

Beyond Us vs. Them:  
Citizenship education with hard  
to reach learners in Europe

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# Beyond Us vs. Them: Citizenship education with hard to reach learners in Europe

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## Introduction

### Hard to reach: a troubling concept in citizenship education

This volume brings together a collection of papers written by people actively engaged in the study and practice of citizenship education in Europe. All are concerned with the perception that some young people are seen by many citizenship educators as being ‘hard to reach’, in the sense that they do not respond to or engage with citizenship education programmes. This category is said to include various groups that are often marginalised in various ways, such as those of migrant or Roma origin, or those in socio-economically deprived categories, who exhibit ‘delinquent’ behaviours, or who are considered to be at risk of being radicalised. We seek to question and investigate the way in which such groups are categorised as ‘hard to reach’, and to explore various approaches and tactics citizenship educators are using to engage with them.

The authors of the various chapters have for the most part been engaged in the discussions and workings of the ‘Hard to reach learners’ focus group as part of the Networking European Citizenship Education (NECE) initiative, which was launched and is sponsored by the *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung* (bpb: The German Federal Agency for Civic Education)<sup>1</sup> and partners in The Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Slovenia and the Czech Republic.

NECE was established in 2004 as an initiative by and for educators in Europe. NECE promotes exchanges and learning about approaches and stakeholders in citizenship education, as well as fostering co-operation. By choice, NECE is a forum rather than an institutionalized body. The bigger idea is to help create a space for a European debate on citizenship education and to contribute to the Europeanization of the field. In its annual conferences, NECE brings together up to 300 participants from more than 30 countries to discuss challenges in citizenship education.

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1 For more information on the bpb, its history and mission: <http://www.bpb.de/die-bpb/147828/history-of-the-bpb>

The idea of putting the issue of hard to reach learners on the agenda of citizenship education goes back to the NECE 2011 conference on *‘Closing the empowerment gap through citizenship education. How to address educationally disadvantaged groups’* in Warsaw, Poland.<sup>2</sup> In order to explore the issue further, a focus group (one amongst many) on ‘Hard to reach learners’ was established in November 2012, when a group came together at the Cordoba NECE Conference, and defined the concept of hard-to-reach learners in broad terms:

it basically includes educationally and socially disadvantaged people who are often ‘forgotten’ by the mainstream of citizenship education or left behind in schools or other educational facilities. Young people, especially immigrants, are particularly affected. In times of multiple crises and a growing social divide in Europe we feel it to be important to focus on this specific group.<sup>3</sup>

As the group met and discussed its role, there was a growing realisation that the term ‘hard to reach’ covered a multitude of interpretations and potential contradictions. In many ways, the chapters in this volume reflect the way in which these discussions and viewpoints have developed over the past four years.

In this introduction we examine some of the problems of definition and construction which we consider problematic, and point out the implications this has, both for the concepts and political contexts/philosophy of citizenship education and for practitioners working in this field.

## Problematizing ‘hard to reach’ as a category

At first sight, the idea of a group being ‘hard to reach’ seems straightforward. Many social practitioners have used the term since the early twentieth century, having apparently borrowed it from the field of social mar-

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2 For information about the conceptual context of NECE 2011 please refer to the documentation of the keynote speech by political theorist Benjamin Barber in Warsaw: Teaching Civic Education in a World of Radical Inequality, Digital Technology and Global Interdependence (<http://www.bpb.de/veranstaltungen/netzwerke/nece/66270/conference-closing-the-empowerment-gap-through-citizenship-education>)

3 For more information on the focus group ‘Hard to Reach learners’ and its work: <http://www.bpb.de/veranstaltungen/netzwerke/nece/155654/hard-to-reach-learners>



keting (Beder 1980). In the early era of advertising for mass-consumption goods there had been discussion about how to reach the emerging group of female purchasers of household items: for example, an article in the *Journal of Political Economy* referred to the work of ‘the efficient and the ignorant housewife alike [as] ~~seldom done ... this woman is~~ hard to reach’ (Fogg-Meade 1901: 228m). The construct was initially taken up by policy-makers in public health (for example concerning immunisation and public hygiene issues) and by social scientists. Such groups of people were seen as being resistant to awareness of public health issues, such as sanitation and inoculation, and targeted groups were characterised as having low levels of education (e.g. Bergner and Yerby 1968).

By the 1970s the hard to reach categories were extended to encompass drug users and by the 1980s HIV positive individuals were included, both groups being characterised by their illicit activities or by behaviour seen to be socially unaccepted by authorities (e.g. Kendal 1975).

In the social sciences, the term first becomes common in the 1940s: for example, Lundberg and Larsen’s (1949) article in *Political Opinion Quarterly* was titled ‘Characteristics of Hard-to-Reach Individuals in Field Surveys’. One such study inadvertently revealed a significant element in these constructions of the category: Rodman asked ‘how well can a middle-class person understand lower-class life?’ in an article about those whom he described as “‘hard-to-reach”, “hard-core” and “multi-problem families (or individual or gangs) ... being ”resistive”” (Rodman 1959: 441). Social work practitioners and academics adopted the term: many studies characterised particular groups of clients as ‘hard to reach’ who refused to accept or were oblivious to social intervention programmes (e.g. Lindberg 1958; Tinker 1959; Malone 1966). At much the same time, psychiatric counselling began to use the phrase, and this usage continues today (e.g. Perl 1963; Kalathil 2003).

In the field of education, the term seems to have been used with reference to adult education, which did not have a captive audience (as in mainstream schooling) and was possessed of a sense of outreach and the desire to be inclusive, common to some of those other earlier disciplines. Contributions such as those of Beder (1980) and Darkenwald (1980) both made very explicit links to the fields of marketing, in particular social marketing.

In a survey of adult education’s target audience, Kerka (1986) identified ‘deterrence factors’ inhibiting hard to reach groups, which included individuals and families with ‘problems’, poorer people, those with negative perception of education (and its value), those with poor motivation or confidence and those with a tendency to non-affiliation. From this initial use, the term rapidly spread to the compulsory school education sys-

tem (e. g. Aronson 1996; Brain and Reid (2003), and hard to reach became associated with a wide variety of communities: the parents of school ‘refusers’ (Rayner et al 1996; Milbourne 2009; Mounteney 2010), minority ethnic groups/those of migrant descent (Golden et al 2002; Battacharyya et al 2003; Harris and Goodall 2008), the Roma (Jordan 2001; Foster and Horton 2005; Symeou et al 2009; Walsh et al 2011), the socio-economically deprived (Hanafin and Lynch 2002), and parents with low levels of educational achievement (Epstein and Dauber 1991; Waanders et al 2007) – these and other groups have all been described as ‘hard to reach’ in terms of their children’s education.

Krek et al (2012) use the term specifically in relation to citizenship education, referring ‘mainly to migrants – particularly new entrants–, and minorities (for example the Roma in central and eastern Europe and Russian populations in the Baltic States)’. They highlighted Danish programmes, one working to increase voter registration among young people of migrant background, another with the Somali community in a particular town, and a migrant-organised initiative in the Spanish Canary Islands, looking at these programmes’ efforts to facilitate and accelerate the processes of migrant social and employment integration. ‘Hard to reach’ has by now become a category that is found in almost every field, as evidenced in an article by Jansen et al (2010) about farmers who are hard to reach with communications about udder health.

These iterations of the term ‘hard to reach’ all suggest a singular view of social relationships: they suggest a powerful ‘we’, possessing a particular insight and knowledge of reality, being confronted with an intractable group, hermetically isolated from the mainstream ‘us’, resistant to, or resisting, the messages ‘we’ seek to convey.

This is an extraordinarily geo-centric view: it is constructed entirely from the viewpoint of those privileged to be in the dominant ‘we’ group, who demonstrate an assumption that the world almost literally revolves around them, in much the same way as the pre-Copernican population saw the sun as revolving around the earth.

It is entirely possible – perhaps often probable – that the population within the tightly defined category sees ‘the problem’ as being the reverse: that not only do they see themselves as ‘us’, but they have difficulties in getting the outside population (whom they will see as ‘them’) to listen to their views and concerns.

But there are a number of difficulties with both of these explanations. Firstly, they homogenise what almost certainly is a plurality of groups – some of which may not even recognise themselves as a group – into single categories, ‘*the* hard to reach’ and those who for whatever reason wish

to reach out to them. Secondly, the process of *othering* leading to the identification of a group as hard to reach depends on the viewpoint that one assumes. To use the case of public services such as education and health as an example, we see that for marginalised groups it is often the services and the service providers themselves that are considered to be (and often are) ‘hard to reach’ (see: Crozier and Davies (2007: 295); Flanagan and Hancock (2010: 4 and 5).

Thirdly, and perhaps more importantly, the creation of categories such as hard to reach pathologises groups as abnormal and aberrant: they are seen as deviant, resisting the normalising agencies of the dominant society. This was first observed as far back as 1990, when Freimuthy and Mettger, writing in a public health context, observed that there were a range of preconceptions associated with the ‘hard to reach’: ‘pejorative labels and preconceptions about various groups may lead to depicting these audiences as powerless, apathetic, and isolated’ (Freimuthy and Mettger, 1990: 232). Similar criticisms have been raised when the term is used in educational contexts. Crozier and Davies (2007) explored home-school relationships among parents in the UK who were of Pakistani and Bengali heritage. They observed that ‘some teachers, head teachers and other educational professionals referred to the South Asian parents as “hard to reach”’, but concluded that:

Whilst it was clear from the parents that they were not very, and in some cases not at all, involved in their children’s schools and knew little about the education system or what their children were doing in school, it was also very apparent that the parents were not ‘difficult’, ‘obstructive’, or ‘indifferent’—the kind of behaviour ‘hard to reach’ implies. ... rather than parents being ‘hard to reach’, it is frequently the schools themselves that inhibit accessibility for certain parents ... [We] challenge the cultural interference model, arguing that it is incorrect and pathologises parents.

*Crozier and Davies 2007: 295*

Crozier and Davies’ observation brings up a fourth concern with regard to the use of the term: ‘Inherent in the act of reaching the “hard to reach” is the implication that there is a problem that must be addressed, [...] This deficit model sees the problem as residing within [the hard to reach groups] themselves, rather than as systemic’ (Osgood et al, 2013: 24–25). The implication here is also that the service that is to be offered or the message that is to be communicated to the hard to reach groups can itself become a remedy to the problem.

Employing a deficit model in understanding the needs of populations, particularly needs related to citizenship education, is particularly problematic, and has implications for the meaning of both citizenship and education (Kakos 2013). In the context of hard to reach learners such understandings about the role of citizenship education may also help to obscuring the fundamental systemic and political flaws and dysfunctional settings within which citizenship educators often operate. The concept itself may hinder critical self-reflection concerning the constructs, preconditions and political interests which are shaping the field we operate in. For example, in chapter 9 Ahmadi et al describe the Dialogue at School project in Germany: citizenship educators have to be aware of the overall social and economic divides that underlie practically the entire school system, and the problematical political discourse that may label young people as ‘Muslims’ who are prone to radicalism. Our societies are often heavily involved in the production of hard to reach categories, through political decisions – for example, through differential educational investment in school budgets, or through conflating the multicultural state with a presumed ‘national’ identity (chapter 12). As Flanagan and Hancock observe, ‘It is difficult to define the “hard to reach” without thinking of the wider societal issues that contribute to or create conditions [that lead to groups becoming hard to reach]’ (2010: 5). This thread is followed and further discussed by Kakos and Ploner in chapter 2 in this volume, while in chapter 3, Beach offers a glimpse into the systemically supported process of disadvantaging and stigmatizing those who are then recognised as being in need of re-education in the name of equality and social inclusion. The caveats that we discuss above show that the term hard to reach is more complex and contested than is often assumed. With regard to citizenship education, we argue that within these caveats lies a gap between what citizenship educators would like to achieve and the willingness of some young people to engage with this. Moreover, our experience derived from exploring these issues within our focus group has shown that the exploration of the complexity of the concept leads to an equally complex set of questions and issues concerning the work of citizenship education practitioners which are both practical and ethical in nature.

## Why are they hard to reach, and why do citizenship educators want to reach them?

The content of citizenship education needs to be analysed in terms of how it might impact on those in the ‘hard to reach’ category, and it might be useful here to distinguish different actors and their motivations.

There are the professional educators who actually engage with young people, there are the policy makers who promote, fund and support citizenship education programmes, and then there are the young people themselves – who are they, and what might motivate them to political action? There are potential clashes of understanding and misapprehension here. Citizenship educators themselves might be seen as wishing to promote a more inclusive society, to achieve a more representative and participatory democracy. As is often assumed, ~~including the hard to reach in this will~~ enhance social justice, equity and general well-being for everyone. Citizenship educators may see such young people as being particularly in need of being made aware of their social and political rights, because it is assumed that minorities, the poor and the alienated are generally less aware of their rights.

But the policy makers behind civic education programmes have their own particular motivations to do so. The policy community in states and in the European Union, both politicians and administrators, are almost certainly concerned by what has been called a ‘democratic deficit’

(Corbett 1977; Marquand 1979).


This term was originally employed in the European context to refer to the workings of the Commission and the Council of Ministers, both of which were only indirectly answerable to the electorate, and has been used more recently to characterise the low (and generally declining) turnout at European elections, which are seen as weakening the democratic legitimacy of governments. As Bessant et al observe, ‘surveys repeatedly indicate that participation by young Europeans, especially in traditional or conventional political processes, is shrinking [...] leading to characterisations of young people as apolitical and apathetic, sometimes explained in terms of their alleged selfishness, narcissism or lack of basic political knowledge’ (2016: 274).

The classic study of *The Civic Culture* by Almond and Verba (1963) suggests that traditional political participation might merely consist of voting in elections, and perhaps joining a political party, and more rarely in seeking political office: the traditional role of the ‘involved citizen’ was largely confined to participating in elections, and for some to becoming more involved in civic decision-making structures. But whilst participation in elections is clearly essential as part of any democratic process, it is not the *only* form of participation, and may, for some young people, not be their principal form of engagement. This seems to be the case for many young Europeans who are involved in a wide range of political activities

other than voting in elections. As Sloam (2013) suggests, young Europeans’

repertoires of political engagement have become more diverse: from consumer politics, to community campaigns, to international networks; from the ballot box, to the street, to the internet; from political parties, to social movements and issue groups, to social networks. This is reflected by the relative popularity of political organisations and associations other than political parties, which are well adapted to young people’s “*lifestyle politics*”.

(Sloam 2013: 2–3).

Evidently, as well as insisting on the value of participation in core political processes such as voting, we need also to recognise that ‘many young people now operate with a different conception of politics’ (Bessant et al 2016: 278). Viewed from such an angle, the promotion of traditional forms of political participation with the implicit identification of abstention from voting with political apathy may be seen by young people at best as irrelevant, and may appear patronising.  Of course, not all of those involved in the variety of citizenship education programmes across Europe are motivated simply by the desire to increase voter turnout among young people. Due perhaps to the breadth of meaning of the term ‘citizenship’, such programmes often encompass a wide range of educational objectives.

The term citizenship education may indeed for some imply a form of inculcation into formal citizenship of a state, or learning the obligations (and the benefits) of being a citizen; but for many educators (especially if operating in a non-formal context) it is, we suggest, a means of developing socio-political abilities amongst young people, supporting their growing involvement with social organisations and change. Audigier indicated the magnitude of this latter understanding ~~of the term~~ by linking (democratic) citizenship education with active participation and with the preparedness of the citizen as an informed and responsible person taking part in public debate and making choices (1998: 13). However, by avoiding a narrow understanding of the term, the association of citizenship education with democracy, active participation and change in the context of hard to reach learners makes the notion equally appealing and problematic. Aiming to reach the marginalised and to engage the disengaged, citizenship education for hard to reach learners seems to highlight ‘a tension between engaging the “hard to reach” as a remedial strategy and engaging the “hard to reach” in order to have more inclusive democratic institutions, provision and communities’ (Osgood et al, op.cit.: 25). This tension seems to be of significance for the role of citizenship educators who may be called

to promote “remedial” approaches [...] misrepresented as “active democracy”, in which services are trying to be “universal” (thus avoiding stigma) but are simultaneously “targeted” (to make sure those who need “fixing” or improving are reached)’ (Osgood *op. cit.*: 26).

Moreover, the provision of the ‘citizenship remedy’ to individuals and groups who are in need of such interventions has certain ethical/philosophical implications for citizenship educators. Positioning themselves as the providers of such cures requires the actors to see themselves as more enlightened than others when it comes to citizenship. Also of importance is that this may have consequences for the attainment of their objectives in their interventions, since such perceptions may be counterproductive to any attempt to reach the marginalised and to achieve social inclusion.

The discussion so far has highlighted some of the issues which we think are of significance for those involved in citizenship education for hard to reach learners. The non-comprehensive list below includes some of the questions that underpin the work in this volume.

- What is the meaning of ‘active participation’ as an objective in citizenship education for hard to reach learners?
- What are the ethical (and therefore political) implications of the act of identifying and targeting hard to reach groups in the context of citizenship education?
- How prepared are citizenship educators to engage with the exploration of the above?
- How do citizenship educators resolve the tension described by Osgood *et al.*?
- What model of citizenship education should we be inspired to offer on the basis of the above tension?

Our ambition in this volume has not been to offer comprehensive answers to the questions above. More modestly, our aim has been to reveal some of the implications that the concerns associated with these questions may have for citizenship educators, and to open up a debate. Each chapter makes a contribution to this goal.

## Concluding remarks, but not a conclusion

Although there may be difficulties in reaching out in some circumstances and to some groups, various chapters in this book demonstrate that there is hardly a lack of means for citizenship education messages to reach out to young Europeans. Besides, judging by the active participation in the explosion of social media use by young Europeans, this is hardly a gen-

eration lacking in social engagement. Therefore, the questions ~~that seem to be of particular significance and~~ have attracted much of our attention, both in various chapters in this book and within the work of the NECE focus group, are not those concerned with the means for reaching the hard to reach, but those focussed on the intentions behind the act of reaching them, the role of those who attempt to do so, and the messages that are to be conveyed to those considered hard to reach.

As citizenship educators, but also as educators in general, we cannot but be constantly confronted with the questions about the social changes that we want to support and about our role and the role of (citizenship) education in serving these changes. ~~Marginalisation, radicalisation and political extremism are phenomena which do not raise the question (only) about 'whom' and 'how' to educate, but most importantly, we would argue, these issues highlight the need to engage with the questions about who the educator should be and what vision they should offer.~~ In Mayo's words, our concern is with engaging 'in educational processes that are driven by a vision of what should and can be'. (Mayo 1985: 5). Most fundamentally, a question stemming from our agreement with Freire's rejection of the concept of neutral education is 'on whose side we are when we teach' (Mayo op.cit.), or, more appropriately, on whose side are we when we target, name and teach the hard to reach.

As we have already discussed, inherent in the act of identifying and targeting hard to reach learners is a process of marginalisation and othering which not only reinforces the distinction (between ~~Us and Them~~) which we want to address, but which potentially supports the function of those processes that are responsible for the subordination and stigmatisation of those whom we wish to educate. It does so by silencing those who are the victimised by these processes, and by implicitly suggesting that it is their 'deficiencies' that are responsible for their fate.

Adopting an alternative view could lead us to recognise that at the root of the problems that we aim to address lies our political system and the 'brokenness' of our democracies (Arriaga 2014: 7), that the crisis that we face is a crisis of political democracy itself (Barber 2011: 2). By recognising this, the questions for citizenship education ~~are~~ closely related to those about emancipation, power negotiation and democratic reform. More than 'remedial work' focused on the marginalised (~~Osgood et al op.cit.~~), the quest for active participation seems to require engagement with the struggle to challenge hegemonic arrangements that lead and reproduce inequalities and marginalisation. From such a point of view, one could lose the optimism inspired by observations about current forms of young Europeans' political participation, since 'much of the power of modern-day



[...] movements is lost whenever they fail to articulate a list of concrete demands' (Arriaga op.cit.).

We would like to claim that as citizenship educators we cannot but engage with the development of such demands. In doing this our role cannot be confined to motivating marginalised groups to 'open up' or to the sharing of civic knowledge, for 'young people do not live in ignorance but in disappointment' (Barber 2011: 2). More fundamentally, the role of citizenship educator seems to us to be integrally linked to the offering of support to young citizens to recognise, name and challenge the structures and processes that lead to marginalisation, and to the questioning of anything that disengages them from the processes in which power resides, including disappointment itself. Laudable and well intentioned initiatives operating in formal and non-formal contexts aim at the hard to reach in order to bring them 'back in' seem to be of little value, for they all too often ignore the elephant in the room, namely the political and social deficits of the system within which they are operating. The form of citizenship education that we envisage in support of social inclusion and active participation is subversive, in that it does not target the *marginalised* but *marginalisation*, and the educators within it are conscious of the political contours of the role that they assume.

By making such suggestions, we feel that in some ways our discussions in this focus group and in this book have led us back to the starting point of this group, and to Benjamin Barber's keynote speech at the 2011 NECE conference:

We need then to begin to think about the real world in which young people live—not just those who are disempowered, not just the disadvantaged, though certainly those, but also the so-called advantaged who feel disadvantaged, deem themselves disempowered in the political world in which they live. [...] Our job we imagine is to show them, bring those on the outside not yet fully empowered as citizens into the civic realm, into the realm of citizenship. Mainstream those on the outside yearning to be citizens.




Yet this is no longer the realm of suffragism or the civil rights movement, where those on the outside wanted in and fought courageously to secure a place in the civic sun where other already basked in civic plenitude. Today's angry outsiders don't want in because to them there is no "in," because the realm of citizenship itself appears to be meaningless, or worse fraudulent – a device to distract them from where the real power resides in money, media, wealth and multinational corporations.

We seduce them into citizenship to blind them to whom the true governors of the world are. [...]. The crisis we face is not a crisis of the absence of citizens from democratic politics but a crisis of political democracy itself. It is a crisis not of citizen education but a systemic crisis in the infrastructure citizens are supposed to be part of. Unless we find ways to deal with that deeper level of illegitimacy, promoting citizenship will have little effect other than to throw garlands of flowers over our chains. (*Barber 2011: 2*)

As we have already mentioned, our aim in this volume has not been to offer comprehensive answers to the questions raised by our discussion, but to share our questions and to open up a dialogue. However, and equally importantly, we cannot – and should not – shy away from positioning ourselves in the debate we wish to initiate. Our critical approach towards the notions and processes that have been the focus of this publication has led us to the suggestion that the role of citizenship educator is perhaps more subversive, more political, more complicated and more entangled with dilemmas than has often been assumed. Our concern is that such observations might discourage citizenship educators ~~who work~~ with marginalised learners and groups; our hope is that this volume might ~~instil in them the curiosity~~ to critically engage with their own role ~~(before engaging with anybody else)~~, and to ~~motivate them to~~ ask hard questions about the functional and social deficits and the distribution of power within democratic political systems. Again, we should keep in mind that this is enlightenment and nothing else, only with a progressive agenda.

At the same time we should appreciate the efforts and energy of the many individuals and groups investing in citizenship education; especially in times in which crises, populism, illiberalism and terrorist attacks feed and reinforce each other. There can be no doubt that citizenship education in many countries of the NECE ‘world’ has become riskier and less rewarding than ever. This volume, in our view, is meant to serve as an incentive for educators both within and outside Europe to start reaching out towards each other with the aim of starting a long-term dialogue about the fundamentals of our business on the one hand, but also of making public and accessible the many good ideas and practices of a new kind of citizenship education ~~that we need~~.

osing this introduction, we would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the enormous contribution of the work of the NECE Focus Group and its members through the years 2012–2016. The ideas presented here are in many ways a result of long-term dialogue and reflection taking place during meetings in European cities as diverse as Berlin, The Hague,

Leicester, Athens, Vienna and Thessaloniki. We are also thankfully aware of the friendship and encouragement we received in this group, as well as of the fruitful exchange and cooperation on a number of concrete projects made possible in the past years.

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## Effecting and discussing ‘the reach’: the contributions to this collection

The contributors to this volume come from a variety of practitioner and academic backgrounds: they include those working in non-governmental, parastatal and government institutions, teachers, postgraduate students, coaches and journalists, as well as academic researchers.

We have tried in our selection of chapters to cover a range of dimensions and approaches to the issue of citizenship education and the hard to reach. We do not pretend to have been comprehensive in our coverage, but we do suggest that we have indicated the array and breadth of approaches. For example, we have been able to offer a range of geographical case studies from across the continent, from the larger states of Western Europe (France, Germany and the UK) to some of the smaller states (Greece, Portugal, the Netherlands, Sweden and the Czech Republic), covering different geographical locations and different political trajectories. We also include some cross-national studies.

Another dimension represented, particularly pertinent to our questioning of what hard to reach might – or might not – mean, is seen in the range of groups identified as hard to reach in the different studies. We include examples of those of migrant origin (Germany, Sweden, France, the UK), the economically disadvantaged (Sweden, Greece), radicalised indigenous nationalists (the Netherlands), school dropouts (France), Roma (the Czech Republic), Muslims (the Netherlands, Germany), second language learners (Portugal), those in prison (Greece), apolitical and disaffected young people (France, chapter 13) and people internally displaced by frontier changes (chapter 12). This list is not exclusive, but is indicative of the range to which the term hard to reach is being applied.

We also have tried to represent a range of intervention agencies in the movement to bring citizenship education to marginalised groups. Many are by state institutions, particularly schools. But we also include other state institutions with a wider remit, like the bpb, and libraries. Some are voluntary agencies, others are community led and funded. The plurality of approaches is important: each will have particular agendas and motivations, each will have identified particular issues and groups on which to focus. We illustrate how the question of citizenship education for the hard to reach is, and very properly should be, the concern of a wide range of groups and agencies.

Equally importantly, we have tried here to represent a variety of different kinds of approaches, of different programmes and strategies. This is not an area where there is, or should be, a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach: there is

no single right or correct way to address these concerns. We have in our selection formal educational programmes and informal approaches, local initiatives and country-wide programmes. Some programmes are targeted at very specific groups, others focus on a particular issue of concern at the moment, and others are more wide-reaching, casting their net very wide. Some use professional educators, others volunteers: all to effect, and based on considered, valid choices and decisions. The field is wide, and we have mapped here just some of the parameters.

## Chapter summaries

In **chapter 2**, **Kakos and Ploner** explore how the hard to reach category is applied to communities, highlighting ambiguities in definitions of the term. It can be used to describe populations in disadvantaged social positions, particularly in terms of the social spaces from which they have been excluded. They are then approached with a missionary intent to re-educate them and alter their attitudes – but such interventions do not address the structural inequalities that lead to their exclusion in the first place, and can enhance the mainstream/marginal distinction into two separate fields of practice. They suggest that while one of the key characteristics of some such groups is their mobility, for others it is their immobility. Current trends in Europe, such as the increasingly nomadic lifestyle of groups such as migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, Roma and travellers constitute a ‘new mobilities paradigm’. At the same time, they draw on UK studies of hard to reach groups among young people are finding it difficult to leave their local neighbourhoods. Such geographic immobility forms a barrier to young learners seeking to escape their communities. Citizenship educators, they conclude, should aim to expand the field of practice with all such groups, allowing the development of mobile, and flexible communities of citizenship practice.

**Beach** examines Nordic (and particularly Swedish) school policies in **chapter 3**. He argues that these construct subordinate social groups of pupils, an under-class who are disadvantaged, deficient, or deviant in relation to dominant social norms, and who requiring ‘special’ redemption through education. In predominantly immigrant areas, schools become stigmatised as unsuccessful in promoting citizenship and integration. He argues that although the ‘social denizen class’ – living at the bottom end of a tiered society – appeared to have been eliminated in the Nordic states in the late twentieth century through social democracy, problematic divides remain. His research identifies pupils in segregated elite study



programmes – characterised by their teachers as ‘gifted students from good backgrounds’ and ‘future leaders’ – and those pupils of other schools, who are characterised as rebellious, non-conformist and aggressive. Drawing on Bernstein (1990) and Bourdieu and Passeron (1970), he argues that the culture of schooling conceals forms of symbolic violence against the poor that challenges concepts of integration and citizenship. Thus citizenship policies, including concepts of rights, have not been able to transcend the class-based nature of society. Citizenship education in Sweden, he concludes, works in the interests of the capitalist class, as schools reflect and reinforce social bifurcation.

Vávrová, Hruběš and Čáp examine the role of libraries in the Czech Republic in **chapter 4**, and in particular how they can initiate members of social excluded communities into civic activities. The authors were part of a Civic Education Centre study of the community-based roles of libraries in countering social inclusion, and they focus on the Roma community, one of the most socially excluded group in the Republic. While some libraries actively sought to engage Roma communities in civic activities and to enable them to participate fully as citizens, there were major differences between libraries in terms of the targeted at-risk groups: most common were elderly people. Illuminating comments from library staff, captured through focus groups, highlight issues of inclusion. While the elderly were recognised as legitimate library users, others such as the Roma were constructed differently. Long-term systematic work with Roma children allowed staff to establish trust with parents, supporting the children and enabling parents to start using the library: for them the library became the first public institution that they entered and actively used. The authors conclude that libraries that proactively provide services beyond book lending, focusing on a social-integrative role, make them key local partners in planning civic integration projects.

In **chapter 5**, Matos and Lopes take Anselm Kiefer’s sculpture *Sprache der Vögel* as a metaphor for how literary texts can explore critical aspects of life with hard-to-reach learners, encouraging reflection on social contexts, and through this develop themselves as critical citizens of the contemporary world. Focussing particularly on hard to reach foreign language readers in Portugal, they argue that engaging critically with literature can provide unique pathways to developing agency among learners, enabling them to exercise meaningful citizenship roles. Drawing on Byram (2008), they assert that because personal values and beliefs interact with education, language teaching becomes a social and political activity: teachers are political agents in the democratic process. Reading literature requires critical thinking: this develops active citizenship. Literary texts provide a space in

the classroom that favours the (co-)construction of meaning by learners as readers, around relevant citizenship issues and concepts. Using the example of Shaun Tan's images in *The Arrival*, which tells the story of a migrant arriving and settling in a foreign country, they show how readers can be transported to a fictional world in which the familiar is made strange, and they can imagine alternative social and political forms. The story provides empathy, compassion and a critical view of society.

**Karakatsani and Katsamori** consider a quite different hard to reach group in **chapter 6**: prisoners. Writing about their study of a 'second chance' school in a Greek prison, they argue that such a unique learning environment presents very different challenges. Prisoners are characterised by high levels of early school leavers and dropouts, by diversity, by overcrowded settings, and by low-level qualifications. Their research, through interviews conducted with prisoners and tutors, is informed by Freire (1973) and Mezirow's (1978) work on the practices of transformative learning through adult education. Education contributes to the rehabilitative role of prison, helping to deliver inclusion: they argue that citizenship education plays a critical role in this. Prison education empowers learners to review, re-imagine and re-shape their lives. The teachers saw it as developing prisoners' understanding of their rights and obligations, and the development of the skills and attitudes needed to reintegrate into society, such as debating and decision making. The prisoners were empowered to grasp ideas of freedom and democracy, which ironically had not been possible when they were free. They had lacked incentive when 'free': one of them is quoted as saying 'The prison of the mind always exists.'

**Pertjis** provides a different approach in **chapter 7**, analysing approaches to how groups of young Netherlanders responded to the *Charlie Hebdo* attack in Paris in January 2015. Many teachers were unprepared for the remarks made by two groups in particular: Muslim background students with radical opinions, and native Islamophobic students. Teachers were shocked by the various conspiracy theories they heard, featuring anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and right-wing extremism. In mixed classes, Islamophobic native students tended to be silent, but in more homogeneous schools they often took a harsh standpoint toward migrants. Radical Muslim students, more likely to be subject to social exclusion and marginalisation, similarly only believed in their own truths. Pertjis traces the policy discussions about approaches to controversial issues in the classroom. He follows education ministry discussions, teacher in-service education initiatives, and particularly the role of the media and 'media hype' – and the 'drastic but hasty' reaction of authorities to this. While many teachers found it difficult to discuss such politically sensitive issues, he notes many

examples of successful debate. The main risk he identifies is of hard to reach learners not participating in discussions if they feel misunderstood or disrespected by the teacher.

In **chapter 8**, Hirsch examines how hard to reach learners might be analysed within an emancipatory framework, drawing particularly on the theories of Gramsci (1991–2002). In particular, she asks if educational interventions with marginalised groups serve to emancipate such groups: do they emerge as liberated from the power structures, able to question them, or do they simply become ‘self-entrepreneur’ or ‘self-responsible’ consumers within a neo-liberal educational framework that reproduces dominant class, gender and ethnic categorisations? While approaches to hard to reach learners can be seen as an advance on policies of ignoring them, they may simply be using new formats and approaches to maintain hegemony. Hirsch adopts a reflective approach to ask how civic education designed to address socially marginalised youths can be thought of as embedding power structures. She in particular analyses approaches within the German system of citizenship education, where she argues that by addressing socially marginalised youth, educational institutions turn towards subaltern, non-ruling, social groups. Participation programmes may appreciate and build on the interests of such young people, but the promotion of self-efficacy or competence can be seen as simply reflecting the current socio-political mode of production, a neo-liberal, post-Fordist, knowledge-based economy.

**Chapter 9** (Ahmadi, Behrendt and Müller-Hofstede) is also set in Germany: 30 schools are involved in a ‘Dialogue at School’ project, which develops citizenship with socially marginalised groups in urban ethnically segregated schools. The project tries to reconceptualise mainstream approaches as, they argue, the realities of Germany’s migrant society have yet to be reflected in the political and cultural context of school citizenship education. Mainstream pedagogy is often still embedded in the concept of a homogenous cultural identity. The project encourages schools to use cultural difference as a reference point, with multicultural dialogue facilitators from outside the school: peer educators who are ‘authentic figures with whom students can identify’. A dialogical approach addresses issues seen as sensitive (and often avoided by teachers) – national and cultural identities, political attitudes, and opinions on international conflicts – and this introduces discussions addressing the students’ own resources. It opens up and reformats citizenship education, exploring individual emotional and psychosocial needs and group thematic interests, far from traditional top-down citizenship education approaches. They argue this is broadly successful: using the dialogic approach to tackle any issue develops long-term trust

and counters potential alienation from teachers. Sensitive issues of identity and homeland, stereotypes and conspiracy theories can be constructively discussed in a safe space, allowing students to become more aware of their own diversity.

**Newman Turner** offers a different approach in **chapter 10**. In England, some 30 per cent of primary school students are from minority ethnic backgrounds, with significant differences in attainment between different groups – some consistently exceeding the attainment of indigenous children, others at the bottom. The label ‘hard to reach’ is only applied to certain low-achieving groups. A variety of informal, community-led complementary schools have been established by migrant communities to provide additional education to children outside of normal school hours: some are small volunteer-run community groups, others have professional staff. All play a social integrating role, providing learning spaces and allowing reflective time with peers and older role models from their own communities. Newman Turner argues that forging links between formal and informal schools can help hard to reach children, and enable all young people to develop the skills needed to operate successfully in multicultural communities. A case study from Leicester, the Cluster Project, shows collaborative arrangements between mainstream and complementary schools, with positive impacts for hard to reach pupils. It helped develop teaching methodologies for complementary school teachers and generally improved understanding between the two types of school. He concludes that mainstream schools are well placed to support complementary schools through ongoing collaboration.

**Pagoni** focuses in **chapter 11** on how participatory citizenship education is used in some French schools to counter student drop out and marginalisation. She argues that the concept of ‘schooling form’ in France is a socialisation process (derived from a French republican top-down conception of citizens being produced by schools) that formalises piecemeal learning, ideologically constructs the individual, and inscribes the authority of subject-organised written knowledge: it disciplines the body and shapes the mind. This mirrors the norms and values of the privileged classes and generates under-achievement and learning inequalities. Pedagogical proposals that allow students to participate in decision making have been developed at the margins, and are unable to alter the norms of the ‘schooling form’. Pagoni traces the development of such alternatives from the 1970s, and in particular a recent shift from a focus on job-market to a centring on schooling. Within this, citizenship is linked to participatory democracy: school schemes that address dropping-out are innovatory laboratories in which participatory citizenship is key. Participatory citizenship,

as a tool to integrate hard to reach students, rests on the three dimensions of identity (a feeling of belonging between students), the political (involvement in decision-making) and the institutional/symbolical (students and teachers becoming involved in student achievement). But these dimensions in turn generate various types of tension, and Pagoni concludes that such practices remain marginal in a very normative schooling system.

The foregoing chapters have focussed on issues in a single country. The next two chapters take a more Europe-wide perspective.

In **chapter 12**, **Ross** argues that the presumed relationship between ‘the nation’ and citizenship can cause potential issues for the citizenship educator. He argues that groups of hard to reach ‘others’ may be created if it is assumed that members of minority groups who are state citizens are not seen as being of the same nationality as the dominant community. Taking Joppke’s (2010) ‘notoriously polyvalent concept’ of citizenship, he suggests that the term citizenship is often used in some popular discourse to define exclusive membership of, and an identity with, a particular nation. Such discourse often treats the terms nation and state as synonyms. On the other hand, citizenship educators in Europe generally (as in this volume) generally use the term citizenship to refer to the skills, attitudes and knowledge needed to participate and understand the political system, and particularly the values on which the liberal democracies are based. Using data from a study of young peoples’ construction of identities in 29 European states, Ross illustrates how groups such as the Roma, internally displaced people, and those of migrant origin may become constructed as marginalised and hard to reach.

**Carpenter and Taru** present further cross-national analysis in **chapter 13**, in a study of the social and political participation of young people (Myplace). Taking a wide interpretation of ‘the political’, this project examined political understanding as a response to specific cultural narratives of the past, analysing political participation as being but one element of wider civic engagement and social attitudes. They report modest levels of interest in politics and widespread electoral participation, but also a lack of trust in political institutions, particularly in central, eastern and southern European states. Participation in social movements and civic action was lower than the propensity to vote. Overall, the study counters the stereotype of politically apathetic youth (see the discussion of the ‘democratic deficit’ earlier in this introduction): significant numbers are ‘active citizens’, interested in politics and with a substantial minority involved in social and political action. But young people perceive the education system as not sufficiently preparing them for political engagement, and see a growing divide between young people and formal politics. Young peo-

ple's concerns do not seem to be a priority in contemporary political systems. Political institutions are not accessible and do not focus on the concerns of the young, such as austerity, discrimination, human rights, and climate change.

The final **chapter 14** by *Remache*, a pedagogue and social worker from France, offers a kind of coda to this collection. In it, he challenges the classical citizenship education offered to 'young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods', which he sees as often confined to rules about social behaviour, the interiorising of rights, and to institutional structures. This fails many vulnerable young people who are encountering economic, political difficulties, cultural and ethical difficulties. How, Remache asks, can one fill the ever-widening gap between *banlieue* youths and institutions? Dismissing both the 'individual-centred' approach to citizenship education (to shape individual actors), and the view that all individual action is simply the consequence of social institutions, he sets out a four-fold model based on an individual-collective axis and an interiority/exteriority axis. This generates four modes of identification – 'I am', 'we are', 'it is', 'they are'. Each dimension is examined in turn, and for each a set of procedural tools and exercises is suggested, which he argues will help frame the construction of citizenship identities. Contemporary challenges too often make it impossible for young people to meet the notion of citizenship: it must be reinvented, through renewed educational practices that will address the hard to reach, those who are poor in terms of power, economic resources, recognition, moral and ethical resources.

## (Im)mobility and hard to reach communities: The practice of citizenship education

### Introduction

Our aim in this short conceptual chapter is to explore current understandings of the designation ‘hard to reach’ when applied to communities, and to look at issues arising from the development of interventions targeting such groups. By exploring the meanings attributed to the term in relevant literature, we will attempt to identify the ambiguities present in the definitions and understandings of hard to reach, also seeking to summarise those ambiguities that raise key questions about the designation. We will then associate these questions with conceptualisations of citizenship and citizenship education, and explore their implications for our understanding of the relationship between hard to reach spaces and the mainstream, and for the implementation of citizenship education interventions designed within the mainstream, intended for hard to reach groups.

Our discussion will then attempt to identify some characteristics of the spaces from which the identification of hard to reach communities and groups usually proceeds. We will suggest that one of the key characteristics of the groups occupying these spaces is (im)mobility, manifest in a variety of forms, and the level of this (im)mobility informs the group’s philosophical distance from those deemed hard to reach.

We will suggest that the identification of certain groups as hard to reach, and the notion of intervening with and re-educating these groups, might imply a simplistic understanding of education, a problematic understanding of citizenship education, and an ethically and politically questionable understanding of the needs of marginalised groups and the process of marginalisation.

## Towards a definition of ‘hard to reach’

A clear-cut and universal definition of hard to reach is indeed ‘hard to reach’. Moreover, ambiguity and vagueness are common to underlying attempts to define, understand, and then design interventions for hard to reach groups. Our consideration of the designation hard to reach commences by highlighting some of these ambiguities. In the next section, we move on to discuss how these opacities could affect the approaches directed towards hard to reach groups, in particular the attempts to design appropriate citizenship education interventions for them.

When searching for definitions of hard to reach, it quickly becomes apparent that the term is very frequently associated, and often used interchangeably, with other terms used to describe populations in a disadvantaged social position or suffering exclusion. This is in essence rather inconsistent with the literate meaning of the term. This is because the challenges implicit in the term hard to reach seem to relate to the efforts of such groups to be reached and achieve inclusion, while the other terms seems to refer to opposite processes and forces, defining the isolation and marginalisation of groups. Common to both cases is that the point of reference from where groups are recognised as hard to reach or as excluded is external to the groups themselves. Indeed, relevant literature seems to be written from the perspective of the occupants of the social space from which these groups have been excluded, with apparent intent to reach out and re-include them (Freimuth and Mettger 1990, Crozier and Davies 2007).

Constructed from within such spaces the efforts to re-include and reach the hard to reach seem to assign to those occupying these spaces (mainstream), not only the power to exclude, but also the roles of advocate and protector of the excluded. Moreover, in those cases where attempts to reach the hard to reach aim to offer a kind of re-education involving altering the behaviours and attitudes of the hard to reach, those making them seem to take on a missionary role. This is reflected in the assumptions about these groups that seems to permeate the literature, referring to ‘beneficiaries’ of the efforts to reach these groups. What remains unquestioned in the reviewed literature is that the effort to reach the hard to reach stems from concerns shared by those who apply this effort; they expect to achieve advantages, not principally for themselves, but rather for those who are to be reached. Certainly, nowhere in the literature searched did we encounter any expression of doubt concerning the scope of the efforts being exerted from the point of view of the hard to reach. Thus, it might not be paradoxical then to suppose that preconceptions about hard to reach groups that ‘perpetuate myths about groups that are discriminatory, fallacious,



and patronizing’ (Freimuth and Mettger 1990: 234) are often held by those developing the interventions aiming to include and emancipate them.

Another ambiguity that arises with regard to the use of the term hard to reach relates to the plethora of groups that are included under this umbrella term. The scale and diversity of the designation is widely apparent in literature discussing hard to reach groups (Freimuth and Mettger 1990, Doherty *et al.* 2004, Brackertz 2007). Considering the stance from which hard to reach groups are viewed and relevant issues discussed, it is apparent that it is important not only to answer the question of how to identify ‘who’ has to be reached, but also to accept that the term implies a notion of homogeneity across distinct groups that may well be erroneous (Brackertz 2007: 1).

The prevailing ambiguities embodied within the concept have not always appeared prominently in working definitions of hard to reach, nor do these definitions offer a clear justification for selecting the term over others, such as ‘excluded’, ‘non-mainstream’, or ‘marginalised’. In fact, our search for such a justification led us to Health Science literature and studies discussing the dissemination of certain services to particular societal groups, then to discussions about research methodologies in the social sciences particularly concerning the sampling of marginalised groups, and finally to social marketing literature from which the term appears to have originated (Beder 1980).

Verifying the links between the concept hard to reach and marketing, Brackertz (2007) refers to the inconsistencies and other ambiguities identified above, pointing out that the use of the term covers anything from ‘minority groups, such as ethnic people, gays and lesbians, or homeless people; it can be used to refer to “hidden populations”, i. e. groups of people who do not wish to be found or contacted such as illegal drug users or gang members; while at other times it may refer to broader segments of the population, such as old or young people or people with disabilities’ (Brackertz 2007: 1).

Brackertz rightly observes that at the heart of the decision to use the term hard to reach is the difficulty communicating with particular groups that remain hidden. By recognising this, the agency of hard to reach groups is acknowledged, accompanied by the possibility that becoming and remaining hidden may be not (only) the outcome of a process of exclusion, but also a choice exercised by those who hide.

One can therefore identify several ambiguities embedded in the use of the terminology which can be summarised in the following questions:

- How can hard to reach groups be identified?
- How do certain societal groups become hard to reach?

- Under which conditions can a decision for such groups to be reached be made?
- Who will benefit from reaching the hard to reach?

## Citizenship identity in hard to reach spaces

In this section, we return to the implicit assumption, referred to above, that hard to reach groups are homogenous entities. After interrogating this assumption we will examine the relevance of the questions posed above in relation to citizenship education for hard to reach groups.

We aim to relate the assumptions about the homogeneity of the hard to reach groups to the concept of ‘citizenship’, and by extension, ‘citizenship education’. In doing so we will draw on the conceptualisation of communities as socially constructed and ‘imagined’ by people who they perhaps will never meet, but who perceive themselves as part of this larger ideological entity (Anderson 1991). Although Anderson’s (1991) concept of ‘imagined communities’ primarily referred to nation-building processes and emerging ideas of ‘citizenship’ across Europe in the nineteenth century, it continues to influence present-day policy making aimed at implementing strategies of inclusion and citizenship. For example, David Cameron’s (much criticised) idea of a ‘Big Society’ in the UK, which relies on the engagement and empowerment of local communities and groups to create national cohesion, social mobility and togetherness (Alcock 2010).

In the case of policies aimed at harnessing community-based citizenship, and in line with Brackertz’s critique of the notion hard to reach, the key problem to emerge is an increasingly blurred image of what or who communities are and how we can best define them, let alone how we can ‘reach’ them. At best, we can equate ‘hard to reach groups’ with ‘disadvantaged’, ‘disconnected’ or ‘minority’ communities, comprised of immigrants, gays and lesbians, the unemployed, single parents, non-mainstream religious/faith groups, ‘sub-’ or ‘countercultures’, etc. Although frequently ill-defined, discussions of such communities still assume that these groups are fairly coherent and that can, with some effort, be located and reached out to. The coherence attributed to these groups reflects that assumed to exist in the mainstream (among the non-marginalised, those that are not hard to reach). Thus, by adopting this view we can suggest that the term hard to reach refers to those citizens whose ‘Otherness’ is necessary to render the term ‘mainstream’ meaningful.

The expression of Otherness in contrast with the mainstream is also illustrated in definitions of citizenship, which draw our attention to the

interplay between subjective and normative aspects of citizenship. As Kymlicka and Norman (1995) have suggested, citizenship not only confers status or a set of rights and responsibilities, but also an identity shared by members of a political community. Subsequently, Osler and Starkey (2005: 19) attributed a triadic nature to citizenship, linking it to status, practice and a feeling (of belonging). We consider that the lived experience of citizenship is present in the interaction between these three elements in a process that we could term the 'cycle of citizenship'. With status often (but not always) operating as a starting point (either given or as an objective), citizens' continuous practice (understood as inevitability attached to socialisation) leads essentially to a restructuring and renewal of the community within which the practice takes place, leading then to the development of feelings of belonging among those who practice.

In this chapter, we approach practice in its basic form, locating it in a continuum, in which the borders between the public and private sphere blur (Mill 1994), and based on the interaction between members of communities and groups that make it inescapable. Whether cognisant or not, practice affects and alters communities and the groups of individuals within them, causing them to change themselves and others by interacting. These changes are indicative of practice and lead to the reformation of communities, and the establishment of new social realities within them, which are marked by the presence and interaction of individuals. Culture, as the product of this interaction, maps these changes and reflects negotiations, power relations, internal conflicts and collective ('emic') actions, which define communities' borders and groups' identities. Simultaneously, and relevant to the prevailing (and perhaps necessary) outsider definitions of hard to reach, culture is also the product of ('etic') authoritative orderings and moral judgements over 'Other' ways of life, deemed to have 'essential' elements, authentic features, as well as definable identities and boundaries (Clifford 1988).

Towards this internally and externally constructed culture, which bonds the members of the communities and fuels their feelings of belonging *in*, individuals develop another form of belonging, the belonging *of* (ownership), directed towards the community that accommodates practice. It is in this latter form that we locate the exclusive element of citizenship, i. e. the efforts (conscious and not) of citizens to protect their community from further expansion, i. e. from exposure to alien practices and consequent change. We also suggest that, in many cases, this exclusivity can offer a better indication of the subjective experiences of citizenship and be particularly valuable in our attempts to comprehend the process of marginalisation as it informs the construction of hard to reach minorities.

To attain such an understanding, we can shift our focus onto the role of Otherness in the construction of group identity and group cohesion, and enrich the discussion with observations about groups as ‘categories of ascription and identification of the actors themselves’ (Berth 1969: 10). Although made in reference to ethnic groups, we contend that Berth’s observation can be applied to understandings about the formation of other groups also. However, it is not the aim of this chapter to engage in an extensive sociological discussion about the role of Otherness and Othering in respect to understanding identity. What we choose to utilise from this discussion is the significance of the process of identity formation, and the key role that Otherness plays in group cohesion: ‘the only way that a community [...] can achieve common identification and solidarity is through discovering [...] some third group who can be the “Other” for the whole community’ (Wetherell 2007: 10). By sharing common Otherness, individuals develop shared identifications and enhance their sense of belonging to the group to which these identifications refer. Meanwhile, they also develop a sense of ownership toward the group, its products and means of production (culture).

It is the sense of ownership described above, which is then translated into a tendency to protect the group from risks associated with the behaviours and practices associated with being Other. Furthermore, as Bialostok and Whitman (2012) have pointed out, it is within the shared understandings of and cultural responses to risk that social cohesion and order is maintained. When examining the literature about hard to reach groups, one can readily identify a plethora of risks associated with hard to reach groups’ behaviours and life choices, including offending, and threats to public health, etc. (Freimuth and Mettger 1990). In some cases, it is interesting to observe that the adoption of behaviour associated with the exclusion and marginalisation of a group is subsequently recognised by the state as a risk. A characteristic example of this is the ‘choice’ of Gypsy and Traveller parents to educate their children at home, resulting in the children later experiencing isolation and other problems at school (D’Arcy 2014), which then lead them to be characterised as a ‘risk’ justifying external (State) intervention (Bhopal and Myers 2016).

Turning our attention to citizenship education, we would like to begin by observing that one can understand any intervention aiming to alter behaviours and attitudes among hard to reach groups (and indeed among any groups) as essentially a form of citizenship education. However, while it may be relatively unproblematic to recognise altruistic and emancipating motives behind interventions promoting healthy lifestyles or facilitating access to public services, the case of interventions targeting political and civic attitudes is far more problematic. We can identify two reasons

for this. The first relates to the fact that the starting point for any such intervention is the rejection of existing attitudes and behaviours demonstrated by the hard to reach groups as dysfunctional and unwanted. The second is the implications that this has for the meaning attributed to citizenship education and for the design of citizenship education programmes. In order to explore these implications we must return to the four questions asked at the beginning of this chapter, and challenge the deficit model of citizenship and citizenship education.

Turning our attention toward the distinction between us and them, as implied in the design of citizenship education programmes for the hard to reach, we suggest such interventions do little to address the structural inequalities that lead certain groups to become excluded in the first place. In fact, we believe that the function of such programmes may be counterproductive, in that they possibly enhance the distinction between the mainstream and social margins; characterising them as hosting two separate fields of practice, and assuming that they generate senses of belonging and ownership that do not overlap. Not only do such distinctions obstruct the ultimate objective of such interventions (assuming inclusion is this ultimate objective), they also pose more immediate questions concerning the source of authority exercised when the mainstream evaluates, rejects and aims to alter behaviours and models of practice developed (and therefore may be functional) within groups that operate outside its margins. Therefore, the intention to intervene and alter attitudes and behaviours in the name of the reintegration of the Other might also result in a double paradox. On the one hand, the need for these attitudes to change is evoked only when they are judged from beyond the social context in which they have functionally developed, and on the other hand, once such reintegration is achieved the newly expanded group will need to invent new forms of Otherness in order to restore their cohesion. Moreover, the development of citizenship education interventions, as a means to achieve the above, seem to imply an approach to education as a tool to address deficits, seeing citizenship education not as a route to inclusion but as an imposition (Kakos 2013).

Based on the above we propose that the development of interventions, particularly of citizenship education targeting hard to reach groups, resembles a form of civic imperialism. The target of which are groups that, after having been excluded by the dominant community, must then operate at the periphery of communities, developing behaviours and attitudes which are then identified as *risks* justifying interventions. Beneficiaries of the dominant community's engagement in this seemingly paradoxical cyclical process are the very mechanisms and structural inequalities that led to their original exclusion.

The next section looks more closely at the civic imperialism of dominant/mainstream communities, discussing the role of mobility and immobility in social exclusion and marginalisation in modern societies.

## Mobilities, immobilities and the hard to reach

It is apparent that research and literature describing ‘social mobility’ in the context of primary, secondary and tertiary education is flourishing. However, this paper identifies and addresses more fundamental, and still largely unanswered questions about the physical, spatial, and everyday mobilities that inform how we conceptualise the notion of hard to reach in relation to young people/learners, and how we interpret (minority) communities relative to the role of citizenship education. The addition of this mobility dimension highlights an opportunity to conceptualise hard to reach groups in relation to current trends in social mobility, particularly in Europe, and the increasingly nomadic lifestyle of certain groups. The dimension of mobility challenges conventional definitions of the hard to reach as place-based ‘groups’ or ‘communities’, moving towards a more critical evaluation of them as mobile, hybrid and constantly changing flows and entities. While (transnational) mobility and forms of nomadism act as barriers to building sustainable relationships with hard to reach learners and/or communities (e.g. Gypsy-travellers, migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers), this chapter also addresses social immobility as a characteristic of hard to reach-ness and as a major barrier to developing meaningful connections- (educational or other) with particular communities and/or young learners.

Recent research already encompasses an interest in the role of mobility, relative to the context of social inclusion and education. For example, Caruana (2014) and Ploner (2015) analysed the autobiographical narratives of UK, international, and ‘non-traditional’ students, recounting their journeys through primary and secondary and on to higher education. The study showed that for most students, high mobility is a key factor informing resilience, leading them to succeed in their educational and professional aspirations. Such (resilient) educational mobilities take various forms and are generally characterised by passing through lengthy, and mostly non-linear, series of stages and places, i.e. moving (or being moved) from one country to another, from one city to another, and from one neighbourhood to another within cities and regions.

From an international perspective, it is important to note that the mobilities described are certainly not limited to members of a new global educational elite who can easily afford to be mobile and who are supported by

the financial capital to pay expensive fees and achieve desirable degrees at reputable Western educational institutions. Indeed, mobility frequently occurs to supply the basic needs of young people seeking to gain social and economic capital in a developed Western country, such as the UK, but can be forced by political and/or ethnic discrimination and persecution in students' native regions and countries of origin. The difference between the two forms of physical mobility highlight the centrality of 'the ways in which physical mobility pertains to upward and downward social mobility' (Sheller and Urry 2005: 213). As Sheller and Urry indicated, 'Moving between places physically or virtually can be a source of status and power; or where movement is coerced it can generate deprivation and untold suffering' (2005: 213). Consequently, and dependent on their relevant experiences, individuals and communities tend to form different relationships with their mobilities. These vary from associating mobility and exclusion, violence and prosecution (Kirpalani *et al.* 2015), to viewing mobility as capital (Kaufmann *et al.* 2004) and a right for the migratory elite (Murphy-Lejeune 2002), practicing transnational mobility 'to secure and extend their economic and social advantages while circumventing national policies designed to broaden educational access' (Sidhu and Dall'Alba 2016: 1).

Howsoever these mobilities are shaped, they reflect the rapid emergence of 'mobile livelihoods', or what some social scientists term a 'new mobilities paradigm' (Hannam *et al.* 2006). Thus, mobility has become an important aspect of present-day life that has radically changed our conceptions of cultural diversity, social change and our sense of community in a globalised (predominantly urban) world. In this context, (intra-national as well as transnational) educational mobility and migration raise a series of questions about how to conceptualise citizenship, which in the classic political science tradition has been defined as a set of rights practiced and negotiated vertically between the state and the individual (Fog Olwig *et al.* 2010). This conforms to Banks' (2008) observation that traditional approaches to citizenship education, to purposefully ensure internalisation of national values (glorified), national heroes, and history (as reflected in the UK citizenship test for immigrants), are inconsistent with the role of global citizen, because a growing number of people have multiple national commitments, inhabiting and moving between multiple nation-states and cultural identities. Clearly, the recent calls to promote 'global citizenship' at all educational levels have helped render such a narrow definition more horizontal and inclusive, moving toward a more normative ideal, based on the notion of societal membership (Banks, 2008; Reid *et al.*, 2010) and involving both available resources and subjective experiences of belonging. As Fog Olwig *et al.* (2010: 3) contextualise in reference to the Danish

context, ‘societal membership’ as an approach to citizenship ‘...is socially mediated and shaped by not only the state but also by social policies and practices beyond the state that in various ways define and support informal norms of belonging that are different from those of the state.’

Whilst trans- and international educational migration and mobilities are growing, posing new challenges when defining citizenship and citizenship education, we also face the paradox that a significant number of young people are geographically immobile, finding it difficult to leave their own local neighbourhoods or social environments (Wacquant 2005, Prince’s Trust 2011). This immobility poses a significant barrier particularly to aspiring young learners who have a profound desire to escape their own communities, where educational independence and achievement might not be highly valued, and where one can become an outsider despite former associations. Moreover, the financial crisis has heightened the risk that previously socially mobile populations might enter into a period of immobility and be unable to change their status. Equally, geographically mobile populations seeking a safer life might enter into pockets of social immobility in the host countries in a manner that does not necessarily reflect their education and skills.

In the UK, geographical immobility has garnered some attention, being clearly identified as an underlying cause of social immobility, especially during the recent years of economic crisis and austerity (McDowell 2012). The overlap of social and spatial immobility has also been confirmed by studies exploring young people’s experiences of territoriality, which depict it as impeding mobility and imposing sanctions on access to leisure, education, employment and social opportunities (Pickering *et al.* 2012). Such spatial/geographical immobility has also been linked to the reassessment of gang-related crime in major cities across the UK. For example, in a case study of Glasgow, Fraser (2013) argues that geographical immobility and limited spatial autonomy amplifies young people’s claims on particular ‘territories’, frequently resulting in youth tribalism, gang-related rivalry, and/or criminal activity linked to the ownership and control of particular geographical spaces and localities (i. e. streets, neighbourhoods, etc.). Adding a mobility dimension to the formation of the identity of urban gangs, youth and subcultures raises further questions about how to conceptualise alienated milieus, i. e. as voluntarily hard to reach groups, and how to approach the values we associate with these groups, such as chauvinism, sexism, violence, and racism.

Although the complex interconnections between social and spatial (im) mobility among young people continue to receive considerable interest in research and academic literature (Barker *et al.* 2009), policy makers on both



the national and local levels often fail to address this problem sufficiently. For example, in the UK, the national institution aimed at addressing this issue was the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU), set up by the Labour government in 1997 and later incorporated into the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit in 2006, before its eventual abolition under the Conservative government in 2010. In a much-cited 2003 report on 'Transport and Social Exclusion', the SEU examined the links between social exclusion, transport and the location of social and educational services. Among other findings, the SEU highlighted that young people with driving licenses are twice as likely to get jobs as those without. Moreover, it stated that nearly one half of 16–18 year olds experience difficulty paying for transport to get to their place of study and that almost one third of car-less households have difficulty accessing their local hospital or better schools outside their immediate neighbourhood. In its conclusion, the report observes that, '...local authorities do not routinely assess whether people can get to work, learning, health care or other activities in a reasonable time or cost' (SEU 2002 & 2003, quoted in Urry *et al.* 2006: 541). Although more recent UK-based studies have highlighted partial improvements in transport mobility to assure social inclusion (Lucas 2012), the rise in (youth) unemployment and the austerity measures imposed on both national and local services during the recent recession years are posing new challenges to the provision of sufficient mobility and access for disadvantaged and hard to reach communities. Therefore, unsurprisingly, it appears that the resilience of certain individuals and groups, who break the associations-between forced mobilities and social deprivation by overcoming conditions that could hinder their progress towards attaining their goals, seems to be unrelated to the support they receive from their host communities, but rather to the aspirations shared by their original communities. Frequently, the presence of narratives about how education supports social mobility are of significance among these communities.

Despite the impact of spatial mobility and space on social mobility, and specifically of the role that education plays in social mobility, it has drawn relatively little attention from education researchers, with the result that its role 'remains somewhat under-theorised in education' (Allan & Catts 2014: 219). Following Allan and Catts (2014), this gap in our understanding can be bridged by Bourdieu's concept of 'field' (1998: 39), as the social space 'within which people engage in gamesmanship and practices that are circumscribed by a unique set of rules, norms and stakes' (Allan and Catts 2014: 221). Our attention to mobility equates to the study of individual's movement into such fields, 'into a locale, through specific bonding practices and the use of space in order to check the validity of rules and citizen-

ship' (Allan and Catts 2014: 222). From a mobility-based perspective, hard to reach-ness seems to account for individuals' and groups' immobility, their limited movement beyond their locality, and their lack of engagement in bonding, bridging and linking practices (Allan and Catts 2014: 218–9) with individuals classified as Other or drawn from wider fields. Consequently, citizenship education for the hard to reach might resemble a process of intrusion into certain domains of citizenship practice, with the aim of disrupting these practices and redefining the locality of the field, or be viewed as a process or re-territorialisation of certain immobile and disengaged groups that have not bonded with other groups, including the mainstream. What is common to both cases is the exercise of authority and power over certain groups, and the resulting questions about the ethical dimensions of the acts and role of the citizenship educator.

## Conclusions

Drawing on the above, and returning to the key theme of this publication, spatial (im)mobility is presented here as an important dimension that determines the ways in which we define (1) who can be termed hard to reach, and (2) how we seek to 'reach' disconnected, de-privileged or vulnerable individuals or groups. In this reading, the key issue at stake is perhaps less about how to access these persons and communities from an outside vantage point, but how to encourage innovative thinking and provide access and mobility on the ground in order to promote social inclusion and connectedness to essential (social, educational, etc.) networks. Following Cass *et al.* (2005), this also implies that citizenship can no longer be confined to traditional models of civil, political and social rights, but that there are also mobility rights that enable (actual, spatial) access to a range of activities, values and goods that determine full membership or citizenship.

Applying this conceptualisation of (mobile) citizenship as the interplay between practice and feeling, we argue that the objective cannot be the identification of hard to reach groups and/or the delivery of an appropriate model of citizenship education to them. This is because the standpoint from which such a process would be justified is one in which citizenship education appears bound to institutionalised practices (Kakos 2012), which understand it as a remedy to cure deficiencies (Kakos 2013). From such a position, the 'Otherness' of hard to reach groups is accepted and reinforced to benefit the assumed mainstream-ness of those who see a need for such education. Approaching citizenship education as an education intended to further democracy and inclusion, we suggest that the aim should be the

expansion of the field of practice for the members of all groups posing an opportunity for the construction of mobile, flexible, and ever-expanding communities of citizenship practice.

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Dennis Beach

## Nordic citizenship values in education: Myth and reality – a Swedish example

### Introduction

The contributions to this volume describe actions taken in response to the phenomenon of growing social exclusion, political disengagement, and radicalism in European countries. In particular, they relate to practices of citizenship education for marginalised groups suffering from some form of disenfranchisement. Several also call into question current practical pedagogical approaches employed with the aim of achieving political and social assimilation, discussing these policies as ideological and top-down. They construct subordinate social groups, such as migrants, minorities and low-income pupils as disadvantaged, deficient, or deviant in relation to dominant social norms, requiring special educational tools to *redeem* them. The present chapter develops a research-based discussion concerning some of the problems associated with this policy approach. Similar to the other chapters, it identifies notions of inferiority as directed toward an underclass of students, perceived as a type of intellectually and socially inferior Other, also stressing the perception that marginalised groups would benefit from citizenship (re-)education to enable them to recognise their intelligence and their entitlement to civic engagement (Gudmundsson 2013). This perspective could be understood to proceed inevitably from the dominant discourse, as could the inability to acknowledge the rejection of traditional forms of engagement by these groups as community-centred acts (Sernhede 2007).

Nihad Bunar's (2001) dissertation provided an early acknowledgement of the problems inherent in national education policies. His study concerned integration and the role of schools and schooling in four urban areas in Sweden, post-marketization, during a period of economic crisis. The stigmatisation of local areas where schools had largely been unsuccessful in promoting citizenship and integration was noted, and economic and stigmatic constraints expressed as overriding concerns. Further, Bunar (2001)

observed that the local communities in these predominantly immigrant areas were often seen as the primary source of the problem, rather than its solution. The solution proposed as part of official education policy was to sever ties with the surrounding environments, and to avoid expanding into or cooperating with communities. Simultaneously, material problems such as the lack of social and economic resources and marginalisation were characterised as among the cultural deficiencies encountered by individuals on the periphery.

This chapter follows the research tradition established by Bunar (2001) as described in brief above. It is written for interested researchers and policy makers, but also for practitioners, to assist them in reflecting upon their own experiences in terms of citizenship education when offered to all school pupils. Its aim is to help future practitioners develop successful, confident learners who might subsequently become responsible citizens, able to make a positive contribution to society. It describes the Swedish education system's failure to construct a national educational system founded on positive values in practice, and questions the solidarity and citizenship expected to develop from the educational experiences, processes and outputs provided by successive Swedish governments and education authorities, and supra-national organisations such as the OECD (Gudmundsson 2013). Schools in Sweden have been responsible for conveying highly divisive messages, affecting the quality of life offered there, just as in other capitalist countries (Berhanu 2016a, 2016b). These differences are built upon and intensified by historical precedence when treating different aspects or characteristics of gender, class, poverty, ethnicity and race as inferior (Bunar 2001, 2008).

## Education and citizenship: Sweden's educational value base

Citizenship is a complex concept. It includes notions of rights, privileges and responsibilities, such as freedom of expression and worship, the possession of legal, voting and employment rights, and the right to stand for and take political office. Writing about the new social precariat, Guy Standing (2011) contrasted these citizenship rights with the material experiences and social and political possibilities of the social denizen. The social denizen is a person typically living at the bottom end of a tiered plutocratic society, in which economic elites directly and indirectly control national politics and culture according to their economic strength (Standing, 2011). According to Standing (2014), people around the world are currently being transformed into denizens (or an underclass), as the rights associated with

citizenship are whittled away by national governments in the interests of plutocracy, often while the full implications of doing so go unrecognised.

Denizen status was politically, and perhaps even practically, eliminated in the Nordic states during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as described by, amongst others, Antikainen (2006, 2010) and Esping–Andersen (1990). This was achieved through the construction of a social democratic labour market and welfare policies in strong political economies, in which extensive spheres of labour protection were constructed around extensively commoditised labour in fixed workplaces that today only apply to a minority (Beach and Sernhede 2011). Participatory rights and responsibilities, both in schools and on the labour market, were continuously extended (Beach *et al.* 2011), and in terms of standards of health and living, new levels of class parity were attained (Esping–Andersen 1990). Educational policies around fundamental citizenship values were developed as part of this welfare state concept (Berhanu 2016a, 2016b, Öhrn *et al.* 2011), and later formalised in the national curriculum in terms of specific values established for the nation's schools; i. e. a kind of citizen charter for education called *Värdegrund* (Assarsson *et al.* 2016). The National Schools Agency in Sweden (Skolverket) described the värdegrund as follows (skolverket. se/skolutveckling/vardegrund), explaining it as a foundation for education and future citizenship that respects individual freedom and integrity, Christian (*sic*) humanist values, and equality and solidarity. It added that these values were conveyed and portrayed in schools, and that all staff members were expected to promote respect for human worth and our shared environment, characterising these as essential school practices, expected to provide specific outcomes from the education system (Assarsson *et al.* 2016).

The question arises, however, about whether such value-based foundations for citizenship and education were expressed beyond the political level (Berhanu 2016a), and about how contradictory they were, even in that context (Berhanu 2016b). At the political level, there is in Sweden, as Lundahl (2011) points out, publicly funded comprehensive education (for those aged 6–16) and an upper-secondary (16–19) school system, complemented by a compensatory adult education sector offering free access to higher education. This system also embodies a commitment that education should promote the maximum development of all individuals, regardless of diversity (e. g. gender, ethnicity, place of residence, physical or intellectual differences, or social and economic factors), compensating for any variations in learning opportunities and supporting pupils experiencing difficulties completing their education. Moreover, this is expressed as important, not simply because such things are fair in themselves, but also because a ‘good education for all’ is seen as a way of creating an integrated soci-



ety characterised by political involvement and social solidarity (Beach *et al.* 2011, 2013, Gudmundsson 2013). These ideals can also be identified from education practices (Berhanu 2016a, 2016b).

Several investigations inform this chapter. These are mainly, but not exclusively ethnographic in character, and have been conducted in relation to three thematic areas or concepts: stigma and stereotyping in Swedish upper-secondary education (Erlandson and Beach 2014, Jonsson and Beach 2013, 2015); education choice and commodification (Beach and Dovemark 2007, 2009, 2011, Dovemark 2004, Erlandson and Beach 2014); and school and learning experiences and marginalised youth (Beach and Sernhede 2011, 2012, Lundberg 2015; Schwartz 2013). These investigations share in common an exploration of how the explicit values underpinning education are expressed, challenged and contradicted.

## Stigma and stereotyping in upper-secondary schooling

Investigations into stigma and stereotyping were triggered by research in the upper-secondary school (pupils' age: 16–19) sector, which explored how students imbued the concept of school with meaning, relative to their concepts of self, their future expectations, hopes and ambitions, and their grades and performances (i. e. performativity) (Beach and Dovemark 2009, 2011, Dovemark 2004, Erlandson and Beach 2014). They explored the narratives students interweave around school and schooling, and the concepts of self and other that are identifiable, as well as what these expressions might indicate regarding the notion of a common egalitarian and solidary citizenship (Erlandson and Beach 2014, Jonsson and Beach 2015).

Currently upper-secondary education in Sweden consists of 18 three-year national study programmes, with admission rules requiring students to attain pass grades from year nine onwards in Swedish (or Swedish as a second language), English and mathematics, plus passes in a further five or nine other subjects for vocational and academic study programmes respectively. Thus, upper-secondary schooling is distinctly differentiated along academic and practical lines (Berggren 2013, Lundahl 2011, Hjelmér 2011a, 2011b, Rosvall 2011a, 2011b). There are also five introductory programmes for pupils who are ineligible for national programmes. During this research, we became particularly concerned with the production of stereotypes amongst pupils, particularly those taking more elite education study programmes, when they were strongly segregated. This was identified as problematic, giving rise to distinctly different concepts of citizenship in earlier investigations (Beach 1999); this seems to have intensified

the performative contexts of schooling and the increasingly personalised curriculum in recent years (Berggren 2013, Holmér 2011a, 2011b, Lundahl 2011, Rosvall 2011a, 2011b).

We termed academic university preparatory study programmes ‘elite’ programmes. These were for maths and natural science, social science, and aesthetic subjects. The pupils were statistically over-represented by middle- and upper-middle class individuals, in terms of both their social origin and social destination, according to data from Statistics Sweden. They are spoken of broadly in schools, particularly by teachers, as gifted students from good backgrounds, expected to become future leaders of industry and society (Beach and Dovemark 2011). The following stereotypes about themselves and others were found to have developed throughout the duration of their studies.

- The in-group stereotypes observed for academic students:
- Mainstream: well-dressed, polite, care about what others think, stable, calm;
- Performance-oriented: hard working, high-performers, ambitious, competitive, motivated, active, committed, interested, focussed, place high demands on themselves;
- Career-oriented: big plans for future, possibility to choose from many good professions, will reach far, aim high, expect well-paid job in the future; and
- Compliant: easily controlled, conformist, obedient, disciplined, orderly, well-behaved, do not dare to criticise, dutiful, governable.

The out-group stereotypes bestowed on other (i. e. vocational programme) students:

- Rebellious and non-conformist: aggressive, disrespectful, messy, too extrovert;
- Lazy: carefree, unmotivated, unengaged, low demands on him/herself;
- No value placed on theoretical education: difficulties understanding theoretical content, learn with their hands, want practical examples, such as to be practical, attention deficits;
- Substance abuser: uses tobacco, drinks a lot, party person; and
- Defective language: poor reader, limited vocabulary, poor writer.

The differences cited between these stereotypes raise several points of central relevance to the present volume. First, there was a clear pattern. The predominantly upper- and upper-middle class academic programme students had constructed an in-group stereotype, depicting them as compliant, career and performance-oriented, motivated, competitive and ambitious, intelligent, entrepreneurial, politically well-informed and intellectual, with the potential to become future leaders. This was also objec-

tively true (Lundahl 2011). Academic programme students in upper-secondary schools tended to go on to pursue academic and professional higher education studies, and subsequently attain professional positions and higher status in society (Beach *et al.* 2011). The academic students expressed their better employment opportunities as just reward for their hard work, intelligence and strong leadership and/or professional potential. The experiences and outlook of the school they attended prompted academic students to believe they were better (and of more value) than the average person (Erlandson and Beach 2014), and this belief was also reflected in comments from and treatment by schools' teachers and head-teachers (Beach 1999, Hjelmér 2011a, 2011b, Rosvall 2011a, 2011b).

This sense of belief in their superior value was not only visible in terms of the way academic students and their teachers described these students, it was also apparent in the values they assigned to non-academic students (Jonsson and Beach 2015). They were designated a lower-class identity and accorded traits that implied they were more primitive, with insufficient reasoning skills to guarantee their own survival, with the result that they were led and controlled according to everyone else's best interests. The attribution of a superior sense of self to the intellectual and cultural elite is historically a relatively well-known phenomenon in the sociology of education. Bernstein described it in *Class Codes and Control* (Vol. IV) in 1990, referring to earlier analyses of curriculum production and communication and class relations in linguistic practices and educational modalities in volumes I to III of the same series (Bernstein 1971, 1973, 1975). Elsewhere, Bourdieu and Passeron discussed similar issues in France in *La Reproduction* from 1970, as did Coleman in the USA (Coleman 1967). They also described cultures of schooling that conceal forms of symbolic violence against the poor (Beach and Dyson 2016). Education is officially founded on values of independence and academic neutrality, but this is an illusion. In practice, education is culturally biased and socially reproductive.

The characterisations above pose several serious challenges to notions of integration and citizenship, but arguments countering them are insubstantial. As pointed out by Jonsson and Beach (2015), the downward stereotypes imposed upon vocational pupils in the school setting referred to reflect objective outcomes in education that relate to both social class and citizenship, not only subjective value positions (Holmér 2011a, 2011b, Rosvall 2011a, 2011b). Additionally, they are consistent with historical narratives, such as that expressed in 1845 by Engels in his book *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, and describing their position and treatment and the justifications of that treatment as proffered by factory owners.

School choice patterns are also of interest here. Similar findings to those noted in Sweden by Bunar (2001, 2008) were identified in the USA, the UK, the Netherlands, Chile and Finland (Beach and Sernhede 2011, 2012). School choice patterns in American schools, for instance, describe how race factors have continually and ubiquitously dominated SAT scores, school size, student-teacher ratios and indicators of academic quality in relation to school selection for white families (Saparito and Lareau 1999). This was rationalised by white parents equating race with academic achievement, and viewing avoidance of mixed race settings as best for their children and their academic achievements (Holme 2002). Additionally, it was noted that white students left certain schools as the proportion of poor and non-white students increased in the student population, but the same was not the case among non-white families. The tendency in Finland is similar. There also, parents avoided choosing schools with a social and ethnically mixed student population, and exhibited bias for choosing white schools over non-white schools (Kosunen and Carrasco 2014). This phenomenon has also been noted within residential areas in Holland (Karsten *et al.* 2013). Similarly, in the UK, white middle class parents tend to seek out schools where there are homogenised white middle class populations for their children, i. e. where there are ‘people like us’ (Reay 2004).

Ryan’s (1976) book *Blaming the Victim* provides a rigorous narrative and theoretical description of this situation. However, several important questions need to be posed to examine the ideas that inform these stereotypes. For instance, we should ask if the narrative is ontologically true or if it has been invented to rationalise different values for different people, in relation to the mode of production in capitalist and racist societies (Anyon 2005). Put more simply: do academic students’ self-described and self-attributed stereotypical traits align in practice with that which they are attributed to signal? Then if so, is the same true for the traits and practices academic students and their teachers have attributed to non-academic students? (Berggren 2013).

## Education choice and commodification

An earlier study I co-authored, ‘Making ‘right’ choices? An ethnographic account of creativity, performativity and personalised learning policy, concepts and practices’ provides some indications concerning possible answers to some of the questions raised above (Beach and Dovemark 2009). It involved ethnographic research from two school classes in two middle-sized secondary schools, located about a kilometre apart in a Swedish town on

the west coast. One school stood in a predominantly middle class area, while the other was in an area of 'high-rise' rented accommodation, where the first language in many homes was not Swedish.

The educational commitments expressed by the students themselves were broadly different based on the school they attended. In the school in the wealthier area, emphasis centred on getting good grades, being seen to be good at school and being interested in schoolwork (Beach and Dovemark 2009). This reflected an apparent understanding of education as a commodity (Beach and Dovemark 2007). As Karl Marx wrote in *Das Kapital*,

A commodity is a mysterious thing, simply because in it the social character of men's labour appears to them as an objective character stamped upon the product of that labour; because the relation of the producers to the sum total of their own labour is presented to them as a social relation existing not between themselves, but between the products of their labour. (Marx, Capital I: 72, my emphases). The products of labour become commodities, social things whose qualities are at the same time both perceptible and imperceptible to the senses. A definite social relation between men (sic) 'assumes, in their eyes, the fantastic form of a relation between things. (Beach and Dovemark 2007: 1)

Beach and Dovemark (2011) examines this further, using data produced by pupils who were identified and described as formally successful on the one hand, and formally unsuccessful on the other. Two things were considered in particular. One was how the two constituted groups and their school activities could be described and understood. The other was how pupils and teachers describe school activities and how they position pupils in relation to and through these descriptions. Once again the ability to appear smart was a key capacity spoken of by successful pupils (see also Erlandson and Beach (2014)), as was showing behaviour that corresponded to what was understood to be an appropriate way of managing the choices that confront pupils in school, as a way to promote the right kind of image. 'You have to show responsibility (and) initiative' as Jens, as one of the pupils at the school put it, but also judged important was 'to be in with the right crowd ... with the right reputation' (Jens). The aim was to obtain a good return on input from work and effort in a competitive situation.

Successful pupils commodified education, viewing higher qualifications and improved educational opportunities as resources, regardless of the consequences for others, in order to advance, achieve good grades and develop a successful student identity (Beach and Dovemark 2009). In other

words, performativity values prevailed (Beach and Dovemark 2011). We concluded that whilst the educational successes of the best pupils/students are often understood to be based on aspects such as personal application, subject interest, ability, intelligence and personal commitment or motivation, at its core school success seemed to rely on other things entirely. These included inauthenticity, status, desire, competitive consumption, and measuring of returns (Beach and Dovemark 2007, 2009). However, one further very important point to note was that successful pupils were typically spoken of as being more gifted than others, not simply greedier for success (Beach and Dovemark 2011). They were said to have positive attitudes toward study and higher motivation and intelligence, rather than the raw consumerist attitude toward education and a view of education as a commodity. As with respect to Marx's definition of the commodity, their learning was understood primarily, if not solely, in terms of the objective character that was stamped upon the product of that learning. The result was that the relation of the producers to the sum total of their learning activities became a social relationship, existing not between themselves, but between the products of their learning. A definite social connection assumed the form of relations between things (Beach and Dovemark 2007).

## School and learning experiences for marginalised youth

The above section questioned the authenticity of the 'gifted', academically-oriented students' self-perceptions, as touched on in the first part of the chapter. This section questions the academic students and their teachers' conceptualisations of non-academic/vocational students. The discussion draws on ethnographic research exploring the intersection of local culture and schools in economically weak multicultural suburban areas (Beach and Sernhede 2011, 2012, 2013, Lundberg 2015, Sernhede 2007, Schwartz 2013, Trondman *et al.* 2012, Widigson 2013) and the education of students enrolled in vocational programmes (Berggren 2013, Hjelmér 2011b, Rosvall 2011b), eliciting and analysing pupils' own accounts of their holistic learning experiences. The young people in these ethnographies are placed formally in the unsuccessful pupil/student category and described as relative failures compared to the academic student group (particularly from the objectively alienated perspective of these students). They are also often referred to as having educational problems and being unmotivated or difficult pupils (Berggren 2013). Here we focus on what the ethnographies reported from the youths concerned, considering their learning abilities and experiences from the bottom up.

The most striking shared disclosure identified in the research was that the learning, motivation and commitment of students in practice differed considerably from anything one would anticipate based on a discourse of deficiency (Lundberg 2015, Schwartz 2013). Their ambitions (Rosvall 2011b) and creative learning clearly profoundly transcended this discourse (Beach and Sernhede 2012, 2013, Hjelmér 2011b), depicting something quite different from low motivation and lack of interest or intelligence as constituting the difficulties encountered in their formal education performances (Widigson 2013). Aspects such as territorial stigmatisation (Beach and Sernhede 2011, after Wacquant 2009), social and academic segregation and stigmatisation (Berggren 2013, Rosvall 2011b), ethnic stigmatisation, cultural racism/racialisation (Lundberg 2015), and the dissolution of place were all identified as important (Bouakaz 2007, Bunar 2001). These things tainted not only schools but also other civic organisations, the relationships between people, individuals' self-images, stereotypical notions of the relationships between crime and colour, and cultural and religious antagonisms. Moreover, they not only constituted a barrier for integration and the development of self-respect and full and equal citizenship, but also a barrier toward a fuller and less biased, more authentic understanding of the times we live in (Sernhede 2007), including the ways in which power is articulated, legitimised and de-politicised in public discourse. Instead of being listened to, as discussed by Lundberg (2015), the voices of the school subaltern were ignored (Rosvall 2011b), misrepresented (Hjelmér 2011b), and even misappropriated (Lundberg 2015). Negative representations abound and the creative voices of the youths in question were rarely acknowledged in the curriculum (Schwartz 2013).

Research by Söderman (2013), Sernhede (2007), and Beach and Sernhede (2012, 2013) concentrated on the learning and experiences of youths in multicultural suburbs on the outskirts of two of Sweden's three major metropolitan conurbations. The young people there were broadly described in policy as having learning difficulties of various kinds connected to their backgrounds and their experiences growing up, but the ethnographies showed the opposite to be true. Creative learning was apparent in the lyrics, rhymes and breakdancing engaged in by suburban youths, and in their attempts to speak out against adverse conditions and respond to common representations to create a sense of respect, understanding, belonging, identity and self-awareness as citizens (Beach and Sernhede 2012). There was a commitment to challenging and transforming common sense and conventional understandings of how to transform suburban life positively (Beach and Sernhede 2013), as well as, ultimately, to try to influence society and define, defend, and educate themselves as subjects within it. Their

creative work was, in the words of Södeman (2013) and Senhede (2007), a means to effect the development of self-worth and a way of giving voice to the margins of society through entertainment. Jensen (2013) observed the same thing in suburban areas in Denmark. The intention was both to have a good time and to initiate a process of creative response to the social degradation that give rise to negative understandings of the suburban reach (Beach and Sernhede 2012, 2013, Jensen 2013).

These responses are therefore very far from the kind one would expect from a primitive and anti-intellectual *homo savage* of the kind implied by upper-class, academic, and 'white' stereotyping (Lunberg 2015). They instead offer well-informed, intellectually creative responses to oppressive situations (Schwartz 2013) that constitute both a symbolic resistance to the prevailing order, and hint at a different future and stronger foundations for citizenship (Söderman 2013). They also respond effectively to the stigmatising and marginalising mainstream societal discourses of politicians and the media (Lundbeg 2015). Such activities also place renewed focus on the importance of belonging to a place and attempts to deal with its social, economic, and cultural devaluation (Schwartz 2013).

As Schwartz (2013), and earlier Bunar (2001), Bouakaz (2007), Pred (2000) and Sernhede (2007) have suggested, even in Sweden suburban multiracial areas are now represented through a white gaze that can be traced back to the film *Birth of a Nation*, made in 1915, in the early Jim Crow era (Lundberg 2015). This film presented an early celluloid image of African Americans as violent, savage and criminal, an image that has been repeated thousands and thousands of times over since; a characterisation strongly preserved and present in contemporary representations (Pred 2000). The criminalisation of people of colour from poor suburban communities has been naturalised in the discourse of cultures of deprivation, and this has had a direct impact on social (including educational) policy as a justification and rationale for social inequality. There is a form of collective homogenisation taking place that, as is also captured in Pred (2000), naturalises both sameness and difference in a culturally racist discourse, where ambiguity, hybridity, and variation are all ignored in the construction of an us-versus-them dichotomy, expressed through a reductionist terminology that disregards variations and contradictions (Bouakaz 2007, Schwartz 2013). In education policy we can now observe in practice not 'one school for all' as in the classic 'folk-home' education concept (Berhanu 2016a, 2016b, Bunar 2001), but different types of schools with different demographics, characteristics, pedagogies and possibilities serving different types of neighbourhood (Beach *et al.* 2013, Bunar 2001, 2008).



## Discussion

Citizenship can be considered a complex concept that includes notions of rights, privileges and responsibilities, which broadly informed the development of educational policies in Sweden during the course of the 20th century (Assarson *et al.* 2016). However, according to the present chapter, in practice these policies have not been able to transcend the characteristics of the class society in which they are rooted (Beach and Dyson 2016). The decomposition of basic citizenship values in a differentiated and culturally bifurcating upper-secondary education system is an expression of this, as is the failure of the comprehensive school system and a free, openly accessible, public university system to treat people equally, producing equitable educational outcomes (Beach and Dyson 2016, Berhanu 2016b). The system reproduces precisely the dialectic tensions of a capitalist society and its distinctions and justifications for what might even be called a ‘just’ and acceptable inequality (Berhanu 2016a).

From a Marxist perspective these disclosures concerning the failure of educational reforms are far from surprising (Cole 2003), regardless of how much they may contrast with what might be expressed in statements by the Swedish Government, its education authorities and organisations such as the OECD. Even during the era of social democratic welfare, the Nordic states have always been capitalist countries and as Cole (2003), for instance, points out, this will make them necessarily unjust, as capitalism is itself unjust, both materially and ideologically. Materially, as the material (and/or intellectual or even emotional) labour of working people is exploited to create surplus value to be accumulated by others, and ideologically because the work that is done is then held up against those doing it as a measure of their worth and due reward (Erlandson and Beach 2014, Jonsson and Beach 2015). These things are clearly reflected even in Sweden, to paraphrase Pred (2000), where the ontologically real problems of education (and) performance(s) include the concentration of pupils from low socio-economic backgrounds in highly segregated housing areas and schools (Bunar 2001, 2008), not the colonisation of schools in certain areas by inferior raw material (Beach and Sernhede 2011, 2012, Lundberg 2015).

Multi-dimensional poverty and its concentration in certain regions, together with the ideological and negative representation in official political and media discourses of ‘citizens’, is a continual challenge to efforts to gain a worthy and fulfilling education for youth groups (Beach and Dyson 2016). This combination has contributed to the dissolution of place, with serious effects on schools and their activities, and a devaluation of the experiences and values of those living in deprived neighbourhoods

(Lundberg 2015, Schwartz 2013). The children in these areas, and those who come from non-academic backgrounds or pursue non-academic programmes of study, are rarely seen from ‘above’ as capable of being active citizens engaged in a globally connected and economically successful society (Beach and Sernhede 2011, Beach *et al.* 2011, Berggren 2013). They are seen and discussed as requiring assistance to become worthy and productive citizens, and salvation pedagogies are employed in schools, as a way of ‘saving them’, both from themselves and from those around them (Schwartz 2013).

However, this is not just an issue of race and place in the sense described by Lundberg (2015). Although it obviously is also this, a strong negative stereotyping of others was also very visible in the academic programme students’ beliefs about vocational students, as presented in the early part of this chapter. The vocational students were described by academic students’ ‘colleagues’ as not only being intellectually inferior (Erlandson and Beach 2014), but perhaps also even being incapable of surviving or generating anything truly creative or positive for themselves or others (Jonsson and Beach 2013, 2015). Moreover, while academic subject teachers were seen to uphold these kinds of negative stereotypes (Berggren 2013), the relationship of producers to the sum total of their own labour has become a determinate of the social relations that exist not between people, but between the products of their learning. This fantastic formation of relationships between things then determines identity (Beach and Dovemark 2007).

The perception of the lower class (and today perhaps above all ethnic) youths that they are seen as the problem and as ‘their own worst enemy’, is found in both local government, national, and European political discourses (Lundberg 2015). Nevertheless, it is important to ask if this is true, in an ontological sense. The evidence brought forward and discussed in the present chapter suggests not. It identifies instead creative subject responses from the ethnographies of the marginalised minority and vocational programme youth that clarify that the young people whose lives and life-spaces were ethnographically shared, watched, learned from, and reported on, were intellectually stronger and more creative than is commonly portrayed (Beach *et al.* 2011, Berggren 2013, Schwartz 2013). Certainly, they are not incompetent or stupid (Hjelmér 2011b, Rosval 2011b), and they need not be inevitable intellectual failures (Trondman *et al.* 2012). The perceived lack of these individuals was imposed from above, out of a failure to recognise or believe in their creativity. Stereotypes were then used to justify the inequality that prevailed (Jonsson and Beach 2015), along with statistics about immigrant educational performances and crime rates in neighbourhoods, such as Rinkeby, Rosengård and Angered (Lundberg

2015). The injustice created by this was twofold: the impoverished were first forced to endure and experience symbolic violence and victimisation, and were then made culpable for their experiences through the application of theories of deprivation to assign blame to them, by holding them solely accountable for their actions and choices (Berggren 2013, Bunar 2001).

The observed devaluation of the qualities of the poor in society, including the devaluation of the low school performer from economically poor suburbs, offers exactly the reverse treatment to that adopted in relation to the ‘qualities’ of the elite, including the reference to successful and high performing student groups discussed in Erlandson and Beach (2014) and Jons-son and Beach (2015). Their performances were misrecognised and misrepresented in exactly the opposite direction. They were described as high quality and as intellectually and creative individuals, when they were not. They were socially reproductive, mimetic and greedily acquisitive, and in this sense proto-capitalistic (Beach and Dovemark 2009). Moreover, when dealing with the discriminating injustices that confront them on a daily basis the successful students took no personal blame for this. For the majority, a successful outcome from education was simply a private activity of collecting ‘intellectual’ property as a form of academic capital to ensure themselves a promising future, regardless of how this may affect the possibilities of others (Beach and Dovemark 2011). Their interest involved accumulating educational qualifications to represent their value and worthiness to others. These aims are dominant in modern society and are an expression of the foundational values of citizenship and worth under market capitalism in education as practiced today. These values stand in strong contrast to those formally expressed in official national policy: they are described as characterising citizenship (and) education justice and equity in Nordic countries, such as Sweden by organisations like the OECD (Assarson *et al.* 2016).

## Conclusions

The word ‘citizen’ in English conflates the individual as a bearer of *political* rights and *social* participants in the life of a community. It describes an individual able to participate and bear certain social rights simultaneously. In German, the word *Staatsbürger*, and in Swedish *Medborgare*, denote this concept, while *Citoyen* in French denotes someone who is more than just a (German, Swedish or French) national with a passport and associated legal rights. This meaning could be translated into English as *subject*, as in a *British* subject, a ‘subject of the Realm’, except that the term subject in the British context also carries the meaning of being subordinated to the Head

of State, which is a meaning not present in German, French and Swedish terminology. There is recognition and enactment of certain fundamental values in political, participatory and individual senses.

In written education policy in Sweden, these values include the possibilities of individual freedom and integrity, and the equality of all people (Assarsson 2016, Berhanu 2016b). They are formally expressed in the National Curricula for compulsory (comprehensive) and voluntary (upper-secondary) schools. However, what should be clear from this chapter is that the education system in practice fails to live up to these promises, being marred by gross inequalities, inauthenticity and negation. In this sense, in relation to citizenship, education predominantly works in Sweden in the interests of the capitalist class, much as it does in other capitalist societies (Cole 2003). It is based on, reflects and reinforces social bifurcation and the hegemony of bourgeois stereotypes, mediated through schools (Jonsson and Beach 2015), and resulting in negative outcomes for the life-chances of those born into contexts where material and recognised cultural capital is scarce (Beach and Dyson 2016).

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## Civic initiation through public libraries in the Czech Republic

The Czech Republic is currently facing major internal challenges, notably problems with social exclusion and an increasing disparity between large cities and rural areas. According to *The Analysis of Socially Excluded Regions in the Czech Republic* (Čada 2015), the proportion of persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the country is approximately 14.6 per cent. The scale of this exclusion poses a threat to social cohesion within Czech society, dividing the majority of society, which benefits from a lifestyle based on employment and consumption related to income, from the excluded minority (Čada 2015: 18). This is also reflected by the increasing polarisation of the social and economic interests of the two sections of Czech society, which are currently rapidly drifting apart (Mareš 2008). Extremist sentiments are rising and gaining public support in excluded regions, as social exclusion translates into an undermining of the democratic cohesion of both Czech society and the democratic system.

When broadly defined, social exclusion might be seen to affect a range of groups across society. These include people on the ‘breadline’, the working poor and the unemployed, as well as members of different ethnic groups and other minorities. The list also often includes the abandoned, disadvantaged or handicapped, as well as homeless people and people with addictions. Here we understand the notion of ‘to be excluded’ to refer to those unable to fully participate in political, social, economic and cultural life in the place and country in which they live. In other words, social cohesion does not result from mere civil, spatial or territorial belonging; it is primarily determined by participation in social and economic dynamics and public governance (Lister 2003). One of the symptoms of social exclusion is indeed non-participation and non-engagement.

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1 This chapter was prepared as part of work on the research project ‘Activism in Hard Times’, funded by the Czech Science Foundation (no. 16-10163S).



Social exclusion itself significantly reduces opportunities to engage in civic life (Keller 2014: 17). Having adapted to their long-standing status as socially excluded, members of these groups are unprepared to participate actively in society, and there is a tangible link between growing apathy and decreased levels of both internal and external political efficacy, such that:

They do not believe that it is possible to change society, nor do they believe that someone could help them in their difficult situation. They have adopted a better-not-to-even-try-then-to-fail-again attitude. They feel they are out of the game for good and they do not feel like playing anyway.  
(Keller 2014: 20)

It is difficult to engage these people in conventional and institutionalised civic education, or to involve them in the process of didactic analysis and civic education planning that would enable public policy planners to design education policies likely to be more effective. When considering this problem from the vantage point of education, we consider such groups as hard to reach learners. These people are often stigmatised, as they are perceived as somehow different and inaccessible when employing conventional methods of communication (Flanagan and Hancock 2010).

This chapter focuses on civic engagement and the participation of socially excluded groups, discussing how they might be provided with space, encouragement, skills, competencies and motivation, to engage fully in civic activities when entering into public space. In particular, we address the question of whether and how it is possible to promote civic education for people at risk of social exclusion via the institution of public libraries. This is because the mission of public libraries is to act as local gateways to knowledge and to provide a safe environment for lifelong learning, independent decision-making and exchange between citizens of all social groups<sup>2</sup>. A study conducted by the Civic Education Centre on the community-based role of libraries in the process of social inclusion was conducted to address these questions.

The first step was to develop the idea of public libraries as key partners for the purposes of civic education and social inclusion. During the course of this study, socially excluded individuals were defined as ‘individuals who are inhabitants/citizens of a given society, yet for reasons out of their control they are unable to participate in usual activities to which they

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2 See UNESCO Public Library Manifesto: <http://www.unesco.org/webworld/libraries/manifestos/libraman.html>

are as citizens entitled and to which they aspire' (Hills, Grand, Piachaud 1999: 229). There are various groups in the Czech Republic which meet this definition. As we cannot cover them all here, we will focus mainly on the Roma community. An official report on the Roma community (Úřad vlády ČR (2015a)) states:

[M]any Roma in Czech society (up to half of the Roma population) live in poverty, are marginalised or live directly in social exclusion. Social exclusion of the Roma is a process whereby individual Roma, Roma families or entire Roma groups are being pushed to the margins of society and their access to resources and opportunities that are commonly accessible for other members of society is hindered or limited. As a consequence, discrimination and social exclusion produces a state of deep apathy in some socially excluded Roma who then abandon any efforts to actively engage with the life of society.

(*Úřad vlády ČR (2015a: 7)*)

The Roma community is one of, if not the most, socially excluded group in the Czech Republic (see Frištenská et al. (1999), Kozlíková (2001), Kašparová (2006), Hirt and Jakoubek (2006), Jakoubek and Jakoubková Budilová (2008), Úřad Vlády ČR (2015b)). According to the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic (Úřad Vlády 2015b: 18–20), among the major factors that act as barriers to Roma integration are:

- The general course of Czech society after 1989, which has increased social and economic differentiation;
- The direction of social policy from the principle of solidarity to the principle of merit;
- Incoherence of social policies, especially the lack of consideration of the impact of social policies on children;
- The government's inability to tackle Roma integration at the local level and the negative attitude of some towns and villages toward Roma integration;
- The failure of integration tools and their gradual metamorphosis from tools of integration into tools supporting segregation;
- The negative attitudes of the majority and of political representation towards the Roma minority; and
- The growing influence of the media on openly anti-Roma views and the underrepresentation of members of the Roma minority in decision-making processes.

Meanwhile, public libraries actively seek to engage the Roma community in various civic activities, to enable them to participate fully as citizens.

Thus, the case of the Roma community provides us with many opportunities to exemplify the capacity of libraries to play an important role in the process of empowering the hard to reach. In the following section, we also present findings discussing research into library-based activities to demonstrate how their role as cultural, education and community centres enables them to empower the hard to reach. The study first introduces the problematical situation encountered by public libraries when carrying out this role, while also directing attention toward their perceived potential and the various activities engaged in by the hard to reach. The final section presents some examples of good practice carried out by public libraries, and the special programmes and activities already established. These public library programmes have shown significant improvements in terms of empowering the socially excluded, thereby supporting belief in libraries as important institutions dealing with social exclusion.

## The public library as a public space for hard to reach groups

When searching for key partners to further civic formal, non-formal and informal education and social inclusion in the local regions of the Czech Republic, we must not overlook the dense network of public libraries that play a crucial role as cultural and education centres deeply rooted in local communities. Historically, libraries have been important agents in the development of civil society and in building educated communities, as evidenced as far back as during the National Revival Movement<sup>3</sup> when building the new Czechoslovak state (see Act No. 430/1919 Sb., on Public Libraries).

Traditionally, public libraries have always served as spaces for reading to which people could come of their own accord to educate themselves, free of charge. This provision has been particularly significant for the poor who cannot afford any other form of education (Pokorný 2003). Education is seen as crucial to enable a person to participate fully in the affairs of a democratic society, and the library was a place to facilitate this (Aabo and Audunson 2012: 138). With the rise of modern information technologies in the early 2000s, libraries started to witness a fall in user numbers, leading them to redefine their book-lending role. At the same time, public spaces, in the traditional understanding, where such space provides citizens with an opportunity to physically meet and engage in discussions,

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3 A cultural movement to revive Czech language, culture and national identity, which took part in Czech lands during the 18 th and 19 th centuries.

gradually started to disappear. For example, public urban spaces, such as squares, parks or streets are increasingly being stripped of their function, as people are pushed out, either due to busy traffic, closed communities or new shopping centres. Rather than serving as civic *agoras*, these spaces now serve as places of entertainment and recreation. Libraries worldwide strive to address this issue by providing communities with a range of services (Koontz and Gubin 2012). To respond to this trend, the National Library of the Czech Republic and the Ministry of Culture have focused on this new role in respective strategic documents (MK ČR 2010, Národní knihovna ČR 2012).

Libraries are becoming public spaces in which interactions between citizens and between citizens and the state can take place (e. g. public discussions with local officials often take place in municipal libraries in Norway, the Netherlands, the UK and the Czech Republic). One such example of a library serving as a community centre is the Library Development Programme launched in Poland and implemented by the Institute of Public Affairs and the Centre for Citizenship Education (funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Polish-American Freedom Foundation). Similarly, Norway sees the library as an ideal physical and psychological space for public debate and engagement in citizenship activities (Aabø and Audunson 2012: 140).

The overriding principle of the public library is the facilitation of unrestricted access to its services. Library services are not limited to meeting the needs of just one social group whilst excluding others. The provision is fully accessible and offered free of charge to benefit the local community. As stipulated in the Library Act (2001), libraries have the option to go beyond their traditional book-lending role and act as cultural, education, and learning providers. According to statistics for the Czech Republic for 2013, public libraries organised 93 802 cultural and educational events, attended by 2 644 305 people (Národní informační a poradenské středisko pro kulturu 2013).

The nature of the public library is that of a barrier-free community centre trusted by citizens, which in turn ensures unrestricted service provision to all, regardless of their education or social status. Libraries thus have the potential to serve as public spaces that are open, and relatively informal and accessible, without the need to prove one's identity (unless you want to take the books home). The statistics above also indicate that library services are not confined to book lending; in addition, people can make use of reference reading rooms, advice centres and participate in educational programmes. The result is that libraries can serve as low-threshold public institutions for socially excluded groups who can use them without fear of exclusion.

One of the key strategies proposed to combat social exclusion and poverty is to boost the inner development potential of rural towns, support innovative local projects in rural areas, and build social networks between local developmental participants. In turn, this will contribute to the strengthening of local development resources (Bernard 2010). The strength of libraries resides in their horizontal potential to connect with key local partners, such as clubs, local authorities, public administration bodies, private sector representatives, schools and local citizens' initiatives. Libraries thus become key associates in the process of internal socio-economic development.

## Public libraries and their potential to deliver civic education provision for hard to reach groups

### Introductory study

In early 2015, we conducted a study to explore and identify public library activities in relation to their role as cultural, education and community centres in towns with a maximum population of 25 000 in the Czech Republic.<sup>4</sup> The research consisted of a quantitative analysis of those programmes in place at the time, which were aimed at socially excluded members of the community, and an in-depth qualitative interpretive study that focused on the role that libraries play in working with socially excluded groups and groups at risk of social exclusion.<sup>5</sup> This chapter focuses on two specific components of the research. The first relates to the perceived potential of libraries to fully implement and provide civic education to meet the needs of the aforementioned groups. The second addresses the perceived limitations that might prevent libraries from fulfilling this role.

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4 Covering only towns with a maximum population of 25 000 was one of the requirements of the client institution.

5 These groups include: low-income groups; the long-term unemployed; families, children and young people in difficult life circumstances; people living in socially excluded areas or in their vicinity; homeless people; the elderly; people with disabilities; ethnic groups (particularly Roma); migrants and other national minorities; people at risk of addiction or people addicted to drugs; people who have been discharged from institutional care or released from prison and people with mental health issues.

## Method and data collection

The data for the quantitative research was collected in February 2015. An online questionnaire was devised focusing on current and future library provision, with reference to groups at risk of social exclusion. With the help of the National Library of the Czech Republic, 5500 libraries were contacted and requested to participate in the survey. Of these, 413 completed the questionnaire. The sample is sufficiently large, although it is not representative, because the self-sampling nature of the survey means the sample is not random. It can be assumed that those libraries that are generally more proactive with regard to provision for groups at risk of social exclusion were also more likely to participate in the survey; therefore, the results might be skewed toward greater involvement in libraries. Nevertheless, the findings do provide a valuable overview of this topic, and the examples of good practice reported are relevant, regardless of the sampling method. To illustrate the context of this part of the research, two graphs are presented.

The qualitative portion of the research was conducted in the form of focus groups.<sup>6</sup> These were recorded and subsequently transcribed, and the transcripts later analysed. Two focus groups<sup>7</sup> were composed for the purpose of this research. An expert sampling method was used to select library staff to participate in the focus groups; i. e. experts were selected according to the criteria of senior library staff working at libraries actively engaged in community-based and civic education activities. The sampling was also designed so that the individual participants would come from libraries based in different regions of the Czech Republic, that is, from different social and economic contexts. The research targeted library staff from villages and towns of up to 25 000 inhabitants primarily, both those from large libraries (acting as regional centres) and medium to small local libraries. Additionally, library staff from regional libraries and the National Library of the Czech Republic also participated in the focus groups, although they comprised only a minor portion of the sample. The reason for their participation was their close links with smaller libraries, as well as

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6 Focus groups were realized in a friendly and very open environment that provided participants with conditions of safety, thus all of them spoke without hesitation or any concerns. Most of the participants were women, which represents the real proportion of men-women employment in the public libraries. There were 17 participants in total, 10 attended the first focus group, 7 the second one. The average age was 40–45 years. Only participants in the age of 15–25 were not present.

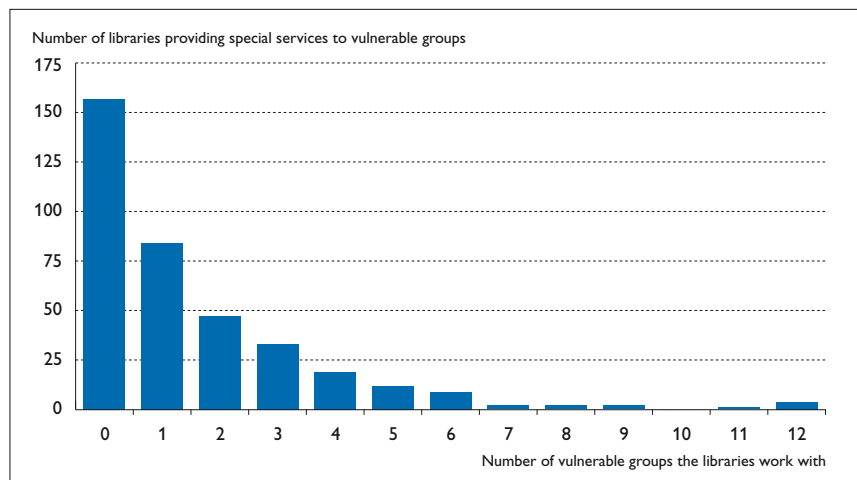
7 Both focus groups were organized in spring 2015. The first focus group consisted of 10 participants, the other had 7 participants.

their role as resource centres providing other libraries with methodological guidelines concerning community-based and civic education activities.

## The existing services for hard to reach groups offered by public libraries

The findings obtained show considerable differences between the libraries in terms of the levels of existing provision for groups at risk of social exclusion. In total, 215 libraries (57.8 per cent) are already offering either one-off activities or comprehensive programmes, targeting at least one of the groups defined above. Furthermore, four of these libraries stated that their activities were aimed at all vulnerable groups. On average, the libraries each focus on 1.5 target groups. Figure 1 offers more detailed information regarding the number of groups being offered provision in the form of activities.

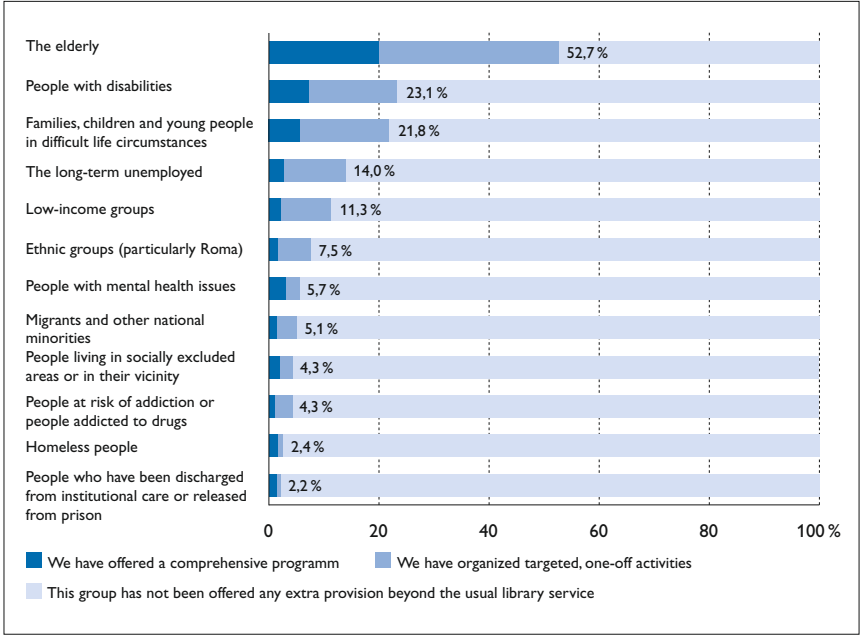
*Figure 1: Depiction of libraries according to the number of vulnerable groups being offered provision (in the form of single one-off service projects as a minimum).*



The existing practice of programmes designed by libraries for socially vulnerable groups is shown in Figure 2. For each group, it is indicated whether the libraries have designed a comprehensive programme, or whether they offer targeted, one-off activities. In terms of targeted activities, however, libraries do not tend to differ overly in their focus on individual groups.

Programmes for elderly people are the most prevalent (19.9 per cent of libraries offer comprehensive programmes for the elderly, whilst a further 32.8 per cent organise one-off activities). Other socially vulnerable groups that are most frequently targeted by libraries include people with disabilities (activities organised by 23.1 per cent of libraries) and their families, children and young people undergoing difficult life circumstances (activities offered by 21.8 per cent of libraries). This is then followed by libraries focusing on long-term unemployed people (14 per cent of libraries) and people on low incomes (11.3 per cent), mainly in the form of one-off activities. Programmes or activities aimed at other socially vulnerable groups are rare, the most under-represented groups are homeless people (2.4 per cent) and people discharged from institutional care or released from prison (2.2 per cent). However, provision for these groups mostly takes the form of comprehensive programmes, as opposed to one-off activities. In total, 61 libraries (16.4 per cent) have collaborated with the Job Centre in the past three years.

**Figure 2: Existing activities organised by libraries for individual groups of people at risk of social exclusion (The percentage figures represent the proportion of libraries that have offered the given group at least some one-off activities).**





## The potential and limitations of libraries: Two sides of the same coin

In order to appreciate both the potential and limitations of libraries and their community-based and civic educational role in reference to the aforementioned groups, it is important to explore one of the key factors that defines the library as an institution set in public space. That is, the distinction between what is perceived as *normal* and what is perceived as *different*.

Individual work with basically anyone is part and parcel because the library can't discriminate.  
(FG2)

And then we have our elderly who are our darlings, aren't they. This group is made for us [...] We would go to the ends of the earth for them because it is they who make up a third of our audience and effectively are giving us this work.  
(FG2)

As the second quotation indicates, the elderly receive considerable attention, as the library staff recognise them as regular library users, i. e. they are the users that actively engage with the library and its services. They access both traditional library services (e. g. lending books) and community-oriented ones, and are the beneficiaries of specific services aimed at them. For example, they are offered ICT courses or talks engaging in discussions on various topics. An important, yet not consciously reflected characteristic of this group is that it acts in a standard socially accepted manner whilst in the library. This manner is not explicitly defined, nor has its meaning been stated, although it can be clearly inferred from the following description of the Roma behaviour of library users, and from the behaviour and particular appearance of those homeless people who visit libraries:

[W]e know that the Roma, if we are going to talk about them, well, they really are rather unique. They have a unique way of thinking, acting [...] The way they are is such and such and such. They speak loudly, they act in a group, they will scream and shout at you, because it gives them power.  
(FG 1)

It is rather sensitive but our library was really tiny and when you had to sit right next to the homeless man it was unpleasant, whereas the space we have now is larger, so it helps a bit. Well, ok, they sit somewhere a bit further away and when a student comes, he or she sits somewhere not too close. Well, let's be honest, their smell is not particularly pleasant. Well, that's homeless people.

(FG 2)

These quotations highlight a serious issue. Although the libraries strive to act as community centres and places for integration, they must align their work with groups at risk of social exclusion with their remit to accommodate *normal* users, who are perceived as the dominant and group of library users:

Personally, I'm not entirely sure where the line is, so as not to put off the regular users who come here ...

(FG 1)

[B]ut then there is the other aspect and that is tolerance of other users. If the number of these groups [the homeless] started to grow, then it would put the others off.

(FG 1)

This interpretation is also supported as follows:

A Vietnamese user is every library's dream. Vietnamese children are competitive, they are proactive and sign up for everything. They behave well ...

(FG 2)

This clearly illustrates the point that the issue lies in *difference*. It is evident in the way different group users, such as the Roma or homeless people are distinct from *other* (i. e. *normal*) users. The reference to Vietnamese users clearly indicates that if library users adhere to, or even surpass, the standard, socially accepted code of behaviour and appearance adopted by the majority society, they are not primarily perceived as migrants and national minorities, but as regular library users (albeit with some special needs, e. g. for literature in their mother tongue).

This *normal* versus *different* construct is the starting point for libraries when aiming to work actively with those groups at risk of social exclusion. The elderly, people with disabilities, and the short-term unemployed

(as opposed to the long-term unemployed) fall under the category of *normal* users, even though they might have some special needs and require some special provision. There are guidelines available on how to work with these groups in a focused and systematic manner, and the library staff are given relevant training. A similar situation applies to working with the Roma. Methodological guidelines are gradually being developed on how to engage this group. Some libraries serve as example setters and guideline providers for other libraries, demonstrating how to work with such groups. However, the problem remains that the majority of society still perceives the Roma as *different*. This is then reflected in the ways libraries work with the Roma and in the challenges they encounter during the process of doing so. Examples of such provision are essentially exceptions, as described by one of the participants:

A wonderful and rare symbiosis occurred at the time, meaning that an external impulse came along which then responded wonderfully to an impulse from within or to an internal situation [...] The town<sup>8</sup> was trying to find ways with the Roma community, as a clientele, how to pick them out, how to make the library more attractive for them, how to set up the environment for them [...] Some foundations got involved at the same time, I think [...] if I'm not mistaken. The town contributed some money, for the facilities, alongside the public administration which wanted to find a solution to the situation. So it was a really lovely cooperation at a professional level ...

(FG 1)

This introduces an important factor: the 'hidden' power of a discourse that acts as a creative and reproductive instrument of knowledge, understanding and the social order. In this case, this order takes the institutional form of libraries and the activities they undertake. Being aware (to a certain extent) of the nature of mainstream discourse with regard to different groups at risk of social exclusion, the libraries partially accepted and reproduced this discourse through their activities. However, the issue was twofold. On the one hand, libraries respond to the sentiments of the majority society; i.e. public discourse either in the form of the library staff sharing these sentiments or the public opinion pressure. Conversely, this public opinion is often quoted in arguments by the authorities run-

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8 We have deliberately not disclosed the name of the place, nor the name of the project or any other names or information that might identify the speaker.

9 See footnote 4.

ning the library service, be it the regions, cities, or towns, i. e. political representation:

For example, they were provided with a bus that would go to the areas where Roma people live. They are supposed to work with them. We have even contributed to some of the facilities in [...],<sup>10</sup> but to put it simply, it destroyed our party that was in the government at the time, because the targeted provision was expensive, unpleasant. “Yet another thing that is being done just for them”. So, basically the party ended up in opposition. It was just at the latest local government meeting that these projects were mentioned as something that is not right and hence we are not going to put our money there ...

*(FG 1)*

As a result, libraries find themselves in the situation where they would like to act as community and integration centres, yet structural conditions—make doing so very difficult, if not impossible. This is despite the fact that the libraries themselves view their potential as positive, since the very concept of the library as a public institution provides it with the status of a place that is open and accessible to everyone without exceptions. They are staffed by highly specialised people who undergo extensive training and participate in many educational programmes in relation to community-based activities and civic education.

Indeed, any group can go there. This space is possibly one of the very few, apart from parks, where they can go without paying. This has already been observed. However, I am still repeatedly surprised that there is such little general awareness of this function. And I don't just mean among those who run the service. They are not aware of this and they should be, but a general awareness of this function that they can go there. [...] The old stereotypes about libraries still prevail [...] One of the typical ones being that libraries are dumping grounds for books, where people go and absorb themselves in a quiet study.

*(FG 1)*

According to librarians, the great potential of libraries lies in the activities designed for and delivered to groups at risk of social exclusion, mainly for the reason stated above, i. e. in their accessibility as libraries represent a low-threshold space. Conversely, multiple factors limit this potential. One

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<sup>10</sup> See footnote 4

of them is, according to respondents, the stereotype discussed above, which reflects the general perception of libraries as held by the majority of society. We are again confronted with the dichotomy of *normal* versus *different*, where the stereotype represents the *normal* category. This notion of *different* is then described in the following excerpt:

It should be an open space where you can find your place because you sit down there, even though you talk in a loud voice [...] It's a place for romantic dates ... [The library] is a place where people gather, where all sorts of cultural events are held, for kids, adults [...] Because we don't pick on them [...] Ah, this lady is on a low income [...] Those people are part of the whole, those people feel sort of good there, that the library is open and is, in that sense, very democratic ...  
(FG 1)

However, precisely this characteristic is at odds with the majority perception of the library. One of the biggest obstacles for libraries when seeking to act as community and integration centres is the fact that society is unable to accept *differences* from the norms it values:

You see, the more open libraries become, the bigger the problem for the majority.  
(FG 2)

Therefore, librarians are faced with the great challenge, that if they want their libraries to become integration and community centres, they will essentially have to vehemently and openly stand up to the deep-rooted stereotypes and prejudices that prevail in Czech society:

I would just like to say that it's difficult. You say that with the majority society, there will be users and now they will go there and see the library full of these Roma kids or they saw a child doing their homework. But how awful they were to them, they said: "Why are you doing your homework here?" The kid was looking at them all startled and they said: "Why aren't you doing this at home?" [...] Unfortunately, this racism is in these people and it's difficult to get rid of.  
(FG 2)

It is clear that this challenge cannot be easily surmounted, since the majority of society would most likely interpret such measures as targeted against it, and would not accept them, probably publicly rejecting them. In such

moments, libraries would need to be provided not only with material support, but also with public declarations of support for this role by local (and central) political representatives. According to library staff and their experiences so far, the opposite is true:

[Y]ear after year, and this should also be mentioned here, we depend on what the councillors decide to allocate to the library and its activities<sup>11</sup> [...] and there are people whose only aim [...] and the mood in the town against the gypsies and the homeless who are lying around, is exactly what got them to the council and it is these people who then vote on the budget for the municipal library.

(FG 1)

## What is the real potential of libraries?

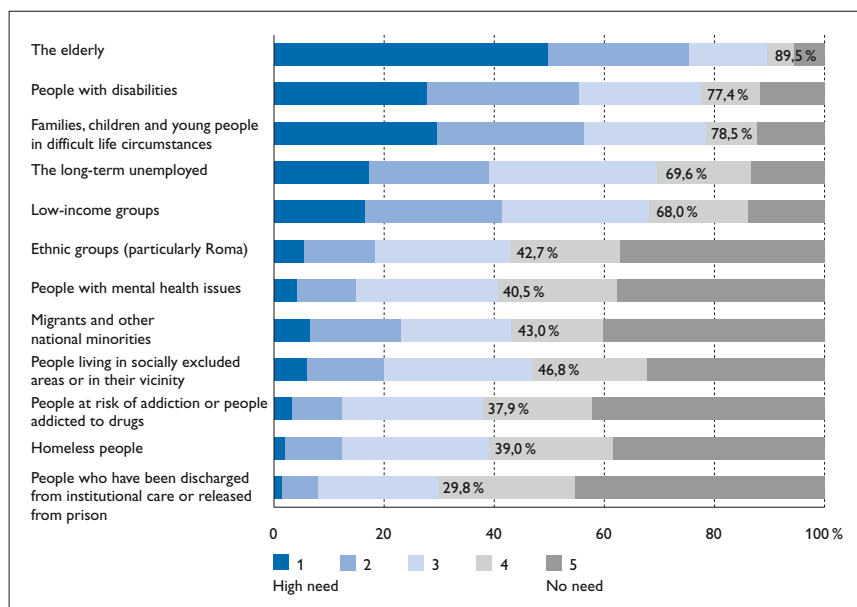
The research results have highlighted several factors that are instrumental in libraries developing their potential to act as community and civic education centres. Firstly, it is important that librarians themselves take an interest in carrying out these activities; that they feel motivated and recognise that the role of libraries as public institutions is defined by their public character, which is generally non-exclusive (see Figure 3). Indeed, libraries serve as open and democratic spaces, where citizens can meet, educate themselves and become involved in community-based and civic activities. This makes libraries an ideal place for civic education, as they resemble ‘laboratories’ in which multiple civic skills can be acquired and immediately put into practice. This happens under the supervision of professionally trained staff and in an environment that is safe for learning and meeting other citizens.

The development of such potential is seriously hindered by ‘the mood of the majority’, which is opposed to similar activities and the absence of support from local and central political representatives. Consequently, the libraries are left to their own facilities without any support. They thus find themselves in situations where they have to justify their programmes and those plans aimed at the socially excluded, or those at risk of social exclusion, not only before the public but also before the institutions that fund them (local government). In reality, however, it appears that it is almost impossible for libraries to implement such activities without support.

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11 In general, public libraries in the Czech Republic are funded and run by the state, region or local authorities. These authorities fund public libraries, which means that public libraries are dependent on them,

**Figure 3: A perceived need for library provision that should be aimed at vulnerable groups in a given town (the percentage figures represent the total of answers 1, 2 and 3 for individual groups).**



## Civic education provision for hard to reach groups in Czech libraries: Examples of good practice

### Municipal Library in Ostrava

Ostrava is an industrial city in the northeast of the Czech Republic. The population is currently around 295 000, making it the third most populous city in the Czech Republic, and by area Ostrava is ranked third largest. Since 1989, the city has undergone radical and far-reaching changes to its economic base. Some branches of the library are situated in areas with a high concentration of citizens from socially vulnerable or disadvantaged backgrounds, mainly of Roma origin. This is the case for the following boroughs of Ostrava: Vítkovice, Mariánské Hory, Radvanice, Kunčičky and Přívoz. The library branches in these areas offer special provisions targeted at the Roma community, mainly through long-term projects, involving a range of activities and programmes designed particularly

for children and young people (6–15 years), including Roma women on maternity leave and their families.

These branches organise regular educational programmes in the form of discussions and library-themed learning sessions for school groups. In addition, the library offers afternoon activities. The library staff run programmes to promote reading skills, creativity and critical thinking (addressing children's fears and helping to familiarise them with the customs of the majority, etc.). Children are thus offered leisure-time activities with some elements of extra-curricular education. The staff also run programmes for parents on maternity and parental leave and their children, as well as organising discussions and other educational events for adults.

It is important that events for children are regular and offer attractive opportunities to stimulate children's creativity. The programmes, therefore, include a variety of activities, such as reading, art, physical exercise, games, and competitions, as well as trips and visits to interesting places around Ostrava (the zoo, sights, theatre productions, and nature reserves). Funding for these programmes is partially provided by the local authorities for these districts in which branches are located, but also by sponsors and/or through grants. Other funds are sourced from the city council's subsidy schemes aimed at supporting socially disadvantaged citizens and crime prevention.

Since 2006, the library branch in Ostrava Vítkovice has been running a major project, entitled *Romaři Kereka* [Roma Circle]. The aim of this was to create a library to bring the minority and the majority groups within society together. The target users, among others, include Roma mothers on maternity leave and whole Roma families. Even nowadays, Roma families remain very close-knit, a characteristic that provides the library with an access key to establish closer and more positive ties with individual Roma people.

The Ostrava Vítkovice branch organises specialised programmes, mainly targeted at children from disadvantaged families to promote their reading skills. The library is successful at meeting this key objective, as evidenced by not only satisfied library users and positive feedback from parents and teachers, but also by high daily attendance (approximately 150 people a day). The aim of the Municipal Library in Ostrava is to look out for Roma visitors actively; however, the library is not a Roma library, in the sense that it does not focus solely on Roma users. The library strives to create a space for meetings where the Roma will feel welcome without becoming segregated. The backbone of this effort is a strong support for a multicultural dialogue. This is implemented through the educational programmes focusing on the active promotion of reading skills and information literacy, as well as by running an information centre offering a methodologi-



cal framework when working with the Roma (literature in the Roma language, literature on Roma history, culture, language, etc.).

The branches in areas known for high levels of social exclusion play an important role in establishing easily accessible cultural centres, which are then mainly used as places where people can meet one another. Both children and adults are then offered opportunities to experience a conflict-free environment where rules apply to everyone. They can then join in by participating in activities using library services. Among others, the library collaborates with schools and other local organisations that work with disadvantaged citizens and people with disabilities. This collaboration also allows organisations to showcase their work, which positively influences public awareness. The result is that people then have a much better understanding of what these non-profit organisations do and the services they can offer.

By engaging in long-term and systematic work with Roma children, the library has managed slowly to build trust among the parents of children, which is an important tool in furthering the opportunities development of these children. Once parents learn to trust the library as a public space they are likely to encourage their children to use it, and may even start using it themselves. If children are happy in the library they will communicate this among themselves, which is a very effective way of advertising the library's services.

Moreover, it is also important that the library gains support from funding bodies, as well as the local authorities for the districts in which branches are located. The project is also supported by specialists in the relevant field, either through expert advice or through project promotion. The library also benefits greatly from collaboration with other organisations, such as local schools and secondary school and university tutors (University of Ostrava, Masaryk University in Brno) specialising in this field.

The key is to build mutual trust between children and library staff. This will draw children's attention to educational activities without causing them to feel threatened, offering them a safe base from which to get help when dealing with day-to-day tasks and the problems arising from school and family life.

A further important task for library staff is to teach the children to follow the rules set out by the library and abide by them (establishing boundaries). When organising projects and activities as constituents of comprehensive programmes, it is important that events are run regularly. The Municipal Library in Ostrava collaborates variously with the University of Ostrava, learning support assistants for Roma children, outreach social workers, Ostrava-Vítkovice District Council, Ostrava City Council, the Goethe-Institute and the Association of Library and Information Professionals of the Czech Republic.

## The Municipal Library in Trmice

Trmice is a town of 3 190 inhabitants in the North Bohemian Region. The library is situated near a socially excluded area that offers a host of enrichment leisure-time activities for children and young people. The library organises a range of educational events to promote health awareness, reading skills, and personal and social development. People in Trmice used to describe the library there as dead. However, with the council's support, and the hard work of the local librarian, the library has been transformed into an important cultural and educational centre.

The library has played a significant role in the process of integration of Roma children. As the library is situated close to an area occupied by many socially disadvantaged and excluded families, the librarian has set out since 2001 to work actively with Roma children. At a time when there were no children's clubs or any other leisure-time facilities for children in Trmice, the library registered 150 child users. Collaboration with the local primary school contributed to this: the school would inform pupils about the free-time activities offered by the library. The children would then visit the library in groups, each having a pre-booked slot. The library invested in new equipment and facilities, such as table football, board games, and computers. The children gradually learned to use the library for their homework and it slowly became recognised as a safe educational and community centre. The library also ran a very successful morning programme for 9–11 year-old pupils to promote awareness of personal hygiene, healthy diet and food shopping. The children were also shown encyclopaedias and other books, in which they could find out information about the human body, and children's recipes, etc.

As a cultural and education centre, the library organises a wide range of discussions and talks, inviting guest speakers and holding exhibitions and concerts. It collaborates with various communities, both inside and outside the town. Some examples of successful collaborators include the Senior Club, the Women's Union, local schools and the Slovak Community. The overall aim of these collaborations is to build bridges between cultures and to promote cooperation with minorities.

Children know the library is a safe space in which they will receive attention and support. The library promotes education and the development of reading skills, not only among children, but also among their parents. It is through the children that their parents gain access to books and become involved in the community-based activities offered by the library.

From the outset, collaboration with the local nursery, primary, and secondary schools was crucial. The schools run multiple after-school clubs and

groups, and the students visit the library to display their work. The key to the library's success lies in its support of the town (its main funder), which not only has great confidence in the librarian's work but also strongly believes in the need to build bridges between the majority and the minorities. In terms of the librarian herself, such work would not be possible without her open and prejudice-free communication and her faith in children from the socially excluded areas and their parents.

## The Municipal Library in Prachatice

Prachatice is a small town in South Bohemia with a population of 11 140. The Municipal Library there started to buy special books for Roma children to help them with their language and reading skills. Using another grant, they also purchased books to develop the communication skills of people who have trouble with verbal communication. The Roma children started to come to the library and use these books, learning how to use its facilities. The library became the very first public institution that they entered and actively used. The librarians taught these visitors the rules of the space and how to respect it. The Roma children learned how to spend their time in the library and meet with members of majority groups while there. Therefore, we can assert that the Municipal Library in Prachatice has successfully created a safe place perceived as easy to access.

After these successful steps, the library decided to broaden its work with Roma children, to try to address them directly by establishing new programmes. These services were designed together with an expert in the field of Roma culture at the KHER Publishing House, focusing especially on Roma literature for all ages. The library cooperates with the local school Zlatá stezka, and socially excluded pupils, and some local charities have prepared special classes for Roma and non-Roma children called *Romano Bavišagos* (Roma plays) at the school; thus, it was easy for the children to gather there in a familiar environment.

The first part of the programme was a performance by the Roma dance company, Roma Star, who performed some traditional dances and new variants were shown before encouraging the children to join the professional dancers to try the steps themselves. The second part related to storytelling and literature. A professional lecturer and two authors told the audience stories based on traditional Roma narrations. The children were then asked to create their own stories and tell them to each other. This special day was very well received, not only by the participants, but also by their parents, and the library has continued planning similar programmes since.

## The Library as a low-threshold facility for the hard to reach

All these libraries offer genuinely low-threshold facilities, offering key elements that are perceived as open and safe by hard to reach visitors. There is no requirement to be registered to enter the library space and nobody should feel discriminated against when doing so. Secondly, people there should be offered assistance and explanation when adapting to the new social environment and learning library rules. If these two preconditions are fulfilled, the library can then focus on developing special services for all visitors.

These services would be likely to be more successful if experts (teachers, local NGOs working in the field) were invited to develop them and invite hard to reach learners themselves to participate in the design, as in Ostrava. It has been proven that such self-directed services are more viable and more sustainable. The libraries themselves also have the possibility of including other public institutions, such as schools, local offices, or charities in their programmes, bringing together children, parents, teachers, clerks, officials, social workers and interested members of the public. That makes for a platform upon which the majority and minority can meet.

Finally, it was shown that if the library were to welcome anyone bringing new ideas and project plans together to provide them with free space to implement them, then users would do so. In addition, users are generally perceived as hard to reach because they feel safe and comfortable about working in institutions they already know. In such cases, libraries become similar to training spaces for exercising citizenship.

## Conclusion

Our research has demonstrated that those libraries that attempt to break out of their middle-class mould face a challenge to extend beyond the microcosm of the notion of what constitutes a library. Indeed, the general interest of the majority maintains a tight hold on their role, reflecting the binary division of society into *normal* (us) versus *different* (them).

There are a number of progressive public libraries in the Czech Republic that proactively provide services that extend beyond the traditional role of mere book lenders. They focus on the social-integrative role of the library, entailing services offered to all groups of people. In this respect, these libraries have become key local partners when planning civic-integration projects in local areas.

This research and examples that exist of good practice have highlighted the conditions that facilitate the long-term cultivation of an open and inclu-

sive library environment. Such an environment encourages people to meet, learn about the life situations of other groups and to learn to accept differences. These visitors are not classified according to their profession or social status, but are viewed equally as library users. This quality of libraries contributes to civic and social inclusion (Aabø and Audunson 2012: 148).

Our research has also highlighted conditions that are key to creating open, pro-integration libraries, as well as identifying the barriers that might prevent such development. While some librarians seek to develop libraries that embody an inclusive role, they undoubtedly face a complex host of structural and social barriers arising from the majority of society. Consequently, libraries find themselves in situations where they would like to act as community and integration centres; however, the structural conditions within which they operate make this very difficult, if not impossible.

The undertakings of public libraries, including the search for those who are excluded, to invite them to participate in activities, requires that they overcome the boundaries imposed on them as institutions defined by the social majority. The examples of good practice in the Czech Republic have demonstrated that the libraries themselves have managed to overcome these barriers, and focus on creating a lively and rich community environment that can successfully offer users from hard to reach groups a safe space to intermingle with the majority. Removing the barriers between social groups within the population, and creating opportunities for meeting is a first step in alleviating the mixophobic positions of individuals (Bauman 2007), and empowering entire social groups. Through participation in such activities, socially excluded individuals can overcome the classification ‘pedagogically hard to reach’, even when objective evidence of exclusion still applies (political, social, economic exclusion). The library space also allows the members of these groups to access information about their civic rights and increase their opportunities to engage in civil society. By acquiring entrance to the pleasant and low-threshold library environment, they can subsequently gain sufficient courage to enter the public space.

As the examples of good practice in this chapter have illustrated, participation in library activities and programmes can help socially excluded people experience a sense of achievement, equipping them with basic skills necessary for civil participation. The key factor here is to establish relationships based on mutual trust. The examples of good practice given included some informal and minimally structured programmes, which have successfully engaged socially excluded groups. It is this potential of libraries, the potential to initiate civic education, that we consider crucial when drawing up strategies for ‘How to reach the hard to reach’.

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Ana Gonçalves Matos and Mota Lopes

## Sprache der Vögel – citizenship education through literary texts in Portugal

Figure 1: Anselm Kiefer's 'Sprache der Vögel' (Art Stack)



### Introduction

This chapter explores how literary texts can offer a powerful means to explore life's contingencies and predicaments, and how this can affect how hard to reach learners think about their own and other people's lives, thereby contributing to their development as critical citizens living in an intercultural world.

We will provide a theoretical, conceptual exploration and understanding of literary texts as art and the possibilities they afford learners, particularly hard to reach foreign language readers studying in various contexts,

by giving them a voice. Over time, learners begin to realize how reading art, by interpreting, decentring, questioning and reflecting critically upon texts, can be an empowering means to exercise meaningful citizenship. Without a disposition to engage willingly in civic, social and political processes, no relevant acquisition of knowledge about citizenship is possible. Literature as an art form may become key for effectively reaching out to learners who for many different reasons feel disengaged, disillusioned, and distrustful.

## Hard to reach learner sin the Portuguese context

Hard to reach learners are a conceptually challenging group to define (see Chapter 2 in this volume). Issues of (in)visibility and (im)mobility complicate attempts to clearly locate or identify them. However, when considering the Portuguese educational context, it is possible to find learners who share some of the characteristics leading to the description of these groups as heterogeneous learners; that is, as disconnected, de-privileged, vulnerable, and alienated individuals.

Within the Portuguese education system, a programme has been developed to prioritise some schools according to the categories of students they assimilate. This programme classifies these institutions that deal with hard to reach learners as TEIP schools (*Territórios Educativos de Intervenção Prioritária*). This means these educational spaces are designated for priority intervention, with the intention of meeting the needs of students who live in disadvantaged areas and who are at risk of social exclusion. These students, who have been identified as potential dropouts, include Roma children, immigrant children, institutionalised children, and other children from poor and disadvantaged backgrounds. Meanwhile, some educational courses and vocational courses have been implemented in regular schools to meet the needs of other students recognised to be failing in the education system.

Although we recognise that many of the students who have been integrated into intervention programs are hard to reach, many others attend regular schools and follow a regular curriculum despite also being hard to reach learners, either because they have special needs<sup>1</sup> or suffer from a

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1 Many special needs children (and teenagers) complete all subjects on the curriculum. They are integrated into regular classes and work together with their classmates in all matters concerned, although some special measures apply concerning their specific situations.

lack of family support, sometimes living in institutions or homes for the young.

It is not our aim to detail our approach relative to discrete special groups. In fact, the instability of the label hard to reach accords with our purposes and our belief that education should not be tailored to particular groups of students: for example, religious groups, ethnic groups or immigrant groups. It is our claim that education should be all-inclusive, thus we will assume that hard to reach students can exist in any formal educational institution, and use the term within official Portuguese learning contexts to refer to learners from economically and socially disadvantaged backgrounds with poor or no family support, and at risk of falling behind.<sup>1</sup> For this reason, we will consider inclusive schools, with students from multicultural, multilingual, working class settings, often with problematic socio-economic and migratory backgrounds. These students attend regular EFL classes within the formal curriculum, regardless of their differences and difficulties. One such group of hard to reach students are institutionalised children. The main agents of socialisation for these children are foster institutions and schools. It therefore becomes imperative for school subjects to address areas such as citizenship education, focusing on values, beliefs and life-learning skills and competencies, such as reading critically. Some of the main problems that characterise hard to reach learners are typically related to cognitive difficulties, psychological detachment, behavioural problems and truancy.

## Citizenship education itself as ‘hard to reach’

The Portuguese Ministry of Education recently opted for cross-curricular implementation of citizenship education which no longer needs a specific school subject. Therefore, after only a few years establishing citizenship education as an autonomous subject in the first three cycles of the basic education system (6–14 year olds), it has been decided that it will only continue in schools as an option on the school curriculum.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, the

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2 These changes regarding citizenship education were introduced by the Decree Law no. 139/2012, 5 July, and Decree Law no. 91/2013, 10 July, which established the new curriculum structure. According to the first, Article 15, schools are to provide for the development of projects and activities which contribute to the education of students at a personal and social level. The areas indicated are those referred to by the European institutions and UNESCO: citizenship education, health education, financial education, media education, road safety education, consumer education, entrepreneurship education, and moral and religious education (this last one is an option).

subject is no longer included as part of the curriculum in many schools, and its importance has significantly diminished. Much now rests in the hands of the teachers, who have to balance the content of their own subject area with citizenship education matters; this is true of language education.

Recently, Hennebray (2014) concluded that there is some distance left to travel before modern foreign languages classrooms integrate European citizenship education. Byram (2008, 2010) eloquently argued for the educational purposes of foreign language teaching, and for placing citizenship education at its heart. The distinction Byram makes between ‘educational’ and ‘functional’/‘utilitarian’ (2010: 317–318) is of special relevance for teaching and learning of different languages and cultures at times of critical societal change. In line with Byram, we consider foreign language education and citizenship education to be complementary areas, and ideal contexts in which to address learners’ kaleidoscopic identities (Ross, 2014) as well as to promote interpretation and critical reflection as tools for communication and participation by reading of literary texts.

The English as a foreign language (EFL) syllabus for the 3rd cycle (12–14 year olds) assumes language to be a form of self-expression, which allows the individual to develop self-awareness and awareness of others, just as it also enables the translation of values and attitudes, grants access to knowledge, and serves to demonstrate skills. This syllabus has recently been complemented with new curricular aims. Both these aims and the EFL syllabus for secondary level (15–17 year olds) learners use as their primary source the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001), considering its perspectives towards language learning and teaching, which mean they should also address citizenship education. In its notes for the user, CEFR states that:

The Council also supports methods of learning and teaching which help young people and indeed older learners to build up the attitudes, knowledge and skills they need to become more independent in thought and action, and also more responsible and cooperative in relation to other people. In this way the work contributes to the promotion of democratic citizenship.

(*Council of Europe 2001: xii*)

Although CEFR mostly provides very concrete references for learning and teaching languages, offering language professionals and institutions—a comprehensive set of descriptors with which to work, it also aims to be an intercultural educational tool and reference in the domain of language education as a whole:

Communication calls upon the whole human being. The competences separated and classified below interact in complex ways in the development of each unique human personality. As a social agent, each individual forms relationships with a widening cluster of overlapping social groups, which together define identity. In an intercultural approach, it is a central objective of language education to promote the favourable development of the learner's whole personality and sense of identity in response to the enriching experience of otherness in language and culture. It must be left to teachers and the learners themselves to reintegrate the many parts into a healthily developing whole.

*(Council of Europe 2001: 1)*

It becomes clear that the task of the teacher, as educator, is to ensure that the global dimension of learning a foreign language should not be forgotten. This general aim is, however, not further clarified by CEFR, leaving the responsibility for understanding major concepts such as 'intercultural' and 'democratic citizenship', and of operationalizing these concepts, in the hands of teachers. In our view, this reinforces the view of language as a merely functional skill.

According to Kumaravadivelu, teachers' beliefs affect teaching behaviour, as do their values and morality. He presents the teacher as a moral agent, thereby alerting teachers to 'systematically analyse, understand, and activate their own intellectual and moral agency' (2012: 68).<sup>3</sup> This is important when dealing with hard to reach students. All teachers might at some point pigeonhole students; i. e. as those with special needs, the institutionalised, those who live on welfare, and many others.

The fact that personal values and beliefs interact with education means that language teaching is a 'social and political activity' (Byram 2008: 3). This raises the question of the role of language teachers, and of what is expected of them in a multi-lingual and multicultural world. According to Byram, teachers are political agents in a democratic process that seeks to build the bridges of European citizenship:

The inclusion of values education and education for democratic citizenship as part of the responsibility of language teachers in addition to the development of language skills in their learners requires teachers to think critically. Teachers need to question and problematise their

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3 According to PORDATA ([www.pordata.pt](http://www.pordata.pt)), early leavers from education and training in Portugal totalled 13.7 per cent in 2015, According to PORDATA ([www.pordata.pt](http://www.pordata.pt)).

own and others' assumptions and pre-suppositions about 'proper' values, beliefs and behaviours, as all 'intercultural speakers' should do.  
(Byram 2008: 150)

When exposing the policies for multi-lingual learners in multilingual/intercultural environments, Byram further argues that language education should not ignore the political environment in which it is delivered. He claims that 'what was seen in the second half of the twentieth century as a training in skills should not shun concern with values and critical understanding of others, ourselves and how we interact together as individuals and groups' (2008: 17). From his point of view, 'the task for language educators is above all to educate, to promote an ability to change perspective and to challenge what is taken for granted' (2008: 17). Byram goes on to deconstruct the purposes of education within compulsory schooling, and in so doing he declares that 'foreign languages are usually presented to learners from an instrumental viewpoint: they will be able to use the languages for work or leisure, to find work in another country or to travel in the real or virtual world' (2008: 24). The phenomenon of globalisation exerts some influence over this instrumentalisation of language, leading Byram to issue this challenge:

If language learning is to be part of a policy of internationalisation, it has to be more than the acquisition of linguistic competence, for such policy needs to counterbalance the socialisation into national identity which underpins national education and national curricula. Foreign language education has the potential to make a major contribution if it offers learners experience of 'tertiary socialisation', a concept invented to emphasise the ways in which learning a foreign language can take learners beyond a focus on their own society, into experience of otherness, or other cultural beliefs, values and behaviours. That experience can and should give them a better purchase on their previous culturally determined assumptions.

(Byram 2008: 29)

The tertiary socialisation<sup>4</sup> Byram writes about is of great importance, especially when considering that encountering other cultures through foreign

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4 The concept of 'tertiary socialisation' was developed by Byram in the late 1980s. According to him, it is a prescriptive concept, 'suggesting purposes and objectives for education' (Byram 2008: 113). Those objectives seem to be closely linked to the development of an international identity, as he further highlights: 'The development

languages makes us aware of our own identity and forces us to find ways of understanding one another. In order to succeed, that experience demands more than mere linguistic competency. Therefore, learning a foreign language means more than attaining linguistic competence. Guilherme (2002) maintains that foreign language education should also encompass the development of intercultural competence and take account of critical approaches to foreign language and culture education that integrate broader educational frameworks, such as Human Rights Education and Education for Democratic Citizenship (Guilherme 2002), within an interdisciplinary approach drawing on critical pedagogy, cultural studies and intercultural communication. Sawyer synthesises this, claiming that ‘the highest ultimate goal for foreign language teaching should be the nurturing of intercultural citizens’ (Sawyer 2014: 47). These aspects of the curriculum, as referred to by Byram could be part of the ‘hidden curriculum’ defined by UNESCO:

The hidden curriculum involves all the incidental lessons that students learn at school. It is sometimes called the ‘unofficial curriculum’ – and includes the lessons about behaviour, personal relationships, the use of power and authority, competition, sources of motivation and so on that students learn at school. These lessons can be either positive or negative in terms of promoting a sustainable future.  
(UNESCO 2010: n.p.)

If we wish to establish a link between this hidden curriculum and language education, we should consider students’ motivations to learn and their perceptions of others and of themselves in a global context, that is, their own framework of values and beliefs. The formal curriculum sets out several topics to address in the classroom, but these mainly focus on the development of linguistic competence, which requires teachers to learn to read the implicit meaning in the objectives and descriptors presented to them. They also explore ways of using the ‘hidden curriculum’, trying their best to move beyond the conception of language as merely a utilitarian tool.

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of an international identity promoted through tertiary socialisation and an international curriculum can thus be posited as a desirable outcome from education in a period of globalisation/internationalisation. However, it is quite possible that an international identity will be in some respects in contrast and tension with a national identity as a consequence of the challenge to the taken-for-granted values that underpin national identity’ (Byram 2008: 114).

We offer a proposal to approach the hidden curriculum in the foreign language classroom with a view to integrating citizenship education and including the voices of hard to reach learners. We believe that reading can be a privileged means to achieve this goal, as it is a deeply engaging activity, which calls for critical thinking and may contribute to the development of critical and active citizens. As learners question some of the attitudes and behaviours contained in the stories, they should be able to (de)construct meanings, imbuing the term ‘citizenship’ with content and meaning. Citizenship should bring learners a sense of individual self-fulfilment.

### Hard to reach:

Literary texts in language education  
Literary texts, which are currently marginalised in foreign language classrooms, have themselves become hard to reach. However, the potential that these texts offer to foster the educational and humanistic value of learning languages-and-cultures, to promote the integration of citizenship education and foreign language teaching, and to connect with hard to reach learners, mean they could be valuable mediators in this process if presented appropriately.

In view of the technological developments and the importance of the image (film, photograph, etc.) in our society, the focus on written texts can be broadened here, to include a more open and inclusive definition of ‘text’ (cf. Pegrum, 2008). Shaun Tan’s picture books and graphic novels are sophisticated art forms which provide a good example of this. Furthermore, picture books are texts that offer the possibility of exploring language and image in concert, making it possible to develop learners’ visual literacy, an area that is crucial to intercultural communication and which is seldom addressed in the foreign language classroom. In the traditional language class, reading is simply taken as comprehension (‘decoding’), and writing skills prevail as formal and ‘neutral’ language exercises within a framework of what could be considered canonical, traditional literacies. Furthermore, the general resistance to the use of literary texts by teachers of foreign languages is further exaggerated when they approach students with hard to reach profiles. Teachers tend to believe learners’ poor results in tests (which focus on functional communicative linguistic needs) and their apparent lack of motivation necessarily place books and reading out of reach, assuming them to be incompetent readers. Such attitudes completely ignore the ‘intrinsicly motivational force’ (Bland 2013: 1) of picture books and other texts. Arguably, these learners’ hard to reach profiles and needs make it even more imperative that they be introduced to read-



ing texts with literary qualities in a foreign language. Before readers can *engage* with a text they must first be *affected* by it.

Several studies of learners, from immigrant, impoverished or multi-ethnic backgrounds, have concluded that hard to reach learners can be reached through literary texts, while building on citizenship education concepts and content. Moreover, some authors have highlighted benefits from reading literature, showing how strong readers are more likely to have positive self-perceptions, and that engagement in a narrative world can create personal narratives of self that could guide a reader's future behaviour (e. g. Bland 2013; Alsop 2010). Farrell et al. (2010) highlight studies with learners from diverse ethnic backgrounds, including children who were not fluent with English or who struggled with reading, showing how they were able to engage in sophisticated ways with complex picture books (Farrell et al. 2010: 199).

Bland cites a study in the USA that points to the importance of assessing the impact of socio-economic status on students' reading (2013: 3), and demonstrating that the gap in reading input for children from impoverished backgrounds was linked to a discrepancy of attainment at age nine. The probability that a child will become empowered as a critical reader and a critical citizen is unequal in a system that disregards the benefits and potential of reading, in particular for hard to reach learners, and the possibilities of linking reading to their lives and their views of the world.

Further evidence of the impact of reading and relevance on hard to reach learners can be seen in a case study of an adolescent reader with autism (Hardstaff 2014), another example of the hard to reach. The 'Journeys from Images to Words' research at the University of Glasgow (Arizpe et al. 2014) also provides evidence for the inclusion of visual texts and critical pedagogy, to develop intercultural inclusive literacy in the classroom. They highlight a further important argument regarding the use of visual texts and the importance of developing critical pedagogies; observing that our world has become mobile, and our language classrooms now welcome a diverse population of refugees, asylum seekers and migrant students. In this context, intercultural competence and literacy practices that include reading and seeing beyond language-based communication should contribute to supporting our students in critically deciphering the visual world that surrounds us.

However, the belief that 'knowing how to read' means an ability to read literature is a fallacy. There is a gap between functional reading and comprehensive literacy (in which interpretation becomes central) which demands the creation of opportunities to develop a reading apprenticeship (Bland 2013: 21). Contrary to current general practice in foreign language

teaching, the choice of texts in formal education should involve assessing their potential to reach students, considering levels of reading engagement with texts. Therefore, teaching learners to construct concepts and knowledge dialogically, as is relevant to citizenship education, should be recognised as similar to reading literature, and of the utmost importance.

We argue here for reading as *learner empowerment*, focusing on the intercultural dimension and following Rosenblatt's 'transactional' reading theory (1994), which validates the reader-centred reception of texts and aims to widen and refine initial readings, while collectively building on meanings and concepts relevant to hard to reach students and their life skills as citizens.

## Literary texts to reach learners

Literary texts as art forms comprise a number of characteristics that might provide opportunities to reach learners otherwise considered to be hard to reach, by acting as catalysts to develop critical awareness and to co-construct citizenship education concepts and knowledge.

Literary texts might provide a space in the foreign language classroom favouring the (co-)construction of meaning by learners as readers around relevant citizenship issues and concepts. The relational space created by the joint exploration of art forms allows teachers and students to mediate, discover and research students' background situations, beliefs and values, as they imagine, engage with, and resist texts through analysis and reflection. As readers are transported into different fictional worlds, where the familiar is often made strange, they engage with alterity, allowing them to decentre, perceive and imagine alternative cultural, social, political norms, while at the same time questioning their own taken-for-granted beliefs and attitudes. Moreover, literature engages readers both cognitively and emotionally (Nikolajeva 2013), helping them confront life in its moral complexity (Fleming 2006), and creating 'spaces of sustained moral reflection' (Taylor 2007: 297) that extend beyond easy solutions, learning to contend with plural cultural identities and multiple national commitments. One of the most relevant features of literary texts, in relation to hard to reach learners (whom we briefly characterised as disconnected, distrustful, disengaged, alienated) is the texts' emotional involvement and potential to connect with readers. This allows readers to build empathy, a fundamental social capacity to take another's perspective, and therefore become decentred from one's own ethnocentric or culturally biased position. Unlike novels that are simply textual, Nikolajeva points out (2013)

that in picture books ‘images carry the primary task of emotional engagement’ (2013: 249), and that dealing with empathy becomes a life skill, helping us to understand people’s emotions in the real world:

[O]ur emotional response to emotionally charged images is possible because we have stored (albeit inaccurate and fragmented) memories of the represented emotion, either from real-life experience or from an earlier experience of fiction, whether verbal, visual, or multimedial’ (Nikolajeva 2013: 251).

She goes on to claim ‘that reading fiction is not only beneficial, but indispensable for our cognitive and emotional development’, making us better human beings (Nikolajeva 2013: 254). Alsup (2010) supports this by focusing on the importance for teenagers of understanding their emotions in new ways through reading critically, and on how this impacts their identity development during adolescence and their capacity to build narratives of the self.

Another extremely significant aspect to consider when reading literary texts and when considering hard to reach learners is their power to change readers’ lives through vicarious experiences. As learners feel empathy and consider new perspectives through their reading, this experience does something to the reader: ‘Total engagement in a narrative world is powerful and can create internal, personal narratives of the self that, some argue, might guide a reader’s behavior in the future’ (Alsup 2010: 4). Nussbaum suggests that a reader’s judgements about characters are transferable to real-life situations, enabling them to become better people and citizens. She underlines how the moral and psychological meaning of emotions can be expressed through art forms, in particular through literature. Metaphors and other literary devices are charged with sensations that generate emotions. Literature can thus be a tool to educate the emotions, and to develop the democratic background needed to empower citizens (Maxwell 2006; Modzelewski 2014). Thus, empathic capacities can be developed by reading literature, contributing to citizenship education.

A further important question, also asked by Alsup (2010: 9), arises at this point in our argument with regard to developing citizenship education: If readers react emotionally to books and can learn through the vicarious experiences, beliefs and ideas of others, can they also be encouraged to identify with antisocial or antidemocratic behaviour and act irresponsibly and dangerously? Alsup considers it necessary for readers to step back and gain critical detachment from the text, to be able to place the narrative in a wider context. We would add to this view, by underlining the

role of teachers as educators and as mediators, which includes a responsibility in the political, emotional and moral perspective, as argued previously. Moreover, we would maintain, with Byram (2008), that while it is appropriate to be pluralistic in approach, limits must be discussed and agreed that accord with this pluralism, and learners should develop an awareness that full agreement between disparate ideologies is not always possible, although citizens should instead engage in dialogue and political action that is acceptable to those involved. Byram makes it clear that, while rejecting relativism, language educators should promote a value-based position, acknowledging respect for human dignity (as framed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights), and that to educate democratic citizens ‘is to enable individuals to recognise the particularity of all groups and their cultures, whilst seeing them in the context of universal human values and aspirations’ (Byram 2008: 187). Understanding factual, social cultural and ethical knowledge, and building empathy, or ‘participative imagination’ in Nussbaum’s terminology (Modzelewski 2014), enables readers to begin a reciprocal, dialogical relationship with a text. Authors such as Nussbaum (Modzelewski 2014) advocate ethical criticism, claiming that reading has ethical implications.

Literature individualises and encourages readers to consider particular situations, thus avoiding generalisations and stereotyping. This capacity, together with empathy, opens the door to compassion, making it possible for learners as readers to identify with underprivileged members of society, learning to see the world from their perspective and to reflect about this experience.

As claimed previously, pictures and graphic novels can be considered to fit into an inclusive categorisation of literary texts, underlining the importance of the competence of reading multiple texts to enable learners to read the world critically. Reading picture books is not synonymous with decoding a written text illustrated with pictures. Active and critical interpretations of written and visual text require visual skills. A study cited by Bland (2013: 22) shows that children aged 4–11 can literally understand complex images, but make inferences at the aesthetic, metaphorical and ethical levels. Word-image interdependence, achieved by creating complementarities or contrasts, for example, opens up a space for learners to critically engage in examining how text interacts with visual elements, perceiving, reflecting, interpreting and analysing layers of meaning and complexity.

Cultural differences are often well documented in picture books with a socio-cultural agenda, or stressing other concerns such as the global environmental crisis, as Bland (2013: 65) suggests. Choosing texts with the

potential to explore relevant citizenship matters meaningfully is therefore an essential step in reaching learners and engaging them actively in the EFL classroom, breaking down the boundaries between students. However, as suggested earlier in this chapter, the process also implies ethical implications for foreign language teachers' approaches to texts, in particular when considering hard to reach learners who need to be integrated into regular foreign language classes.

To reiterate in the interest of pedagogical clarification, one such consequence relates to the intercultural principle of raising self-cultural awareness. This implies that teachers will attend to their learners' histories, cultures, experiences, identities, other languages and other literacies, which may be valued within the learners' communities and that are part of the hidden curriculum. Such knowledge and identities should be introduced to the classroom, in order to interact productively and meaningfully with the texts being read, giving learners a voice. As pointed out previously, citizenship education should not be considered a form of curricular knowledge to be 'transmitted' through texts, or to be reproduced in texts, but one in which learners must engage with texts in a process of meaning-making, so that they can also be seen as resources to support students' work to promote cultural production and action.

Matos (2012: 129–135), in her model of intercultural reading in foreign language education, describes reading as an active and collaborative dual process of meaning-making: firstly, involving engaging in a personal response (the reception level); and secondly, stepping back and engaging in a critical response, built cooperatively by sharing and discussing information with other readers in the classroom. This second phase allows for consideration of a multiplicity of perspectives. The reading of literature becomes a merging of personal, emotional response and critical collaborative reading.

When teaching literature, practices can involve open-ended questions and activities, such as double-entry journals or annotated spread tasks (Farrell et al. 2010), and will encourage speculation about alternative meanings that go beyond the experience of the initial reading and move from more literal to more inferential and insightful meanings. Dialogue and group discussion are typically at the centre of these activities, with the objective of sharing and validating initial individual readings, of stimulating curiosity, of promoting reflection, critical thinking and interpretation, and of encouraging creativity. These tools assist the questioning and analysis of images, helping students to understand values and beliefs as culturally located constructs with connections to issues of power, gender, age and race amongst other categories.

Cultural self-awareness is an important step in becoming intercultural. Cultural awareness can be improved by enhancing the knowledge and lived experiences of learners. As learners interact with art forms and explore and build on social and cultural meanings, they may understand and come to challenge those social and cultural meanings and practices that would otherwise remain silenced or ignored and move on to a further stage, in which the learners themselves become authors. The first stage of responding to art by actively building meanings, sharing in group discussions, questioning, interpreting and modifying initial perspectives, may be followed by a productive stage, in which learners become authors of their own texts. The objective is to creatively awaken the consciousness of hard to reach learners by allowing them to build on the rich and meaningful context of the stories they have read to create their own texts, thus validating their own, more personalised views of the topic studied. This could be achieved by modifying parts of the original texts, suggesting an alternative text or by continuing the story.

### *The arrival* – an example

*The Arrival* is a wordless visual narrative telling the story of a family man forced to look for a better life in a foreign country. The image on the front cover (Figure 2) presents the perspective adopted: the alien is not the foreigner, as is often assumed, but the native. This powerful story is mostly told through the eyes of this traveller with a suitcase, who stares in incomprehension at the strange creature that will play an important mediating role during his arrival and settlement in what is, for him, a foreign country.

The cover also illustrates how Shaun Tan presents realistic reference images of people and objects, combining them with elements from a fantasy world.

Figure 2: Front cover of *The Arrival* (Tan 2007)

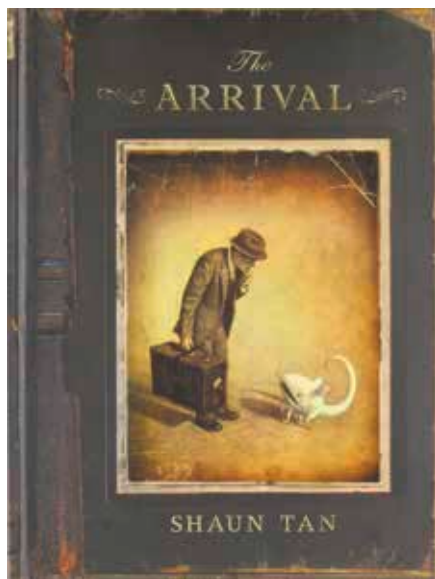
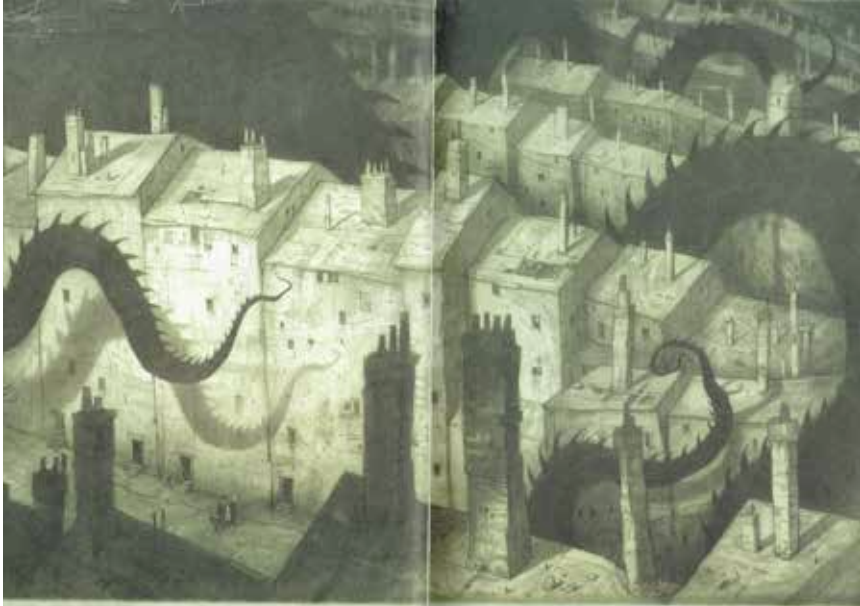


Figure 3: *The Arrival* (Tan 2007: n.p.)



This imaginary world becomes a stimulus for the readers' imagination and interpretative faculties, as readers are challenged to make sense of the unfamiliar new universe and explore metaphors, connotations, and associations, while experiencing the fundamental tension and strangeness felt when arriving in a new and foreign culture. The strangeness of this new world provides readers with an opportunity to build parallels with the realities already known to them. In this case, fantasy deliberately establishes connections with familiar, real experiences of readers, while engaging in inspired imagination and envisioning new possibilities: 'This is an important book, charging its readers with a significant political message' (Johnston 2012: 437).

The story is predominantly told from the perspective of the immigrant and within the constraints usually felt by refugees, people escaping persecution and oppression of different kinds. Figure 3 depicts a tiny family, alone and vulnerable to a threatening dragon-like monster that crawls over a desolate city.

As the reader comes to understand and learn about the family's problems, expectations, their lives and hardships in a foreign country, this generates empathy, compassion and a critical view of society. The new world



is depicted fully; enabling the reader to individualise the experiences told and participate in greater depth at the interface of textual and non-textual realities.

As Farrell et al. (2010: 200) note, the silent narrative also reinforces the space opened up for reflection, by slowing down those readers, no longer occupied with their reading pace, but more engaged in mediating objects and actions and constructing meanings. Conversely, exploring picture books with no words emphasises and empowers the role of readers as narrators, as they engage dialogically with the images (Farrell et al. 2010: 201). The absence of written language also succeeds in underlining the painful experience of arriving in a place where a different, unknown language complicates communication. Johnston (2012: 426) points out how language can be exclusive as well as inclusive. The fact that the story transcends language is appropriate for use with hard to reach readers, as there are no linguistic barriers to engagement with the story; moreover, this wordless story is also about the power of language.

An empowering social experience is achieved by questioning conventions and values and reflecting on the relationship among social groups, while examining otherness. Readers' interaction with the text provides a door to individual worlds to unlock understanding of the difference that exists all around us. The endpapers (Figure 4) underline a shared humanity, while showing the multiple singularities of individuals. Johnston reminds us:

[T]hat identity must be seen beyond a single descriptor, such as race or gender or appearance or occupation or history. Tan's egalitarian script summons a moral imagination and encourages subjunctive empathies in relation to heterogeneity – empathies that are sorely needed in the 21 st-century world.

*(Johnston 2012: 437)*

The details and aesthetic values in picture books and graphic novels are essential to bringing about meaningful responses and to locating characters at a particular level, to avoid generalisation and stereotyping (Figure 4).

Although this chapter concerns above all the reception of literary texts as a means of reaching students, and of examining and interrogating issues of dislocation, belonging, difference, cultural conflict, we would like to suggest that art forms also provide opportunities for readers in the foreign language classroom to react creatively and to express and (re)create critical awareness of the experiences of others and of themselves. This gives learners a personal voice, as demonstrated by Graham's project, commented on here:



[T]he study and making of art could be a powerful way to engender empathy, compassion, and intercultural dialogue, and engage students and teachers in critical thinking about cultural assumptions, immigration, and diversity.

(Graham 2009: 160–161)

Figure 4: *The Arrival* (Tan 2007: endpaper.)



In favour of engaging learners in literate activities that include written and visual text, Eckert adds:

Because adolescence is a time of deep emotional, physical, and intellectual change, students benefit from a wide variety of artistic expression which offers alternative worldviews, challenging and expanding the subjectivities they bring to the task of making sense of written and visual discourse.

(Eckert 2010: 143)

Recently, London's Tate Modern gallery organised an inspiring exhibition entitled *Citizens and States*. The online description makes a powerful statement about the connection between art and citizenship matters:

This ... is concerned with the ways in which artists engage with social ideals and historical realities. Though some artists associated modernism with a utopian vision, art has also provided a mirror to contemporary society, sometimes raising awareness about urgent issues or arguing for change.

Whether through traditional media or moving images, abstraction or figuration, militancy or detached observation, all the artworks in this wing highlight aspects of the social reality in which they were made, and try to generate a reaction and convey a more or less explicit message to their publics.

*(Tate Modern 2016)*

We would like to argue that these art forms also have the power to reach learners, to provoke questions, reactions and thoughts, creating meanings that can be built on by learners to complement their work with literary texts. Some of the works at this exhibition, such as Philip Guston's 'Monument' (1976), are linked with Holocaust memory and mourning; Picasso's 'Weeping woman' (1937) holds her dead child after the bombing of Guernica; Joseph Beuys's '7000 Oak Trees' (1982) portrays a project, seen locally as a gesture towards green urban renewal. These are merely a few examples of the many possible artistic texts with strong connections to citizenship issues, relevant to citizenship education and available for teachers as educators to explore meaningfully, perhaps as supplementary texts, within foreign language classes. The relationship between learners as readers and artistic texts could, moreover, provide possibilities for developing further links with local communities, institutions or persons at the national or international levels, moving from engagement with texts to engagement in action: 'Only when individuals are critical readers and effective communicators can they make a difference in the quality of their own lives and the lived conditions of those around them' (Alsop 2010: 12).

## Conclusion

The experience of art forms, either reacting to or creating them, while conveying meanings through art, can be empowering and transformative and lead to forms of participation in political, social and civic life, giving a voice and visibility to those learners who tend to be hard to reach for multiple reasons, thus countering a sense of invisibility, separateness or exclusion.

The work of Anselm Kiefer, a German painter and sculptor, suggests that art, like alchemy, alters base materials into valuable and enticing objects. *Sprache der Vogel* (figure 1), one of his most well-known pieces, shows two bird wings emerging from a pile of ancient books. The title may also point to how in alchemy, the language of the birds was considered a secret and perfect language, the key to perfect knowledge. It is certainly our belief that literary texts as art have the potential to reach learners and bring about a transformation in their perceptions of our world's problems. The power of literary texts, as the wings in the sculpture, manifests when readers are able to explore texts personally, critically and relate them to their social meanings.

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## Citizenship learning in prison education: Student and teacher views from Greece<sup>2</sup>

“Freedom is having a school inside the prison; to exist among prisoners and feel free.”

*SCS Learner*

### Introduction

This chapter examines adult education structures and the role of schooling in prisons in Greece. Prisons provide a unique learning environment, presenting singular challenges that differ from those encountered in the mainstream education and training sector. The prison population is characterised by its high percentage of early school leavers and dropouts, its increasing diversity, and the fact that prison education and training is typically delivered in overcrowded settings. Prisoners’ low qualification levels typically negatively affect their employment prospects upon release, and this has been identified as one of the key factors influencing whether or not former prisoners re-offend (Gus 2003). Thus, it is assumed that the provision of education in basic skills in prisons, particularly vocational training, will play an important role in prisoners’ future reintegration into society (Hawley *et al.* 2013).

Despite the predicted benefits of education and training for prisoners, such as improvement to their employability, social inclusion and re-integration, various research studies in a variety of contexts all around the world have shown prisoners are reluctant to participate in learning activities

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2 This paper is written in memory of George Zouganelis, the Principal of Korydallos Prison SCS and our beloved teacher. Our warmest thanks to the teachers and learners at the Second Chance School and the Vocational Training Institute at the prison for welcoming us to their premises, and for their willingness to share their valuable experience with us.

(Hawley *et al.* 2013, Vacca 2004). In Greek prisons, however, the situation appears to be different, especially in terms of adult education (EDULLL 2006). Inmates are very motivated to attend second chance schools (SCSs) and welcome the vocational training offered by vocational training institutes (Instituta Epaggelmatikis Katartisis (IEKs)). In this setting, the role, design and content of specific education programmes seeks to meet the needs and expectations of individual prisoners by employing innovative learning approaches. For example, educational processes that use art as a means of implementing transformative learning, as proposed by Mezirow (1997). To understand the situation regarding the success of SCSs in Greek prisons fully, it is important to explore the quality and efficiency of current learning provision, especially in relation to citizenship education, as will be expanded upon in this chapter.

## Research and method

This study took place in a Second Chance School (SCS) and at a Vocational Training Institute (IEK) situated inside a prison in Athens Second Chance School. Our aim was to analyse the views of the learner inmates and their educators concerning the role of education inside this type of school, focusing predominantly on the construction of the notion of citizenship, the literacy components of the curriculum, the use of different active pedagogical methods (projects), and the contribution of art education. Drawing largely on theories of adult education, the educators at this institution adopt a holistic approach based on complete knowledge of each learner's profile, which builds familiarity with his/her needs and aspirations. They opine that the school's objectives should not be the inculcation of sterile knowledge, but the transmission of essential knowledge and skills to nurture active and responsible citizens (Ravitch and Viteritti 2001). This objective is reinforced by the general structure and philosophy of SCSs, which draw on a democratic conception of the teacher-learner relationship, and of teaching and learning.

The research data for this study was collected in 18 semi-focused interviews of approximately 30 minutes. Eleven interviews were conducted with SCS learners and instructors (seven learners and four instructors), and seven with IEK learners and educators (five learners and two educators). In terms of nationality, the current learner population is 55 per cent Greek and 45 per cent foreign, a ratio we tried to maintain when selecting interviewees; all the learners are male. The objectives of this study were firstly to draft the profile of each learner-interviewee according to age, educational level, and social and economic background, and secondly to depict

and analyse the personal objectives and motives that lead learners to participate in educational structures. Of equal interest was the role of the institution in cultivating the notion of citizenship and in achieving prisoners' reintegration into the broader social context.

## Second chance schools and learning in prison

Prison education in Greece aligns with policies established by the Council of Europe, and draws on the traditions of adult education and lifelong learning. The Council of Europe (2009) recognises the importance of education and training as a basic element of the development of each member state, declaring four strategic objectives:

1. Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality;
2. Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training;
3. Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship; and
4. Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

Regarding education in prisons, Costelloe (2014: 31) specifically states:

Nonetheless, education in prison can have a most profound impact on bringing prisoners back into society. Not only in terms of their reintegration or resettlement but more so in terms of the accepted belief that education, and in particular, lifelong and life wide learning, has a significant role to play in bringing the disenfranchised, the marginalised, and the disaffected “back into society”. European Commission 2010, UNESCO 2002,  
*Government of Ireland 2000*

Three approaches are also identified by the European Commission (2011), proposing:

1. The adjustment of the educational programme within traditional and wide mainstream secondary school curriculum, but oriented towards the interests and needs of adults;
2. Training programmes that focus more on employability than on traditional education and are almost exclusively centred on basic skills and vocational training; and
3. Programmes that provide courses influenced directly by the prison context, for example, in cognitive skills and anger management.

However, although the European Union apparently recognises that the establishment of schools in prisons is of great importance, and seeks to con-

tribute to their creation in all European countries to combat the negative impact of imprisonment, limiting ‘the damage done to men and women through it’ (Council of Europe 1990: 15), each member country remains free to determine their structure and operation (Costelloe and Warner 2014).

In the Greek case, SCSs were instituted to educate adults. According to their primary goals, as expressed in statute (Spinthourakis *et al.* 2008), they aim to ensure the cultivation and development of learners, to guarantee their entire and equal participation in social, financial, and cultural life as free and active citizens by reinforcing their skills to allow them to participate effectively in the job market (Council of Europe 2011). They were developed to combat the social exclusion of adults who had not completed their basic education and so did not have the necessary qualifications and skills to meet vocational requirements (Stamelos 1999). Young people over the age of 18 who have dropped out of school are given the opportunity to attend SCSs to complete their compulsory nine-year period of education. Intensive primary and lower secondary school courses are run at SCSs and graduates are issued with a leaving certificate, equivalent to that of the Primary and Lower Secondary School leaving certificate. This entitles them to register with the Unified Lyceum, Technical Vocational Educational Institutes and post-gymnasium vocational institutes, and to attend some vocational training courses.

## Learner profile

According to Greek Law 4019/2011, prisoners, just like immigrants, addicts, HIV-positive individuals, and juvenile offenders, are described as vulnerable and disadvantaged people due to the interruption in their lives brought about by imprisonment. The role of education is intended to be to lessen the negative impact of imprisonment and reduce recidivism. It is felt that this can be achieved because it encourages prisoners to consider themselves members of society, with both rights and obligations (Hawley *et al.* 2013). Diversity and its acceptance are of critical importance to educators when evaluating the composition of people in prison education groups. Prisoners come from diverse ethnic and social backgrounds, and so it is essential to examine the positive impact of education and explore how the process of the acquisition of appropriate knowledge, skills and values, can contribute to their forthcoming integration.

The majority of these learners, whether immigrants, unemployed, homeless, drug-users, or repeat offenders can be classified as hard to reach learners; defined by Michalis Kakos (cited in Kappel-Rovira *et al.* 2013: 2) thus:



Hard to Reach Learners are educationally and/or socially and/or economically disadvantaged people who are often ‘forgotten’ by the mainstream of citizenship education or left behind in schools or other educational facilities. Young people, especially immigrants, are particularly effected. A growing group is the economically disadvantaged and the NEETs (not in education, employment or training).

Therefore, prisoner-learners are deemed hard to reach because it is difficult to approach and integrate them into the framework of a particular educational institution. Even during their time in prison, when they are in a controlled and restricted environment, it is difficult to encourage them to take up schooling (Hawley *et al.* 2013). However, while the members of this group share common characteristics, such as the sense of being rejected or of being ‘othered’, it is important not to ignore the fact that they come from different ethnic and social backgrounds and so have different needs and expectations. ~~Alistair Ross (2013) cautions that it is unwise ‘to homogenize all HTR [Hard to Reach] people into a single group’, explaining that specifically tailored strategies are needed to reach each group, as experts have to adopt different approaches according to their unique characteristics and special needs.~~

## Theoretical Background

Prison education is mainly informed by Freire (1973) and Mezirow’s (1978) theories about adult education, adopting the values and practices of transformative learning. A central issue discussed by Freire’s (1993) theory relates to the importance of dialogue and its contribution to the promotion of equality, mainly through mutual understanding, acceptance and respect. Freire’s (1993) originality proceeded from his critique of the concept of ‘banking education’, in which the teacher is believed to be the holder of knowledge and learner participation is not promoted. In opposition to this, Freire (Freire and Fandez 1989) suggested an approach to learning that is more dynamic, intending to promote interaction between the teacher and the learner. He argued that the teacher should encourage their learners to participate actively in the entire educational procedure, by highlighting each learner’s special needs and previous experience.

Some years after Freire first proposed his theory, Mezirow (1997), drawing on Freirian pedagogy, and grounded in the rules of language and human development, introduced the theory of transformative learning. He defined frames of reference as ‘the structures of assumptions through

which we understand our experiences. They selectively shape and delimit expectations, perceptions, cognition, and feelings' (Mezirow 1997: 5). Three common themes now characterise Mezirow's theory of the mechanism of transformational learning in the classroom: experience, critical reflection, and rational discourse. Mezirow (1997) introduced critical reflection as the distinguishing characteristic of adult learning, seeing it as the vehicle by which one can question the validity of one's world view. He identified rational discourse as a catalyst for transformation, as it induces participants to explore the depth and meaning of their various world views, and to articulate their ideas with their instructor and classmates. In addition to critical reflection, which challenges assumptions, transformative learning demands a trusting social context encouraging dialogue as well as a reflective and critical discourse. A key element associated with the process of transformational learning relates to the importance of establishing a community of learners, and the role of relationships within this community (Hawley *et al.* 2013).

Each learners' unique life experiences provide a starting point for transformational learning, which places great importance on the development of autonomy (Mezirow 1991). The process of transformative learning involves various types of change: change in values and ideas, change in perspective, change in behaviour, and a change in the self. Mezirow (1997) further emphasises how transformative learning is rooted in the way human beings communicate, combining reflection and discourse, and developing personal autonomy. More particularly, transformative learning in the context of prison education can contribute to a significant change in an individual, through the transformation of perspective associated with three very important dimensions: psychological, convictional, and behavioural (Clark 1993, Mezirow 1991). It also contributes to a range of changes, including regarding understanding of the self, world view, behaviour, the construction of conscience, ideology and direction, and finally the construction of citizenship. The role of citizenship education is also crucial here (Costelloe and Warner 2014), as will be explained below.

## Role and objectives of prison education

Various international conventions and recommendations (Hawley *et al.* 2013) have bestowed upon prisoners the same right to education as other citizens. Furthermore, the provision of learning opportunities in prisons is recognised to offer a range of potential benefits to both the prisoner and society. Education and training can reduce the social costs of crime, and

support the rehabilitation of prisoners by improving their employability, and assisting their reintegration into society on completion of their sentence (Vacca 2004).

Education is a key element informing the rehabilitative role of prisons, one with a significant, if often indirect, role to play in many of the other rehabilitative processes in which a prisoner can engage while in prison. It is not only a way of keeping the prisoner occupied; education also has the capacity to play a significant role in delivering inclusion for prisoners who had encountered social exclusion before they entered prison (Hawley *et al.* 2013) and might do so again after they leave. Education can change their personal attitudes and perceptions, and help them to understand the reasons for, and the consequences of, their actions. Meanwhile, in the context of an economic downturn and increasingly competitive labour markets, like that which people have had to face in Greece in recent years, it is even more crucial for prisoners to gain skills and competences to enhance their employability (Gus 2016).

Citizenship education is also viewed as a crucial component of the educational content delivered in prisons. Its main aim is the cultivation and development of appropriate knowledge, values and skills, to make a citizen feel secure and prepared to enter actively into the social and political world (Costelloe 2014). Costelloe and Warner (2014) suggest that the main purpose of education in prison should be to empower learners to review, re-imagine and re-shape their lives. Barber (1992: 128) described citizenship education as:

[T]he literacy required to live in a civil society, the competence to participate in democratic communities, the ability to think critically and act deliberately in a pluralist world, the empathy that permits us to hear and thus accommodate others, all involve skills that must be acquired.

According to the communitarian approach, active citizenship could be characterised as a learning process leading to the development of relative competence. Hoskins and Deakin Crick (2010: 120) regard competency in this context as, ‘a complex combination of knowledge, skills, understanding, values and attitudes which lead to effective, embodied human action in the world in a particular domain’. Delanty (2003) on the other hand regards citizenship as a learning lifelong process, with a developmental and transformative impact on the learner. This means that citizenship education should involve the acquisition of a range of dispositions, virtues and loyalties (Karakatsani 2004), which can be immediately connected with the practice of democratic citizenship, and not treated as a matter of

learning (Kymlicka 2002). Therefore, education has to ensure learners gain the appropriate skills and knowledge, first for their reintegration into the labour market, and then into the whole of society, as active citizens (Balias 2008). Thus an education that is only focused on functional literacy, i. e. the ability to read and write, will not be sufficient if it does not also aim to encourage dialogue, and promote critical and reflective thinking and decision-making.

## The study context

The first SCS in a Greek prison was established in 2004 in an effort to abolish social exclusion (Panagiotopoulos 2009). Now there are nine in operation. They follow the general rules and principles of the Europe Commission as outlined above, and aim to support learner's acquisition of basic necessary knowledge and skills, cultivating a collective environment of collaboration, providing motivation and new perspectives on individuals' forthcoming reintegration into society to avoid recidivism. Since September 2015, a branch of the School has operated in the wing dedicated to HIV-positive prison inmates.

The SCS courses offered to inmates last 18 months (two school years), and lessons are held daily, with time in class totalling 25 hours each week (Vekris and Hondolidou 2003). A key feature of the school, and one that constitutes the primary motive for the majority of learners, is that daily classroom attendance has a beneficial effect on the calculation of a prisoner's sentence, since one classroom day equals two sentence days. The decision to permit inmates to attend school is undertaken by members of the prison council, the school council and teaching staff. Educators must produce an outline of each learner's psychodynamic profile to ensure the smooth coexistence of educators and learners during the learning process, and to avoid potential tensions and conflicts. Consequently, individuals demonstrating intense nationalistic behaviour or exhibiting psychological fluctuations and disturbances are rejected. According to school regulations, the minimum requirement for learners is the possession of a basic knowledge of Greek, proven by possession of a certificate from the primary school or a certificate confirming attendance at the first and second grade of a Greek lower secondary school or an equivalent school abroad. However, to avoid rejecting people because they do not have appropriate language skills, there are optional extra intensive courses that learners can take in order to be granted acceptance. In addition, some schools in prisons, in collaboration with the Department of Primary Education, provide

inmates with the opportunity to obtain a primary school diploma. Learners can either achieve the qualification by attending short courses and subsequently sitting a test, or, should they be deemed to possess a sufficient level of knowledge already, they can take the test immediately.

In parallel with these developments, another innovative and effective educational structure has been implemented at two prisons in Greece. These are Vocational Training Institutes, which offer adult prisoners who possess a secondary education certificate further training programmes in specific fields, such as Graphic Design and Electronic Media. This programme includes four semesters of training, plus one practical training semester, which takes place inside the prison. These institutes contribute mainly to the professional training of inmates, affording them important benefits by facilitating their future entrance into the job market. As their future entrance into the job market could be characterised as a matter of great importance informing their gradual re-integration into society.

## Interviewees' profiles

The SCS and IEK learners interviewed for this researcher are on average 30 years old. In the case of the SCS, the learners have completed primary school, and most have attended just one year of lower secondary school. The learners at the IEK are high school graduates, and might also be Technological Educational Institute (TEI) graduates, or vocational training institute graduates. The higher educational level of the IEK trainees means they are characterised as the prison's elite by the other trainees and prison employees and educators. In the case of SCS learners, most left school for financial reasons, driven to enter the workforce by their families' financial needs. There have also been some social reasons noted, such as migration and low motivation from family members to complete school.

## Prisoners' reasons for enrolling in education

According to their own accounts, the principal reason for learners choosing to attend the prison schools during their incarceration is the so-called 'daily wage', i. e. that attendance benefits the calculation of their sentence (one day at school is equivalent to two days of serving one's sentence otherwise). However, some prisoners mentioned other incentives that were equally important to them, such as the acquisition of knowledge, and the creative use of their time in prison. SCS learners reported that academi-

cally they had acquired fundamental knowledge and skills, such as knowledge of Greek literature, mathematics, English, and IT knowledge, which they could not have attained while they were at liberty. They stated that they considered this knowledge very beneficial to their social and professional reintegration. Characteristically, one learner mentioned that he was proud that he could now help his daughter with her maths homework over the phone, and others said that they felt very satisfied that they had a basic knowledge of English and were able to use computers. They described the school as a ‘clean place’, which had a salutary effect on their temperaments, and they all expressed a desire to spend more time there.

Educators certainly perceived the offer of the ‘daily wage’ as an important incentive, characterising it as a necessary initial condition to encourage prospective learners to engage with the educational process. Thus they agreed with the ‘beneficial calculation of the learner’s sentence’ because of attendance, even though it might be criticised by some researchers or practitioners as an inappropriate incentive to attend school. They stressed that subsequently everyone is free to choose whether to continue in education. However, the educators make great efforts to maintain their learners’ level of interest and to minimise dropout rates. According to their statistical data, this effort has so far been rewarded by low dropout rates, although some learners are forced to halt their studies because they have been released or transferred to another prison.

## Relationships with educators

The learners both of SCS and IEK reported that their relationships with their instructors are excellent, and that they respect them hugely, recognising their contribution through the support they offer and the trust they exhibit. One learner mentioned that being with his educators was like being with family, and almost all admitted that, thanks to their educators, they now felt safe, self-confident, and able to respond according to their current identity as learners.

When the educators were asked about their personal relationships with their learners, and what they felt they had gained from their contact with them, they all gave similar answers, focusing on the learners’ need for emotional support and encouragement. Recognising the special situation that their learners experience due to their confinement, they try to fulfil their expectations by providing them with a wealth of support. They also pointed out that in the classroom they can forget their trainees are prisoners, as they become focused on involving them in the learning pro-

cess and on developing and cultivating their management and participation skills.

Recognising and respecting their learners as being especially vulnerable, due to their backgrounds and their current status as inmates, causes educators to strive to meet their special needs and take on the roles of motivators and mentors. These learners have previously experienced rejection, and may lack the motivation to improve their lives and grasping a second chance. Thus educators have to recognise this and adopt appropriate approaches according to their unique characteristics and special needs; addressing their learners' emotional and practical shortcomings in a way that avoids patronising them, or making them dependent upon the school, encouraging them to be free to make their own choices and chart their own post-prison lives.

## General benefits of education

Referring to their experience of attending the school and of co-existing with others, almost all the learners associated their presence at school with the existence of rights and obligations and concepts such as freedom and democracy. They mentioned that attending school makes them feel accepted by everyone, and free to express themselves, as they can make their own choices about the educational programmes they attend, and are stimulated to think in different ways. Their presence at school also helps them to exercise their right to an education. This right automatically generates obligations, such as the preservation of a safe environment, mutual respect, the obligation to be present every day, and to participate in school activities. Attendance at the school is both a right and a privilege, as learners know that many other inmates would like to participate in the education scheme but are unable to do so.

The SCS learners' behaviour in school is characterised by their educators as exemplary. They avoid causing any trouble, and one educator reported, 'When the learners enter the school premises, they leave outside any kind of offending action'. The learners explained their good behaviour is a response to the positive effect education has on them. They cite some of the benefits of attendance as membership of a group that is respectful toward its members, the opportunity to use dialogue, anger management, the acceptance of one another's diversity, and the ability to re-think and re-shape themselves and to review their reactions and behaviour.

When asked their opinions about the courses they attend, and any preferences they hold, the SCS learners particularly mentioned the Social Lit-

eracy class and participation in the plenary assembly as the most interesting, since during both they have the opportunity to become conversant with social concepts and current affairs of interest to them. They stated that during the Social Literacy class and the plenary assembly they can express themselves freely and conduct a democratic discussion with other learners and with their instructors about issues that concern them. In response to a similar question, the IEK learners also expressed a desire to attend courses focusing on social issues and current affairs. We observed that the learners, probably due to their current identity as inmates and based on their characteristics as adult learners, were more oriented toward courses that give them a chance to express themselves, and an opportunity to rethink their ideas and beliefs, and maybe, as Mezirow (1997) suggests, to transform the knowledge they have acquired.

## The contribution of citizenship education

Discussing the meaning of citizenship education and its contribution to prison education in general, educators described it as being of great importance, linking it to the knowledge of individual rights and obligations and the cultivation of appropriate skills and attitudes to assist learners to reintegrate into society. Specifically, all of them mentioned that citizenship education traverses the whole curriculum and they emphasise the cultivation of basic skills, such as the ability to debate and make decisions on a daily basis. An educator also stated that he views 'learners' everyday lives at school as a microcosm of their future social conduct'. Nevertheless, they also noted that they are aware that their learners are adults, with a well-developed social and political consciousness, and their approach respects this by emphasising collaborative contributions.

Citizenship education intersects with both the context and the mode of teaching on the Social Literacy course as it aims to familiarise learners with the concepts and ideas that govern their social life and actions as active, free citizens. The course structure allows the teacher freedom to plan a daily presentation which frequently relates to current affairs. The main objective is to ensure that the learners express themselves freely and participate in discussions and engage in debates on issues that concern them, such as the concepts of liberty, justice, citizenship, etc.

Educators also place importance on the plenary assembly, which is held whenever one of them deems it necessary to raise an issue for discussion, to arrive at a decision through dialogue. All of the educators consider the assembly vital; on the one hand it promotes and cultivates the concept and



principles of democracy, and on the other it strengthens learners' self-confidence, as they feel that their opinion is important and that they are being called upon to make decisions about things that affect them. They consider school to be a forum for democracy and citizenship that provides them with equal opportunities, guaranteeing the learners equal participation in learning and, above all, cultivating a safe, secure environment free from all types of prejudice and discrimination.

The educators mentioned that the learners are simultaneously granted rights and given responsibilities, since they are called upon to assume and carry out multiple roles and must respect the commitments necessary for each role. As learners, they are asked to meet a timetable and fulfil conditions for completing their assignments, but at the same time, they can be members of theatre or photography projects, in which case their commitment is to the project and themselves. Above all, they are responsible for safeguarding the peaceful atmosphere that prevails on school premises, for avoiding quarrels and disputes among themselves and contributing to the maintenance of the school, by keeping areas clean and helping with necessary repairs. According to their educators, these duties are carried out with great success.

## The Benefits of Art Education

Various artistic projects are key components of the instructional programme at the SCS in the prison. Learners at the SCS can choose between a variety of daily workshops in the fields of dance, drawing, photography, reading, radio and theatre. SCS educators particularly emphasise the positive influence of art, stating that it has demonstrable results and that it is the best way to encourage learners to act as creators, becoming a tool with which to improve and bolster their self-esteem (Clements 2004). A great proof of art's benefits is the evident desire of some learners who at first were disinclined to take part in a workshop to participate in more than one and invest a lot of time. At the same time, because of their constant contact with different forms and types of art the learners can develop new interests, frequently discovering talents and skills they did not know they possessed. Their participation in such a project makes learners feel peaceful and encourages them to set goals for themselves. As one teacher noted, the applause at the end of a theatrical performance is 'balm to the soul' of learners. The result is that often those learners who initially refused to participate in such projects become the most vehement in their demand to participate subsequently.

SCS learners reported that they benefit greatly from participating in the various projects available to them, and that their participation makes them feel that they belong to a group and can interact with other members. They said that art has a therapeutic effect on them, as it is simultaneously inspirational and motivational. One learner reported that while participating in a photography project he had discovered a talent for it, and is now seriously considering becoming a professional photographer after his release.

The IEK learners are prescribed a daily curriculum that does not include participation in any such workshop, and they expressed a desire to have the same opportunity as the SCS learners. They explained that through participation they might be exposed to different stimuli, and could gain useful qualifications or skills that they could use for their future employment.

## Release and resettlement

When the learners were asked to imagine life after their release their answers were very optimistic. Almost everyone expressed a desire to continue pursuing some kind of education or training. They all wanted to complete their studies at another SCS or at an IEK outside prison if they were released early, and some were certain they would continue and then complete the next level of education. What was most evident, however, was everyone's need and desire to re-enter society on equal terms, to be fully accepted by society, and to enjoy all the privileges society affords its citizens.

Clearly, the priority for all the learners was to find employment, so that they might live with and support their families. They believe that the label of prisoner will follow them for the rest of their lives, and consequently feel insecure about their release. They also consider employment to be a basic component in supporting their journey towards reintegration.

The educators reported that even though the majority of the learners wanted to continue their studies after their release, in their experience only a small proportion are able to do so. This is because of the difficulties of combining work, family obligations and study. Indicatively, an educator mentioned the case of two learners who after their release started to attend a SCS. However, after three months they had to interrupt it to find a second afternoon job to cover their families' expenses.

The learners also recognised the difficulties they would face integrating into the job market on their release, observing that social prejudice would not favour them. However, they welcomed the fact that, accord-

ing to the prison's social service records, the re-offending rate for prisoners who have attended the SCS is very low.<sup>3</sup> This knowledge enforces the role of learning in promoting cultural and personal advancement, and in preparing inmates for their imminent reintegration in society. As one educator underlined that if the schools in the prison could be placed on a more stable foundation, from both an institutional and logistical viewpoint, and could collaborate with another structured institution (providing room and board, for example) upon the inmates' release, this educational institution would undoubtedly be considered a highly effective means of achieving reintegration.

## Conclusions

When analysing the different ways in which prison education is conceived by the study participants, we encountered two different perceptions among prisoners. Some identified themselves as 'offenders', whereas others recognised themselves as 'whole persons' and equal members of society. Our study found that those inmates who were most inclined to participate actively in the programme were those who recognise themselves as equal members of society rather than as offenders, and those who saw studying as a clear opportunity to improve their skills and chance of succeeding after release. Thus, a successful educational programme in a prison can be characterized as exempt from any kind of stereotypes and discrimination toward learners, and based on the following guidelines (Vacca 2004):

1. Prison literacy programmes should be inmate/learner-centred, designed with a respect for individual diversity;
2. Programmes should encourage learners' participation in daily activities, projects and decision-making;
3. Programmes should emphasise instructions that include engaging topics that motivate and sustain the inmates' interest; and
4. Programmes should provide opportunities for inmates to see themselves in roles other than that of prisoner.

We consider the final guideline, which is based on both Mezirow's theory and the inmates' accounts gathered during the course of our research, to be the most important. A fact that is also pointed out by Costelloe and Warner (2014) through their recommendation that a prison education should give

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3 In the case of Greece there is no official report to confirm this fact. Thus we have to base our evaluation on educators' claims. However, similar research undertaken abroad offers empirical proof (see for example Vacca 2004).

learners the opportunity to review, re-imagine and re-shape their lives. The negative effects of imprisonment can include a sense of stigmatisation, and the purpose of an education programme is to improve inmates' self-confidence and stimulate them to develop new perspectives to support their future reintegration into society. Educators made great efforts to support and encourage learners at every opportunity, and learners cited the satisfaction they felt when they successfully contributed to a project or when they gained knowledge that they never would have thought possible formerly. An example of this is those inmates that said they had read more than ten books during their studies, yet before their imprisonment they had not even read one.

According to the Council of Europe and the European Union (1989), the role of schools in prisons is to lessen the negative effects of imprisonment by offering inmates a safe environment in which diversity is acceptable, and by providing appropriate knowledge, skills, and capabilities to ensure their positive transition into society after their release. With respect to inmates' special needs, and based on the theories put forward by Freire (1998) and Mezirow (1997) regarding adult education and life-long learning, educators in SCSs in Greece have designed a daily curriculum to support the development of projects in which all learners can participate. This flexibility is welcomed positively by learners, and during our interviews they expressed their pleasure in participating in the projects and noted their desire to increase their hours of participation. It was noted earlier that the IEK learners complained that because of the IEK's structure projects were not included as part of their curriculum. The IEK trainees said that they wanted the chance to participate in such projects, and that they wanted some teaching hours devoted to discussing social issues that interested them, so they could have the opportunity to express their thoughts and ideas.

The SCS learners reported that their favourite teaching hours were those spent on the Social Literacy course and during plenary assembly. They cited the pleasure they felt when participating in a group where they could express themselves, interact with others, use dialogue and participate in decision-making. They stated that these opportunities helped them to improve their personal skills in communication, and led them to question their previous behaviour. One respondent revealed that through his participation as a learner he has been able to review his previous thinking and learn what it was like to interact in a group and express himself without anger. The educators at the SCS also reported that they invest heavily in those elements of the programme that allow learners the opportunity to experience democracy in action. Their aim is to make the school a

forum for democracy, where the values and aims of citizenship education are dominant and traverse the entire educational structure.

According to our findings, the contribution of artistic disciplines to education in prisons were also of great importance. Both educators and learners put forward four reasons for this:

1. Learners' involvement in art workshops keeps them occupied and away from quarrels and other disruptive situations;
2. Through the arts learners cultivated and developed their creativity, while at the same time learning new ways of thinking and expressing themselves;
3. The arts offered learners the opportunity to explore their individual potential and develop new interests, improving their self-esteem and self-confidence through their work; and
4. Through art, learners could dare to imagine themselves differently, taking on other roles and responding to the demands of novel scenarios.

The importance of art was especially evident in the IEK learners' demands for the opportunity to be involved in arts workshops and benefit from their outcomes. SCS learners wanted to spend more of their time in school engaged in artistic activities.

Having completed our investigation, the most crucial question that arise concerns whether the education offered in prison positively contributes to inmates' integration into society following their release. Since 1990, the international literature has shown that inmates who attend educational programmes while imprisoned are less likely to return to prison following their release (Vacca 2004). The explanation offered for this is that participating in education gives learners the opportunity to imagine themselves in a different way, and to raise their low self-esteem and increase their self-confidence, because they have gained the appropriate skills to enter the labour market (Hawley *et al.* 2013).

Undoubtedly, employment constitutes the most important factor in successful reintegration and the avoidance of recidivism after release. In the Greek case, there are no official data on rates of recidivism, and findings from interviews mainly describe the manner of release and probable conditions for recidivism. The difficulty that prisoners face in finding employment after their release is great and obvious. However, the acquisition of appropriate knowledge, skills, and any kind of training give prisoner-learners an advantage over other ex-prisoners. Moreover, education affords them the opportunity to aim to achieve something better and the confidence to do so.

It is important that in a restricted environment such as a prison there is a place where learning can prevail, and where developing the consciousness of free and democratic individuals is a key pursuit. While in a prison envi-

ronment, the learners in our study were able to grasp the ideas of freedom and democracy, something they had been unable to do when they were free. Their lives are made meaningful through education, leading them to set their own educational and social goals actively, even while incarcerated with no clear idea of when they might be released. They have come to appreciate their incarceration as providing a means to acquire freedom, and to free their intellect and spirit. Learning has given them the optimism and incentive to return to society and re-join it as active and equal citizens. They had lacked this incentive as ‘free’ men, because, as one learner remarked, ‘The prison of the mind always exists.’ This is where the power of education lies; affirming the maxim, ‘when a school opens, a prison closes.’

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## Media, education and controversial issues in times of terrorism: Issues and strategies from the etherlands

At many schools anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and homophobia are anything but extinct phenomena: there are young people who virtually believe that Jews are born with two little devil's horns, there are parents who believe their child will become gay if the teacher is gay, and there are young Muslims who are confronted with severe discrimination on a daily basis.

(El Rahmouni, paper presented at a discussion at the Dutch House of Representatives, 2015)

Adolescents frequently have radical opinions. This is often a kind of experimentation for these young people. I am always afraid that the educational system will overreact. In case of extreme ways of thinking, it is important to understand if other unusual things are happening with the student.

*(Interview with cultural anthropologist Martijn de Koning cited in Pertijs 2016d: p. 6)*

In January 2015, Jihadist gunmen killed twelve people at and around *Charlie Hebdo's* headquarters in Paris, including editors and cartoonists working for the satirical newspaper. Two days after the shooting, in a linked attack, a jihadist gunman opened fire in a Jewish supermarket in the French capital. There was a direct connection made between the satirical cartoons published by *Charlie Hebdo* and the attack by jihadist gunmen. Students at Dutch secondary schools either condemned the attacks, or showed (some) understanding for the attackers. In many cases, teachers were not fully prepared for the remarks made by certain students, and have since reported being shocked by the conspiracy theories they heard. As a result, a nationwide discussion about how teachers should discuss

controversial issues in the classroom erupted in the Netherlands. Since the Paris attacks (November 2015) and the subsequent Brussels bombings (March 2016), teachers have been searching for the right approach to address controversial issues arising from current events.

The problem of how to teach controversial topics, specifically those related to freedom of speech, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, right-wing extremism and the integration of ethnic minorities, is not new. However, the unexpected responses by students at Dutch schools to the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting, the Paris attacks and the Brussels bombings, increased the urgency to address this matter and offer solutions in the Netherlands. Teachers reported that school policy concerning discussions about sensitive issues is still in its infancy (De Graaf *et al.* 2016: 11). Since January 2015, various organisations and individual teachers have offered suggestions to discuss these controversial issues in class. At the political level, an increasing body of attention has been focused on education as an instrument delivering civic skills and critical thinking skills.

These issues have been placed much more highly on the political agenda, resulting in research into politically sensitive issues in schools, commissioned by the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science, and a round table discussion at the House of Representatives. Meetings have been organised by individual members of parliament, schools and civil organisations. In all these cases the primary question raised was: How should teachers discuss controversial issues in class? This chapter is a case study, describing how Dutch teachers and authorities are dealing with teaching controversial issues following the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting, the effects of the media on discussions in the classroom, the experiences of teachers, and ongoing discussions among policymakers.

In this chapter, special attention is directed toward two hard to reach groups: students with a Muslim background who hold radical opinions, and native students whose attitudes derive from Islamophobia. Both groups believe in their own realities only, rejecting the ‘other’. In mixed classes, and at mixed schools, native students with Islamophobic attitudes tend to remain silent. They have an opinion, but refuse to express it (Pertjjs 2016b: 6). In more homogeneous schools, students with similar opinions do dare to speak out, and take harsh standpoints toward migrants, claiming they live in an era characterised by ‘ordeal’, and often expressing worries for the future (Kleijwegt 2016: 46–47). Many teachers find it difficult to reach these students. As one teacher said,

[I]n one way or another we don’t consider the presence of extreme right views in the classroom a problem that is similar to the radical Islamic

views expressed by others. We obviously find it more “normal” to hear a student saying that all Muslims should leave the country. (Personal communication, 19 April 2016)

The other group of hard to reach learners are students with a Muslim background holding radical opinions; they are often more likely to be subjected to the risk of social exclusion and marginalisation. Much like native students with Islamophobic opinions, Muslim youths with radical views believe in their own truths, and reject those of other groups, including those of the dominant culture. However, they are much more vulnerable when seeking to enter the job market and do not typically receive the same educational opportunities as native Dutch students (Inspectie van het Onderwijs 2016: 19).

While both core groups of hard to reach learners have been identified as such by their teachers, schools, and experts, there is no consensus regarding how to approach them, or how to manage controversial issues. Nevertheless, the feeling that there is an urgent need to take action and develop materials and programs to do so is shared by educators. A frequently cited problem is the often one-sided information students receive from different (social) media outlets, especially because the mainstream media is widely criticised for being biased. This makes it more difficult for teachers to discuss controversial issues even-handedly. Students not only express diverse views, but also draw on different supposedly reliable sources to support them.

## The Dutch school system, core values and citizenship

One of the main characteristics of the Dutch school system is that it offers *freedom of education* as a constitutional right guaranteed in article 23 of the Dutch Constitution (Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations *et al.* 2008: 8–9). The Netherlands operates a dual school system; there are public (authority) and private schools. Private schools are free to organise their teaching as they wish, but they are expected to meet attainment targets determined by the government, establishing the knowledge and skills pupils are expected to have by the end of their school career (Rijksoverheid n.d.). Most private schools are faith-based schools (e.g. Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu). Denominational private schools can also choose to apply a faith-based criterion when accepting staff and students, as long as they are not discriminatory (Rijksoverheid n.d.). In the context of the relative freedom of education, Dutch schools are also obliged to

deliver citizenship education; in most cases, schools decide independently how much they focus on citizenship education and the content offered.

According to the Dutch State Secretary of Education, Culture and Science, ‘the identity of the school and the citizenship task are closely related. Moreover, it is important that the substance is tied to the situation the students of the school live in’ (Dekker 2013: 2). According to Geert ten Dam, ‘citizenship education is about respect for the rule of law, respect for others, and respect for opposing opinions, and it is to be taught in all Dutch schools, regardless of their denomination or pedagogical vision’ (Pertijns 2015b: 20). Schools are expected to stimulate observance of core values, proactively upholding the democratic rule of law, and if necessary preventing situations or behaviour that contravenes these values. Citizenship education encompasses widely supported core values, including equality, tolerance and the principle of non-discrimination, which are included in the Dutch Constitution and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Pertijns 2015c: 22). Schools are asked to inspire these values in their pupils, and to monitor possible risk factors inhibiting the process of acquiring them, by paying attention to radicalisation and intolerance in relation to daily events (Pertijns 2015c: 22).

In addition to the division into private and public-authority schools, Dutch schools are also divided according to whether they are ‘white’, ‘black’, or ‘mixed’. The Dutch Inspectorate of Education does not use these definitions (Personal communication, 17 April 2016), but the concepts are present in government documents. The Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP) classifies schools as “black” in cases where more than 70 per cent of the students are from ethnic minorities with non-western immigrant backgrounds (Kanne 2011: 45). Statistics from Netherlands (CBS) classify schools as “black” when more than 50 per cent (or in some sources where more than 80 per cent) of the students are non-western migrants (e.g. Hartgers (2007: 12–13)). Another approach is the relative approach; this is when a comparison is made between the school population and the composition of the youth population in the district in which the school is located (The Netherlands Institute for Social Research, personal communication, 20 April 2016). In recent years, the indicator used to distinguish between different sorts of schools, has not been the immigrant background of the pupils, but the low level of education of parents and the consequent disadvantaged position of the students (Beucker, 2014). The existence of schools that can be predominantly labelled as either ‘white’ or ‘black’ (or ‘weak’), results in a concentration of certain groups of hard to reach learners.

## Hard to reach learners and the mainstream

With headlines such as ‘Not everybody in the classroom wants to talk about *Charlie Hebdo*’ (Visser and Van Ewijk 2015), ‘Teacher struggles with terrorist attacks in France’ (Van der Voort 2015), and ‘She had already practised self-censorship before *Charlie Hebdo*’ (Haitsma 2015), Dutch newspapers, both broadsheet and tabloid, have initiated a public debate highlighting the discussion of controversial issues in classrooms. The main message of most of the media reports in this vein has been that teachers encounter difficulties when talking with their students about freedom of expression, equality, religion, and radicalisation. According to these media reports, teachers were not fully prepared for unexpected questions such as ‘why do they kill us?’, ‘why do they always offend our prophet?’, ‘why are people angry now, but not when Muslims are being killed?’ An incident involving a teacher who had to remove a *Charlie Hebdo* poster at his school caused a nationwide debate (De Volkskrant 2015). Some teachers were shocked by the responses of their students. Several teachers left the classroom to cry, wondering how to discuss such controversial topics with students from Muslim backgrounds (Boonman 2015). One of the teachers referred to the double-think world in which Muslim pupils live:

Some time ago a small group of pupils told me that the beheadings by Islamic State were American animations. They told me these movies were fake. At school these children dance in a modern way with their mobile phones, but at home the curtains are closed and they watch Arab channels together with their parents. (Haitsma 2015). When the teacher was discussing *Charlie Hebdo*, she realised that her pupils did not identify with her. ‘This makes me scared: should I be more careful choosing my words? Or ... am I already very careful?’  
(Haitsma 2015)

After the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting, the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science commissioned research to gather a comprehensive overview of the problems experienced by teachers; specifically to determine at which schools and in which situations problems were arising (Dekker 2015: 1). There had previously been little research into the problems Dutch teachers encounter when teaching controversial topics (Sijbers *et al.* 2015: 1). The notion that teachers face serious difficulties when teaching controversial subjects was mainly based on journalistic stories or anecdotal evidence, rather than empirical research (Sijbers *et al.* 2015: 2). A study by researchers at the Radboud University Nijmegen found a majority of teachers (80 per

cent) felt well equipped to discuss controversial issues in class (Sijbers et al. 2015: 50). For example, about 25 per cent of all respondents wanted to receive more support from the school leadership, but this number rose by two thirds in so called ‘black’ schools (Sijbers et al. 2015: 59). Less experienced teachers and female teachers were less positive about their ability to teach controversial topics (Sijbers *et al.* 2015: 58).

In 2015, the Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science, Jet Bussemaker, commissioned a journalist, Margalith Kleijwegt, to report on the problems that arise when teaching controversial issues. Bussemaker wanted to undertake a bottom-up review to explain to the Minister that there is no single easy solution able to resolve the problem of radicalisation to teach controversial issues (Schutte 2016: 30). In the report *2 Worlds, 2 Realities – how to deal with this as a teacher?* Kleijwegt observed the development of mental segregation within the Dutch school system, explaining that multiple worlds and multiple realities co-exist in parallel. Students experience events from the perspective of their upbringing. These different realities are strengthened by the often one-sided images proffered by social media (Bussemaker 2016: 1). According to Kleijwegt, the school leadership and teachers are concerned about a larger group than mere radicals:

They notice a growing group of young people who don’t feel at home, young people who have a lot of problems and who follow social media. And polarisation should be added to this. While students with an immigrant background have the feeling that they are being neglected and discriminated, many Dutch native students are feeling threatened and wonder with fear what will happen, in their words, when they will be a minority. From both sides the levels of understanding and empathy are decreasing.

(Kleijwegt 2016: 13).

According to Kleijwegt’s (2016) report and other reports dedicated to this debate, two groups can be identified as hard to reach learners when discussing incidents like the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting and the Paris attacks:

1. Predominantly young Muslim students who show sympathy for the ideology of radical Islam, and who have opinions that can be classified as anti-Semitic, anti-gay and anti-Western; and
2. Predominantly indigenous Dutch students with Islamophobic and xenophobic opinions, who believe that their lives are being threatened by (Islamic) migration to the Netherlands.

At a round table discussion in the Dutch House of Representatives, El Rahmouni (2015) mentioned the large and growing group of young Mus-

lms who are turning away from society, and rejecting the basic principles of a free society. According to El Rahmouni (2015), many teachers want to discuss issues associated with democracy and recent events with these students, but do not know how. As a result, the students begin to feel even more misunderstood (El Rahmouni 2015). The second group consists of young indigenous Dutch pupils, who believe that the achievements and benefits of a free society only apply to the indigenous population (El Rahmouni 2015). This analysis was supported by the concerns shared by teachers following the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting, the Paris attacks and other terrorist incidents:

“My pupils said nothing was true. The editors of *Charlie Hebdo* weren’t killed. It was a large conspiracy by the Americans, in their eyes terrorists. They are first graders (12–13 years old, IP), adolescents who dare to say everything. They have no clue about the impact of their words”, a teacher at a so-called black school said.  
(*Ghaemina* 2015)

Many pupils lump all kind of groups together: foreigners, migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and terrorists. Some pupils have zero knowledge about the facts. Their opinion is based on what they read on Facebook, WhatsApp or what their parents are telling them. This makes it very difficult to start a discussion, because time after time I have to stop to explain to them that a certain assumption is incorrect.  
(*Civics teacher, personal communication, 22 November 2015*)

Students at a “white” school for Intermediate Vocational Education were convinced that the dramatic image of three-year old Aylan, a little Syrian boy wearing a red T-shirt and blue shorts, washed up near the Turkish city of Bodrum, an image that caused worldwide many emotions, had been constructed by the media to generate pity. The boy didn’t drown, but was placed with his head down to feel sorry. A picture of this dramatic event was hung in the school building, but this was removed: teachers said it had probably been taken down by students.  
(*Kleijwegt* 2016: 20)

## The media

Statements made by teachers at different types of schools in different parts of the country show a widening gap between several existing truths.

Teachers often rely on mainstream media to inform themselves about news events. Journalists and the audience often believe that the media offers a window or a mirror onto reality, and that it gives ‘absolute evidence’, determining issues that are objectively ‘important’ and those that are not (Van Ginneken 1999: 85–86). However, the media coverage of the Paris attacks in November 2015 by the Western media was widely criticised because the 2015 Beirut bombings and the Russian plane crash received much less attention. For this reason, some Dutch students refused to take part in a moment of silence for the Paris victims (Personal communication, 16 November 2015).

Often, students refer to media reports on the internet, images and discussions on social media to ‘proof’ that they are right, e.g. that the Western media ignores deadly attacks in other parts of the world. Young people are therefore constructing new (political) identities online. About 96 per cent of the Dutch youth possess a smartphone (Gfk 2015), which makes it possible to share information with their peers instantly and at any time, information that is supportive to their views concerning certain news events or developments. Lim observes:

Be they part of mainstream youth or youth subcultures, young people today are vividly appropriating media content and channels to interact with their peers and in the process they foster norms, conventions, shared practices and collective identities within their peer groups.

*(Lim 2015: 326–327)*

When they encounter controversial issues, students refer to sources they believe are reliable; for example Facebook accounts from people with a certain background, images spread via Twitter showing media reports are ‘false’ and numerous websites establishing the viewpoints of certain groups, e.g. nationalistic, right-wing outlets or websites supporting radical Islamic views. They use the information found on these websites to prove that media reports are biased, falsified or even part of a state-directed propaganda machine. These students often believe their evidence is stronger than the realities presented by mainstream mass media outlets. This information is then shared via the internet among people who hold the same beliefs.

The problem of conflicting truth-claims among students is not unique. Long before the Paris attacks, similar situations could be observed arising in classrooms. The Dutch Member of Parliament Ahmed Marcouch commented, ‘After 9/11 I visited schools where students were supposed to respect the three minutes of silence. In the class that I visited, the civics



teacher couldn't keep his students quiet' (Pertijs 2014b: 21). According to one of the Dutch leaders of a radical Muslim movement, after 9/11 Muslims believed a war against Islam has been started: 'The War on Terror is a War on Islam. People see us as potential terrorists' (Pertijs 2014c: 22). In other cases, one teacher was completely ignorant of world affairs, as the Jewish Dutch moviemaker Natascha van Weezel describes: 'The day after 9/11 my teacher asked me why I hadn't learnt my Latin words. "Because I was watching CNN", I answered' (Pertijs 2014a: 20). Sometimes students felt stigmatised; for example, when a teacher, after showing images about Islamic State, loudly asked two Muslim students in the classroom: 'what is the opinion of our Muslims on this matter?' (Pertijs 2014b: 21). Similar incidents were reported countrywide after the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting. Teachers are still being confronted by radicalism, Islamophobia, xenophobia or homophobia from their students. For example:

"When I asked my students during a lesson about the refugee crisis who are asylum seekers, they told me a refugee is a murderer, a rapist or a terrorist", one teacher at a predominantly white school said. A teacher at a so-called black school said that after the Paris attacks in November 2015 pupils disturbed the minute of silence by shouting "Free Palestine!" (Personal communication, 21 November 2015).

The impact of media coverage on students is especially apparent when media hype leads to an intense discussion about what really happened. Vasterman defines media hype as 'a media-generated, wall-to-wall news wave, triggered by one specific event and expanded by the self-reinforcing processes within the news production of the media' (Vasterman 2005: 259). According to Vasterman, in a setting where media hype prevails, a social problem can reach crisis proportions, forcing social actors, especially the authorities, to take drastic but hasty action (Vasterman 2005: 266). According to Vasterman: 'This, again, reinforces the concern among the public, because the action confirms the existence of a real crisis. And this, of course, triggers a new wave of media attention' (Vasterman 2005: 266).

After the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting, the Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science, announced measures against the radicalisation of students after the media reported problems arising at schools in which students justified or even supported the murder of the French journalists. According to Stewart (2015: 131), it is difficult to analyse the Paris shootings and the response to them 'without taking into account the unprecedented influence mainstream and social media news coverage has on governments.' Undeniably,

Our 24/7 all-news environment has become a vortex in which the increasing mass of information and an unprecedented velocity of communications produce a force that threatens to overwhelm media and government alike. We are starting to feel we are in a permanent state of siege.

(Stewart 2015: 131)

The authorities responded primarily to media reports by speaking out against radical opinions, asking teachers not to ignore controversial issues that arise in the classroom, but to take responsibility and act. Meanwhile, the authorities promised to support teachers who experienced difficulties addressing controversial issues. As a result, the authorities primarily concentrated on targeting students with radical views belonging to marginalised groups.

The impact of images of terrorism, varying from the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting to those of decapitations spread by Islamic State, and the fear students experienced due to these news items, was not a primary concern. This is rather surprising, as more than ten years ago scholars examined how traumatic news content could lead children to experience negative emotional after-effects (Carter 2015: 257). One of the concerns they raised is that without protection, children may perceive the world to be a 'confusing, threatening, or unfriendly place' (Carter 2015: 257). A Dutch study found that 48 per cent of children between 7 and 12 years old reported being afraid after watching the news on television (Valkenburg 2014: 151). Interpersonal violence apparently upsets children the most (Valkenburg 2014: 151). After the Paris attacks, the students who were following the news on the Paris attacks uncensored on the internet were confronted by real live images causing fear: 'I don't know if I will go to Amsterdam this weekend', a 16-year old girl from the south of the Netherlands said after the Paris attack (Personal communication, 16 November 2015).

Words such as 'terrorists', 'Muslims', 'Islamic State', 'fear' and 'war' dominated media coverage of the attacks. These words were also used in the arena of public debate. Both the mainstream and marginalised youth had to formulate their own understanding about what was happening. The impact of these words and images varied according to each student, but fear and anger definitely informed the emotional responses from young people.

Both mainstream and marginalised youths were afraid: in some cases, the fear centred on the possibility of becoming a victim of terrorism, and in other cases it focused on becoming a victim of hate crime. Even in cases where all the students condemned the Paris attacks, the emotional responses varied. For example, students from some marginalised groups

became angry when their classmates were mourning the Paris victims, but failing to remember the victims of violence in Lebanon or Syria. They blamed the Dutch media for their failure to intensively report on victims of terror outside Europe. One Dutch student wrote on his Facebook page: ‘Fuck Paris. You don’t even know half what happens. If you pray for Paris, pray for the whole world’, referring to conflicts in the Middle East (Schelfaut *et al.* 2016: 10). Another student stated that she believes it is unfair to pay so much attention to the Paris attacks:

Especially not when you realise what happens in Syria for so many years. Thousands of people died, but we didn’t mourn for a single minute. But when I thought about this a little longer, I realised how bizarre the terrorist attacks are. In Syria there is a war, not in Paris.  
(Schelfaut *et al.* 2016: 10)

A newspaper for Dutch adolescents explained to its readers, ‘terrorists also attack other Muslims. In Turkey, in Beirut ... and in Syria’, and the chance a terrorist attack will take place in the Netherlands ‘is much smaller than in France’ (Van der Weij 2016). The issue of the number of victims of terrorism in Europe compared to victims outside Europe formed part of discussions about what schools should do following a terrorist attack. While the Paris attacks in November 2015 took place on a Friday night, the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting was breaking news in the middle of the day. Many students were still at school when the first images from Paris arrived. Thus, teachers had to decide rapidly how to respond.

## Teacher responses

While many media reports predominantly focused on teachers being scared or uncertain when addressing politically sensitive issues in the classroom, numerous discussions took place after the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting, raising different angles and experiences.

After the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting, the journal for civic teachers, *Maatschappij & Politiek* (Society & Politics), and the social-democratic Member of Parliament, Ahmed Marcouch, organised a meeting for teachers at the House of Representatives to share their thoughts, worries and possible solutions. About 25 teachers, mostly civics teachers, participated in this meeting. Except for one teacher of Spanish, all of the teachers present (civics) had found a way to discuss the Paris events with their students. Nevertheless, many of them stressed the need to share ideas to ensure they would be

better prepared if another incident happens (Boonman 2015). While the majority of participants at the meeting at the House of Representatives were civics teachers, and therefore professionally better prepared to talk about sensitive issues, the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting was discussed by teachers of other subjects as well.

In a small survey of 477 teachers, 85 per cent of respondents said they had paid attention to the consequences of the Paris attack (Didactief 2015). A research sample of 50 teachers collected by the author of this article showed that the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting was discussed by a very diverse group of teachers with various subject backgrounds (Pertijs 2015a). A few teachers ignored the attack as they did not feel well enough informed, or failed to find any opportunity to discuss it with their students (Pertijs 2015a). Within this particular sample no teacher reported facing any problems when discussing the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting, but at schools with a (relatively) high level of hard to reach learners, the teachers said they found it difficult to talk with students who showed sympathy for the French killers, and those who held an Islamophobic opinion. The Dutch teachers used numerous ways to approach the *Charlie Hebdo* attack. According to the previously mentioned survey, a small number of respondents shared their own opinions with their students, while others read the Bible or the Koran with their students. However, by far the most commonly used method was a group conversation (Didactief 2015). Often individual teachers took the initiative here; but sometimes school leaders did so too. At the same time, non-governmental organisations and civil organisations took on the role of developing projects with a special focus on discussing sensitive issues. In his letter to the Dutch House of Representatives, the State Secretary for Education, Culture and Science referred to a number of initiatives by civil organisations offering support to teachers, including ProDemos, Amnesty International, School en Veiligheid (School and Safety) and the gay rights organisation COC (Dekker 2015: 4). The number of organisations involved with projects teaching controversial issues in the class is much more extensive.

El Rahmouni distinguishes the role of teachers of civic education and related subjects from teachers of other subjects:

Teachers of French or physics have a natural authority when it concerns their professional knowledge, but this is not always the case with teachers of social subjects, as students might experience a struggle when social issues are being discussed in the classroom.

El Rahmouni, paper presented at a discussion at the Dutch House of Representatives, 2015

Hester Radstake, a professional teacher trainer, stated in an interview that other teacher competencies are needed after incidents such as the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting and the Paris attacks:

In those cases, teachers need to have competence to be a moderator. Teachers can have a lot of questions: how must I handle such a talk in a correct way, what do my pupils think about these issues and how will they react, what should I do if they have extremist opinions that are against my norms and values and those of other pupils, how can I prevent an escalation, and to what extent I can tolerate certain opinions? (Pertijs 2016: 5)

Radstake states that intensity and shock play a large role for teachers when discussing violent incidents with their pupils, especially after terrorist attacks like in France:

A teacher is not only a teacher, but also a human being. Their own shock, consternation and confusion with the events – often the exact circumstances are not clear when teachers see their pupils after the attacks – can give a feeling of paralysation: they feel not ready yet to talk with their class about what has happened. That is one of the reasons why many teachers get a stomach ache when they realise they “will have to do something” with this issue in the class (Pertijs 2016: 5)

A teacher at a secondary school attended by students of multiple nationalities stated that she had waited some time before discussing the events in Paris.

On the one hand, I wanted to allow myself to think about the attack, but on the other hand I realised that I have a pedagogic relationship with my students. About the way you discuss this kind of matters with pupils, you should think very carefully as a teacher. For example by asking pupils about their emotions and to ask them to talk about their possible fears by ways of asking questions. As a teacher, I needed more time and information to make my students think about what had happened. (Personal communication, 16 November 2015).

Media reports about teacher responses often focused on teachers asking for help, referring to situations they could not handle, and fear and tension in the classroom. However, while many teachers admitted that discussing politically sensitive issues is not easy, there are many examples of teachers

who successfully conducted debates on these issues, with or without the help of the authorities, special trainers or organisations.

In January 2016, a workshop was held during the annual Day for Teachers of Social Studies organised by ProDemos (House for Democracy and the Rule of Law) and the Association of Teachers of Social Studies (NVLM). About 30 teachers gathered to discuss the question of whether they are, one year after the tragic events in Paris, sufficiently prepared should a similar incident happen. While several participants praised existing projects that assist teachers in discussing controversial issues in the classroom, the main conclusion reached was that ultimately teachers are expected to deal with situations that arise in the classroom themselves. One of the goals of the workshop was to create a checklist so that teachers would be better prepared to discuss politically sensitive issues with students holding extreme ideas. One of the items on the final checklist composed by the participants, was that a teacher must have sufficient knowledge about the conflicts in the Middle East (and their history) to be able to understand and explain the main concepts. This point has been mentioned elsewhere; for example in an interview, the Dutch-Egyptian writer Monique Samuel, advises civics teachers to pay extra attention to perceptions of reality:

If you talk about the Israeli-Palestine conflict, do you talk about Palestine, occupied Palestine, the occupied Palestinian territories, the Palestinian territories or the disputed territories as the Israeli people call these areas? Is a Hamas fighter a rebel, a hero, a terrorist, a political activist or a freedom fighter? Take a Dutch newspaper. How does the media talk about Moroccans? Change the word Moroccan into Jew and take a look what you get. The worst form of anti-Semitism you can imagine. Make the pupils aware of the words they use.

*(Pertijs 2015b: 15)*

Furthermore, the participants of the workshop underlined the necessity to gather information not only from Dutch national media outlets, but also from other sources; for example CNN and Al Jazeera, or websites frequently visited by students (e. g. [www.maroc.nl](http://www.maroc.nl) or [www.geenstijl.nl](http://www.geenstijl.nl)). This would enable teachers to understand the information being shared among students who use these kinds of sources to support their opinion, and to thereby minimise the risk of bias. Chrifi and Bellaart (2015) claim that teachers and students accuse each other of only being informed regarding one side of an argument, and unwilling to address the issue from another perspective:

The teacher assumes that news coverage by the national media is usually correct and value-free. Students believe this news is one-sided western, manipulated or even made up [...] The teacher believes he or she is carefully choosing the words. For example ‘Muslim terrorists in Paris’. Young people believe that the connection between religion and terrorists is incorrect. “Who is she calling Muslims?” And: “The freedom of speech is important, but we are not allowed to say that Jewish terrorists kill children in Gaza”.

*(Chrifi and Bellaart 2015)*

During the workshop, the participants complained about the role of the authorities. ‘Why does the Minister of Education always refer to processes of radicalisation?’ one of the participants wondered. ‘She is only framing the problem, while radicalisation is only part of the problem’ (Personal communication, 29 January 2016). Another point of concern raised by the participants was the lack of a comprehensive program from the authorities to discuss controversial issues in the classroom. The result of this lack of policy is that teachers have to find their own way to discuss politically sensitive issues in the classroom, or to take part in special teacher training programs.

## Approaches

At the beginning of 2016, a number of possible approaches to the problem of addressing politically sensitive issues in the classroom had emerged. The initiatives taken to discuss sensitive issues in the classroom, targeting hard to reach learners from different sides, can be divided in four categories:

1. Teacher training;
2. Peer education;
3. Socratic method; and
4. Individual teachers’ skills.

### 1. Teacher training

Since the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting, one focal point that emerged was the need to offer appropriate teacher training. According to the Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science, Ms Bussemaker, education is more than simply the transfer of knowledge. ‘It is also about individual development, the search to [find] your own voice and to acquire a critical and reflexive attitude. The teacher fulfils an essential role. Skills to start a difficult conversation should have a place in the curriculum of teacher

training colleges' (Bussemaker 2016: 2). An important question raised was who should offer this support. Some critical remarks have been made. The Dutch Member of Parliament, Ahmed Marcouch stated that schools shouldn't hire 'charlatans from intercultural communication or something like that' (Kamerman 2015):

After the Paris attack they directly appeared: the specialists and the interpreters. That is undesirable, even dangerous. We have to make sure that municipalities, the police and schools have their own experts.  
(Kamerman 2015)

Teacher training plays an important role in integration and in the development of coherent citizenship education at Dutch schools (De Graaf 2016: 7). Institutes for teacher training are key to preparing teachers-in-education who are firmly grounded and confident enough to mentor their students in difficult conversations, and to stimulate them to behave as conscious citizens (De Graaf 2016: 7). To assist in this, a special project, *Dialogue as an instrument of civics*, has been developed to support teachers-in-education to start a dialogue with their students (SLO and Diversion 2015). This method or project was based on the peer education method and developed by the agency for social innovation, Diversion, the teacher training of the Hogeschool of Rotterdam and the Hogeschool of Amsterdam, and the national institute for curriculum development in the Netherlands (SLO). The policy suggests the right atmosphere is necessary to establish a dialogue with pupils about sensitive issues; this can be created according to the following three stages (Diversion 2015). The first stage is to become a discussion partner by not denying the worldview of pupils, putting oneself in an open-minded position and asking questions. An important element here is the ability to analyse the class and to understand what they are trying to say. The second stage is that of facilitator. One of the recommendations is to adjust the moderation of the dialogue to the needs of the class and the teacher's own style. All pupils should be involved, and there should be space for different kinds of opinions. The authors propose a carousel debate (in which students debate a position from various angles) to bring rational and emotional arguments together. The third stage is focused on closing the dialogue positively. The teacher should analyse the class, ask himself whether some pupils might have felt ignored or attacked during the discussion, and address this in closing (Diversion 2015). This method is being implemented at different teacher training colleges, and is more complex than this brief analysis is able to convey. A special method is also being prepared for teachers working in primary school settings.



An alternative way to assist teachers is by offering specialist training. The Dutch State Secretary for Education, Culture and Science commissioned the foundation, School en Veiligheid (School and Safety), to organise specialised training to assist in the discussion of politically sensitive issues in class. The training began a year after the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting. The goals of initiating a conversation with students is a key feature of this training. Hester Radstake, one of the trainers, explains there is no ‘standard recipe’ because numerous factors play a role, e.g. the level of tension and timeliness of the topic, the age and background of students, the experience teachers have facilitating conversations, the atmosphere and level of safety in the classroom, among other variables (Pertijs 2016a: 6). To support teachers in preparing conversations about controversial topics, Radstake summarised the literature according to five questions: Why? What? Who? Where? When?

The goal of the Why-question is to explicate the cause of the conversation and what you want to achieve, the What-question relates to the topic itself (what is it about?), the Who-question is focused on the position of the students and the teacher himself (what is their point of view?), the Where-question concerns the level of safety and the atmosphere in the classroom, and finally the When-question is about the timing of the conversation, for example, what happened before and the level of knowledge of students. (Pertijs 2016: 6)

During training teachers are recommended to adopt an inquisitive stance toward any conversation and to remain interested and open, despite their own convictions (Pertijs 2016: 6). Teachers are also advised to tolerate different opinions, but to establish clear rules as well. Intolerant, hateful, violent or radical views should be actively opposed by the teacher (Radstake 2016: 17). To avoid emotions becoming too intense, a time-out should be included, during which students can be asked to summarise what has been said, or what they think they have learned up to that point (Pertijs 2016: 6).

One of the main risks is that hard to reach learners will cease to participate in any discussion if they feel completely misunderstood and disrespected by the teacher. Chrifi and Bellaart from the Kennisplatform Integratie & Samenleving offer teachers four practical tips (Chrifi and Bellaart 2015). Firstly, the teacher should underline the difficulty of the subject, and explain that it will be necessary to examine it carefully as a group. Secondly, they stress that it is important to demonstrate clear understanding before confronting pupils with what they are saying. Thirdly, the teacher should ask questions to encourage the pupils to put themselves in

the position of someone else (e. g. how would your father react?). Finally, the teacher should not mention the word radicalisation too early. Thus, the focus might be on religion and the search for your identity. The authors stress that teachers and other professionals require support to be able to communicate effectively. 'If they don't get any support, we will increase the gap between the professionals and young people' (Chrifi and Bellaart 2015).

Besides School en Veiligheid, a number of other organisations have also offered teacher training, including the Anne Frank Foundation, which has developed training referred to as *An effective conversation after a discriminatory remark* (Anne Frank Foundation n. d.). Teachers from all parts of the country have participated in the training they offer (Pertijs 2016c: 7). The expertise unit for the Social Stability of the Dutch ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, which is responsible for integration, offers training on: 'How to deal with ideals?' The aim of this is to ensure that teachers have a better understanding of the processes of radicalisation from a pedagogical perspective (Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid n. d.). Other organisations that offer supporting materials online include De Vreedzame School (The Peaceful School).

A strong focus of all these trainings and materials is the importance of starting an open dialogue in what learners perceive of as a secure and safe environment. One of the concerns addressed by teachers is that some teachers avoid starting difficult conversations or deliberately ignore the extreme opinions voiced by some students (Kleijwegt 2016, 51). According to Kleijwegt, ignoring the significance of conversations by overlooking remarks is irresponsible (Kleijwegt 2016: 51). Kleijwegt (2016) urges school leadership to ensure that teachers start communicating on this issue, so that those teachers who do not feel comfortable discussing these matters, do not feel isolated. The role of school leadership is not defined clearly in this context, and practices vary from school to school. In meetings and at workshops teachers mentioned the different approaches initiated by school leadership. In some cases after a serious incident school leaders invite all teachers to discuss how best to deal with a situation, or they invite civics teachers only to discuss with students the details of what has happened. There are examples available of leaders who prefer to ignore events like the Paris shootings, or those who decide to take action themselves by providing examples of how to cope with the actual situation.

## 2. Peer education

One characteristic of peer education is that schools can give peer educators space to share their message and own experiences with students (Diversio 2011: 55):

It worked surprisingly well to invite a Muslim and a Jew who got [on] well together. We spent three lessons talking about the Holocaust and three lessons about the Middle East. The first question we asked students is how a Muslim looks [...] They [say] Kadir is a Muslim. When asking how a Jew looks like they said 'they have curls, a little hat and wear black clothes'.  
(*Pertijs 2014a*).

Eventually the Jewish peer educator managed to reach out to students. The agency mentioned above for social innovation, Diversio, has a nationwide network of peer educators. However, an important precondition of the success of peer education is that the peer educator and the peer respect each other as equals (Diversio 2011: 40). According to peer educator Maryam El Rahmouni of Diversio, even an apparently big gap between the student and the peer educator can be bridged, as she experienced as a Muslim at an entirely white and provincial school (El Rahmouni 2015). Peer educators are trained to react to any confession or remark by pupils, even when those remarks are offensive (Diversio 2015: 28). This puts the peer educator in a different position to the teacher.

## 3. Socratic method

The Socratic method relies on two starting points: it is not a discussion, but a shared philosophical investigation into 'the truth', and although this truth probably does not exist, we should try to find it (Mahoney 2015: 8). As with the dialogue method applied in peer education, as described above, it is important to ask pupils questions. According to Ahmed Marcouch, civics teachers should remain neutral:

You especially have to ask questions and the task of the teacher should be to make the pupils think and doubt. Many Muslims start doubting when it concerns religious questions. Some teachers are uncertain, because they say they have less knowledge about Islam than their pupils. Then they keep silent. This also happens when you have fantasists of Islamic State in your class.  
(*Pertijs 2014b: 21*)

The Dutch civics teacher Barry Mahoney practises the Socratic method in his lessons. He describes one of his experiences:

- Pupil A** Muslims are mentally retarded, because they decapitate people. It's true, isn't it?
- Teacher** What is exactly true?
- Pupil A** That they are retarded.
- Teacher** Who?
- Pupil A** The Muslims, didn't I just tell you so?
- Teacher** Why are Muslims mentally retarded?
- Pupil A** Because they decapitate people and ruin beautiful cities and they believe in an old fool who totally doesn't exist.
- Teacher** So there are three reasons why Muslims are mentally retarded. Can anyone think of more reasons?
- Pupil B** Those women wear a burqa or something like that, isn't that abnormal?
- Teacher** Why?
- Pupil B** Well, you cannot see them at all, maybe they carry a bomb under their burqa.
- Teacher** When?
- Pupil B** Huh, what do you mean?  
(Mahoney 2015: 9)

According to Mahoney, the moderator must focus in a very literal way on the words being uttered: 'Only those very words can be questioned, because other cases cannot' (2015: 9).

#### 4. The role of the individual teacher

Directly after the *Charlie Hebdo* shootings, teachers instantly had to decide how to discuss the attack. The experiences of teachers when doing so varied tremendously. Some teachers were horrified by what they heard in their classrooms, and did not know how to react. Others found a way to discuss the subject by focusing on the victims, on freedom of speech, or by trying to determine how the pupils experienced the attack. A teacher at a so-called 'black' school, attended by pupils at a junior general secondary educational level, wanted her pupils to think seriously about what had happened. She decided to let her pupils write an essay, but before they started writing, the teacher explained clearly the importance of argumentation, and establishing norms and values. Discovering the opinions of the pupils

was not the main goal of this task; it was that the pupils should effectively express their ideas on paper (Boonman 2015).

While there are more opportunities for teachers seeking support now, they never know when something will happen, or when an unprepared conversation will be initiated in the classroom. They are widely aware that they should expect the unexpected. Some teachers state that they would like to discuss controversial issues with their students, but they have no time to do so because of their other obligations (Kleijwegt 2016: 50). According to many civics teachers, it is 'normal' to discuss controversial issues as it is part of their job, and they are often seen as experts at their schools. Despite this apparent normalcy it is not easy, even when they are well prepared. Unexpected remarks always arise. Thus, it is necessary to ask: What is the best teaching style in a case where a student openly supports a terrorist attack, or says refugees should die on their way to Europe because they are rapists? Should a teacher always be neutral, or should they follow the official line set by the authorities? Should the teacher engage in a dialogue with the students, offering a space for all opinions, or should the teacher play devil's advocate and confront the students? Tensions rise after a serious incident like the Paris attacks, and teachers might not necessarily have the option of preparing a lesson carefully in advance. As research shows, experience helps when teaching controversial issues, but choices always have to be made according to the school type, the atmosphere in the class, and the actual remarks made by students.

## Challenges

More than a year after the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting, the question of how best to discuss controversial issues in the classroom is still a hot topic in Dutch schools. New reports are being published, conferences are being held about radicalisation processes and the role of the education system in interrupting them, and politicians continue to stress the importance of civic education in relation to processes of mental segregation, as described earlier in this chapter. Since the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting, the number of organisations (state supported, non-profit and commercial) offering training for teachers has increased.

Moreover, as a result of the refugee crisis, a new politically sensitive question has entered the arena: How can the country handle the number of refugees arriving, predominantly with a Muslim background, and how tolerant should the Dutch people be? Some students characterise refugees as potential terrorists and rapists, often referring to the Muslim background

of the young men arriving from Syria, Iraq or Afghanistan. At the same time, students with a Muslim background who felt offended after the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting once more feel attacked, because their religion is once again part of a fierce debate about norms and values, freedom of speech, and cultural differences. Just as a year ago, the media continues to play a key role by intensively reporting on these issues. Once again, young people are searching for answers on media outlets or websites they feel reflect their views, highlighting sources that confirm what they believe to be true.

A major challenge for teachers will be to deal with the media impact on students. Students have 24/7 access to the internet, and often use information sources other than those used by their teachers. Especially after serious incidents, such as the Paris attacks, conspiracy theories arise online, offering evidence to posit certain truths, apparently supported by pictures, videos and documentation. On the other hand, the mainstream media is widely criticised for bias (e.g. the coverage of the Paris attacks in comparison to the media coverage of the Beirut bombings) or being overly sensitive to hype. A teacher must prevent the loss of his or her authority in front of students, but a teacher can no longer solely rely on their own knowledge about the world and ongoing events when raising controversial issues.

A further challenge is to prepare teachers so they can manage learners' opinions effectively in the wake of unexpected events. When controversial events occur, it is important to remember that the number of hard to reach learners is often much larger than initially anticipated. While the media initially focused on Muslim youths holding radical opinions, other groups hold radical opinions that represent a serious challenge to teachers also. As Kleijwegt observed, there are two worlds and two realities in schools. Multiple issues can cause tensions at unexpected moments. To date, a number of possible training schemes have become available; however, the opportunities to participate in a training are too limited. Some training is offered only a couple of times a year. After the terrorist attacks in Paris (in January and in November), special meetings were attended by many teachers wanting to share their experiences and generate ideas and possible solutions. Teachers are aware that a similar terrorist attack may take place in Europe, maybe even in the Netherlands. The only question is when.

The third challenge is choosing the right approach. What this should be is the subject of ongoing discussion among teachers of civic education. Good practices are being shared at training sessions, conferences and workshops, but teachers are still searching for the best approach to teaching controversial issues in uncertain circumstances. Civics teachers are very aware of the complexity of the controversial issues being discussed in the classroom. Therefore, it has been suggested that, while there is no single solu-

tion for how best to teach controversial issues, such issues should be given a permanent place within the civic education curriculum, so that they are regularly debated and not only discussed when strong feelings are triggered by circumstances.

The final challenge is to create an atmosphere in schools in which talking about controversial issues is a daily practice, and is a part of the democratic school culture supported by students and teachers alike. This will not be easy, as long as public and political debates on controversial issues continue to be over-heated, driven by insults, threats and even assaults. In today's media-saturated and polarised societies, teachers must find a way to provide a secure environment for all students from various backgrounds holding different perspectives about current events.

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# Emancipatory? Critical reflections on promoting self-efficacy among marginalized youth

## Introduction

Emancipatory civic education must reflect on its embedding into current power structures ‘How is emancipation of the marginalised groups served by our interventions?’ This question was raised in the course of a focus group concerning ‘Hard to reach Learners’ (a programme funded by NECE (Networking European Citizenship Education)<sup>1</sup> since 2012). The term emancipation usually refers to liberation from power structures, and hence to a questioning of the same. The question of how emancipation is served by civic education is important to many practitioners, as expressed in the recently published Frankfurt Declaration (2015) in Germany, written by academics and practitioners in the field of civic education. The Frankfurt Declaration discusses positions for a ‘critical-emancipatory Political Education’ and one position, termed ‘Reflexivity’, stating:

Political Education is itself part of the political. Learning relations are not free from power structures, Political Education reveals this. Learners and political educators are part of social and political discourses which influence their perceptions, ways of thinking and actions. The neo-liberal approach of the ‘self-entrepreneur’ or ‘self-responsible’ consumer imposes itself within educational institutions. Furthermore, power structures continue to be reproduced along dominant gender and ethnic categories. Critical-emancipatory Political Education starts where these kinds of normative constructions are made visible, criticized and

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1 NECE is primarily funded by the German Federal Agency for Civic Education (bpb: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung) and is a European platform with partners in several EU countries; see [www.nece.eu](http://www.nece.eu)

questioned. Political educators are conscious of their social embeddedness and take a critical-reflexive stance, which they make transparent and therefore open to criticism. In doing so, they offer learners protection against being subdued by the ideas of the educator, whilst reinforcing the right of the student to self-will and self-determination.

*Frankfurt Declaration 2015*

When considering civic education that addresses socially marginalised youths, the question of how power structures are reproduced through these programmes is rarely raised. Usually the discourse focuses on how civic education can reach marginalised groups utilising new formats and approaches, and on how programmes can be implemented successfully (Besand and Fuhrmann n. d., 2013, Kohl and Seibring 2012). This can be considered progress when compared to a situation where civic education providers do not aim to reach different kinds of people. However, how new formats and approaches themselves comprise ‘part of the political’ (Frankfurt Declaration 2015) is seldom discussed. In this chapter, I want to contribute to such reflexivity by asking how civic education designed to address socially marginalised youths can be thought of as embedded into power structures. This is necessary because if we want to discuss how to support emancipation by questioning power structures, we need to understand how we can think of them and how civic education itself is embedded within them.

This I intend to explore with the help of critical theoretical approaches and using the example of the bpb. The bpb is not only very engaged in the field of so-called ‘Hard to reach learners’, where it focuses on socially marginalised youth,<sup>2</sup> it also provides an approach that might appeal to other institutions. For example, it asks about the interests, habits and living conditions of young people and aims to support them by fostering their social competencies and self-efficacy, so that they can stand up for their own rights. We might then question how these seemingly emancipatory aims can be thought of as embedded into power structures. To conduct this critical reflection, I begin by reviewing the work of one of the most influential critical social theoreticians, Antonio Gramsci (1991–2002), and

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2 I will use the term ‘socially marginalised youths’ to refer to those young people described as ‘poorly educated’ or ‘educationally underprivileged’ by the bpb, which thereby takes as a basis a specific educational concept. The terms ‘distanced from politics’ and ‘poorly educated’ were and are discussed extensively in Germany (cf. Calmbach and Borgstedt 2012, Ottensbach 2011, and Sturzenhecker 2002).

the studies he has inspired.<sup>3</sup> This insight will inform the overall thesis of this chapter, which is predicated on the supposition that educational practices always stabilise the consent of subaltern groups in alignment with the power structures they are governed by. This perspective does not neglect the reality that while educational practices might serve as emancipatory processes, it is important when supporting the further development of new educational approaches to ask how they might reproduce and stabilise power structures.

Subsequently, the approach taken when fostering social competencies and self-efficacy is reflected with the help of current research studies that deal critically with competence-orientated civic education. From the current body of research available, the thesis can be extracted that the support of social competencies and self-efficacy runs the risk of stabilising existing power structures through (presumably unconsciously) concealment. The aim is not to evaluate existing approaches, as empirical research would be necessary, and this is unavailable thus far; for such evaluation criteria would need to be established. Hence, the aim of this reflection is to encourage discussion about how civic education programmes, which are usually aimed at emancipation and participation, might be responsible for organising the consent of youths to the power structures governing them.

## The promotion of self-efficacy in the scope of civic education with socially marginalised youth

After the Second World War, civic education was historically related to re-education, as fostered by the Western Allies in the western region of Germany. This re-education aimed to de-Nazify the Germans, and to familiarise them with the system of liberal democracy. Against this historical background, the bpb was established.<sup>4</sup> Today the bpb continues to support Civic Education with publications, workshops, trainings and so

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3 Opratko gives an overview of these studies (Opratko 2010: 199–202). Antonio Gramsci lived from 1891 to 1937. He was a ‘leading representative of the Italian workers’ movement’, ‘member of the Socialist Party’ and ‘co-founder and party chairman of the Communist Party’ (Demirovic 2007: 21). From 1924 onwards he was a Member of Parliament and in 1926 he was arrested for the ‘incitement of civil war’. Gramsci died in 1937 only shortly after his release from prison (Demirovic 2007: 21).

4 The bpb was thought of as a German supplement to the concept of re-education implemented by the Allies (Schultheiß 1990: 20).

forth. During its history, it has always had to justify its existence as a publicly financed institution and by extension the need for civic education. The legitimisation of the bpb can be localised in the context of the prevention of communism or right wing extremism or the establishment of a new political culture in the newly-formed German states after German Reunification.

At the end of the 1990s, the bpb was reorganised and it was acknowledged that it did not reach people from socially deprived milieus effectively (Hirsch 2014). Meanwhile, the aim to reach socially deprived persons could be seen as a part of the new legitimisation by the bpb. In times of social disintegration, the bpb is tasked with heightening social cohesion (Jaschke 2010:58, 108).<sup>5</sup> This is one reason for the various initiatives it has developed to date: particularly with the aim of reaching socially marginalised youths it authorises research studies, develops new educational materials for civic education as a subject in schools and supports networks for practitioners and academics interested in this topic.

One ‘main objective’ for the bpb when addressing youths is to ‘to arouse an interest in commitment and participation at an early age; essentially, to teach children and young people that they have the power to make things happen’ (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung 2012). With the aim of gaining access to socially marginalised young people (as so-called ‘hard to reach learners’) the bpb develops assistance in their immediate social proximity, eliciting the interests of young people, and seeking to promote their self-efficacy. These elements can be traced back to different scientific expert assessments commissioned by the bpb with the aim of receiving recommendations to work with ‘youth of poorly educated milieus’ and those ‘with a migration background’ (Bittlingmayer and Hurrelmann 2005, Roth 2005).

In one of these expert assessments Bittlingmayer *et al.* states ‘youth from poorly educated milieus are not reached by readily accessible offers of civic education. As an example they mention music festivals where the opportunity of receiving political information is provided’ (Bittlingmayer and Hurrelmann 2005: 18). Even within such formats, a ‘minimum level of individual motivation and personal interest is indispensable’ (Bittlingmayer

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5 The bpb is a subordinate authority of the Federal Ministry of the Interior. In 2010, the Ministry of the Interior furnished an expert assessment asking for the ‘conditional factors of the social cohesion’. This expert assessment recommended the ‘strengthening of the political education’ (with regard to political participation) and the bpb is expressly mentioned under the keyword ‘Questions of implementation’ (Jaschke 2010: 58, 108).

and Hurrelmann 2005: 19). However, young people from ‘underprivileged milieus with poor school education’ have no such motivation and interest (Bittlingmayer and Hurrelmann 2005: 22). According to Gaiser and de Rijke this applies to about 25 per cent of the youths in Germany (Bittlingmayer and Hurrelmann 2005: 19–20, Gaiser *et al.* 2000). These youths

[A]re particularly often characterized by external controlling convictions, they understand their social environment as something in which they do not have access to any design and alteration possibilities. Their self-confidence and self-esteem is below average [...]. The majority of disadvantaged young people are socially segregated in a way that even short termed motivational drives to attain self-defined aims subjectively move into a hardly reachable distance, even if they are not deemed to be very exhausting from an external point of view.

Bittlingmayer and Hurrelmann 2005: 22 For this reason, Bittlingmayer and Hurrelmann advise the bpb to start with programmes ‘before the immediate civic education work in the stricter sense’ (Bittlingmayer and Hurrelmann 2005: 22). They suggest a pedagogical approach, which they call ‘pre-political civic education’, aimed at reinforcing youth self-esteem and self-confidence and strengthening the ‘internal controlling convictions’ of young people. This is associated ‘with the belief [...] that social contexts are not fateful but changeable by each person himself/herself’ (Bittlingmayer and Hurrelmann 2005: 22–23). Only when this belief exists is it possible to awaken a rudimentary interest in political questions (Bittlingmayer and Hurrelmann 2005: 23). The authors point out that socialisation experiences cannot be removed by political education projects, but might raise the interest of youths, which the bpb can then respond to (Bittlingmayer and Hurrelmann 2005: 22–23). The arousal of interest is seen as the precondition to offering civic education and motivating youths to participate (Bittlingmayer and Hurrelmann 2005: 23). As soon as young people have attained an awareness of personal agency through education and the attainment of political-democratic and social competence, action becomes ‘less problematic and less improbable’ (Bittlingmayer and Hurrelmann 2005: 23), according to the cautious formulations of authors. Their concrete advice to the bpb is to advance forms of cooperation through youth work institutions and youth welfare service, and to promote projects in the immediate social proximity of youths (Bittlingmayer and Hurrelmann 2005: 28, 31).

## Wide-ranging concept of politics

The bpb commissioned a study in 2010 to provide an in-depth examination of the political interest of ‘young people distanced from politics and poorly educated’. The data for this study was collected in 36 narrative individual interviews with so-called ‘poorly educated youths’; both native and migrant secondary school pupils and trainees who had completed their secondary education (Calmbach *et al.* 2012: 44). The study concluded that these young people conceive of politics in a manner that cannot be explained according to the ‘categories of the political class’ (Calmbach *et al.* 2012: 76). These categories include: being able to prefer a political party and to justify that preference, knowing about politicians and the political system, following political news coverage and contributing to the discussions in political circles concerning news items (Calmbach *et al.* 2012).

Furthermore, they concluded that young people are interested in justice in society and in the design of their living spaces; they assign spokespersons to communicate their problems and desires and to pursue their social and political interests. Moreover, they are ready to stand up for others and commit to concrete aspects pertaining to their immediate social proximity (Calmbach *et al.* 2012: 9). Typical canonical topics, which, among others, refer to politicians, political parties, political business, and Europe, are perceived of as uninteresting by the young people interviewed. However, they state a strong interest in topics including

[A]pprenticeship place, unemployment/welfare aid, justice, discrimination, youth centres, poverty, money, school, crime, violence, family problems, naturalization, multicultural circle of friends, consumption, restriction due to minor age, social benefits, homelessness.

*Calmbach et al. 2012: 69*

Beyond this, the study finds the youths interviewed perceive politics as something that ‘happens’ above them; it ‘is done by others – which they are glad about’ (Calmbach *et al.* 2012: 16). They consider their own opportunities to exercise influence too few, and the younger the interviewees the more this belief applies. The researchers therefore recommend an orientation toward a ‘wide-ranging concept of politics’, warning that with a strict and rigid concept of politics ‘the political agenda of “poorly educated youth”’ would remain concealed (Calmbach *et al.* 2012: 77).



## Examples of bpb projects

Meanwhile, there are numerous bpb projects in place in the immediate social proximity of young people; these include projects taking place in youth centres or in schools and working toward a concept of politics not confined to institutional knowledge. The aim of promoting self-efficacy is often recognisable therein. When examining some of the bpb projects more closely in the context of the topic ‘hard to reach learners’ it becomes obvious that (similar to the studies commissioned by the bpb) a strong focus is directed towards the individual. On the one hand, the individual is described as in deficit and needing their competencies enhanced, but on the other, they are seen as holders of resources (such as interest and talent), which should be afforded greater recognition.

Many of the programmes aimed at empowering young people focus on fostering their social skills and their self-efficacy: Young people shall ‘experience themselves as political actors capable of acting’ (Bittlingmayer *et al.* 2010: 2) or gain support to discover their own strengths (StreetUniverCity Berlin 2008: 1). The project ‘Dialogue at School’ aims to achieve the ‘strengthening of self-confidence and self-efficacy as well as the development of social competencies, such as communication skills, judgment, conflict and consent abilities’ (Dialog macht Schule n.d.). One important element of the project is that young people organise their ‘own projects, which should offer ‘experiences of success and of self-efficacy’ (Müller-Hofstede n.d.). In doing so, ‘Dialogue at School’ aims to support the political participation of young people (Dialog macht Schule n.d.). When evaluating many bpb projects, it also becomes obvious that the aim is to visualise marginalised positions; this is either because young people develop their own projects, or because they contribute with their own issues and topics.

Extracts from expert assessments (commissioned by the bpb for the purpose of receiving recommendations for their work with socially marginalised youths), and related project examples show the bpb is concerned with the question of how to broaden access to publicly financed civic education. The approach to consider the interests of young people and to support their competencies is widely appreciated. Considering the bpb, as well as other institutions of fostering competencies among socially marginalised youths in the context of civic education programmes, several project evaluations—have been implemented (Besand *et al.* n.d., 2013, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung 2001, Zentrum für Angewandte Politikforschung 2013). They examine how new formats of civic education are received by youths and how their implementation can be improved. However, to date there

has been no research on the question of how these new formats can themselves be embedded into power structures. For this reason, there is no evaluation of the extent to which these formats reflect or support the power structures they are supposed to destabilise. Such an exploration is necessary for a civic education system serving the narrative of emancipation that is additional to the often-researched question of ‘how to reach specific target groups’. In the following, I will elaborate on this thesis. This will make it possible to illustrate how one might think of the societal power structures that are ‘incorporated’ and hence are not reproduced against the will of the individual, but with their agreement and contribution.

## Civic education and the reproduction of power structures

To examine how practices of civic education can be generally thought of as embedded in the reproduction of power structures I refer to the concept of political power as defined by the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci (1991–2002). He was interested in the emancipation of the subaltern, that is non-ruling, social groups. Gramsci assumed that in liberal democracies, political power is not only based on coercion but ‘on a combination of coercion and consent’, whereby consent in this case means the active and/or passive consent of subalterns to being dominated (Becker et al. 2013: 7). This societal consent has to be always considered as contested and precarious. Therefore, referring to Gramsci, the question arises of how the consensus of the subalterns, meaning the various subordinated groups who do ‘not form a homogenous unit’ (Becker et al. 2013: 211), ‘on the structure[s] dominating them is permanently reproduced in a contested manner by means of concrete compromise and involvement projects’<sup>6</sup> (Opratko 2012: 30). This fight to uphold consent takes place in the field of civil society, which includes, according to Gramsci, educational institutions, the academic and cultural sphere, the media and everyday practices (Demirović 2007: 25). Based on such an understanding of political power, the bpb (akin to other educational institutions) is acting in civic contexts; that is, in contexts in which the struggle for consent to/resistance against existing power structures takes place (Merkens 2011: 197–198).

However, Gramsci does not assume that the dominated social groups will necessarily be manipulated by the dominant ones or live in a kind of

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6 In Gramscian thought, a ‘compromise and involvement project’ would mean, for example, giving workers higher salaries or social insurance, or agreeing to levels of worker participation in political and economic spheres.

‘wrong consciousness’ (Becker *et al.* 2013: 111). His understanding of ideology differs from many commonplace ones: Gramsci does not only understand ideology as a phenomenon of the mind but also as a phenomenon of material practice (Becker *et al.* 2013). What is meant by this can be illustrated in brief using the example of religion: someone who is religious does not only ‘believe’ but also performs practical actions (practices), such as praying or attending church service (Becker *et al.* 2013: 111). These everyday practices would be ‘passed on, taught, conveyed – in Gramsci’s words: organized’ in civic spaces (Becker *et al.* 2013: 111). In this process, these practices change permanently because interests, opinions, practices of the subaltern groups are adopted and integrated. This process of adoption and integration is also shaped by power structures. Hence, ‘power structures not only exist as constraints imposed from above or the external environment’, but also consist of ‘autonomous adjustments’ and ‘active integrations’ into existing societal relations (Merkens 2011: 194–195).

We must note here that Gramsci’s theory also assumes a ‘permanent transformation of the cultural habits, customs, norms, and values in correspondence to the predominant mode of production’, which is ‘pedagogically instructed and structured by state activity ...’ (Merkens 2011: 199). The current mode of production can be termed the post-Fordist knowledge-based economy. Hence, the social scientist Andreas Merkens (following Gramsci) assumes the need for ‘educative mobilization of state and civil society’ as a basis for the post-Fordist way of working and living (Merkens 2011: 202). In post-Fordism the ‘flexible, knowledge-based working methods are learned [...], as well as corresponding lifestyle habits and everyday practices are pedagogically guided and connected with a subjective meaning’ (Merkens 2011: 202). Merkens, who deals with the applicability of Gramsci into a critical theory of current civic education, however, warns of knee-jerk reactions arising from these thoughts on ideology:

The ideological call from the ‘top’ to arrange the own life planning according to the guidelines of a flexible capitalism is [...] embedded in various civic practices and places in mutual pedagogical socialization processes always being determined by breaches, shifts, and compromises.

*Merkens 2011: 202*

Therefore, he demands to particularly focus on ‘the actual modes of adoption [...] which are determined by the active as well as passive self-integration, the dismissal or redefinition of the educative demand’ (Merkens 2011: 202–203).

We must then ask how civic education can be located against this theoretical backdrop. I suggest that by addressing socially marginalised youth, educational institutions (such as the bpb) can turn decidedly towards the subaltern, that is non-ruling, social groups. Many youth participation programmes work based on an approach that strongly appreciates, values and builds on the talents, topics, habits, life situations, and interests of young people; so from Gramsci's perspective, the interests of subaltern groups are recognised to some extent. The promotion of self-efficacy (which is often connected with the promotion of competence) can be interpreted as a reflection of the socio-political context of the current mode of production: the post-Fordist knowledge-based economy.

Based on the assumption that education is involved in the reproduction of power structures, Gramsci's wording of the everyday practices inspires us to further examine 'forms of civic education which mostly are invisible because they are unnamed and as such also often unnoticed' (Merkens 2011: 193). This is relevant because, along with the conveyance of everyday practices, ideas are also conveyed about 'how society is arranged, as well as beliefs, why something has to be like this or what is a questionable point to it' (Becker *et al.* 2013: 141). From a Gramscian point of view, societal relations are reproduced with the actions of the subjects, which point within this reproduction to a hegemonic structure (Merkens 2011: 203).<sup>7</sup> For a hegemonic-theoretical analysis this structure has 'to be recognized and criticized, however, in the same moment the emancipatory spheres need to be taken and politicized for "counter-hegemonic" interventions-' (Merkens 2011: 202–203).

Analogous to Gramsci's understanding of power structures and ideology, civic education programmes can be examined critically; specifically, with regard to the question of which way and to what extent they are involved in organising the consent of subaltern groups to the societal relations, dominating them via compromise and involvement projects (using the wording of Opratko 2012: 30). Thus, the question arises: how does the aim of fostering social competencies and self-efficacy run the risk of organising the consent of subaltern groups according to the societal relations dominating them? It is important to understand how such projects

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7 For a better understanding, this theoretical thought can be exemplified thus: To evaluate students with grades is a social practice; it is based on the assumption that different performances exist and that these different performances can be evaluated (Becker *et al.* 2013: 111). This can be seen as a hegemonial assumption since it is a common practice in schools. Hence, the societal practice of giving grades reproduces a hegemonic structure.

might stabilise power structures by concealing them (albeit presumably unconsciously). At least this is the provocative thesis extracted from current research studies addressing competence-orientated civic education and empowerment concepts critically (Kleemann-Göhring 2013, Bremer *et al.* 2010, Bünger 2011, Bröckling 2007).

Question power structures? A critical reflection on the goal of self-efficacy As described, the promotion of self-efficacy starts with the everyday practices in which young people exert influence on themselves. Returning to the bpb example, it has been demonstrated that new formats of civic education intend to promote the linguistic, social, and political competencies of young people: such as the ability to express oneself linguistically or to promote the belief of young people that what they say counts, and that it is beneficial for them to obtain a hearing and that their voices are important. Through this endeavour, educational organisations can promote the political capital, that is, “a specific cultural capital” to which language and education belong, but also symbolic capital (recognition) (Kleemann-Göhring 2013: 281). Often, this approach to promoting competencies is understood as ‘empowerment’ in civic education. We can then ask how such formats run the risk of reproducing power structures rather than challenging them. This question (amongst others) was highlighted by the educational scientists Helmut Bremer and Mark Kleemann-Göhring. They critically reflected on the promotion of competencies according to formats of civic education. Therefore, they referred to Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of the political field which understands politics also as a social field (and civic education as a part of this field), in which actors must be imagined as players participating in a game; accepting rules (which are often implied and unspoken) and assuming that their participation will pay off (Kleemann-Göhring 2013: 281). The political field has its own rules (like all other social fields), like ‘the way you may talk about politics’ (Kleemann-Göhring 2013: 281).

Kleemann-Göhring (2013: 281) describes fields as places of social struggle over the boundaries and rules of the game, and over the privilege of defining them. Holding one’s ground on the field depends on different means of power, one aspect of which is political capital, and another is ‘a habit adapted to the logic of the field’ (Kleemann-Göhring 2013: 281). The main actors of the political field are interested in ‘maintaining the field in its form, i. e. that the institutions, responsibilities, and rules are safeguarded’ (Kleemann-Göhring 2013: 282). These main actors belong in a way to the orthodox, system-stabilising pole in the field; therefore, ‘the greatest risk to them comes from those questioning the current rules of the game’ (Kleemann-Göhring 2013: 282). These persons are found at the het-

erodox, subversive pole, but this does not mean that the ‘democratic system shall be abolished’, rather than the current rules must be questioned (Kleemann-Göhring 2013: 282).

According to the author, a typical feature of social fields is the distinction between laypersons and experts (Kleemann-Göhring 2013: 281). Laypersons tend to anticipate self-exclusion, they do not talk about politics in accepted form, assuming that their opinion is not in demand (Bremer *et al.* 2010: 20). Civic education can be system-stabilising if the ‘ideal of the political citizen and her/his necessary citizens’ competencies are derived from the logic of the political field’ (Kleemann-Göhring 2013: 283). For this reason, the aim of civic education should not be to educate laypersons to become experts but ‘to revalue the existing competencies of the laypersons’ (Kleemann-Göhring 2013: 288) and ‘to generally question the division into experts and laypersons and the associated power structures’ (Lösch 2013: 130).

As shown previously, youth participation programmes today frequently begin with the interests and topics established by the youth contingent, but we must also ask what these programmes aim to achieve. Put bluntly: are they designed only to teach established rules or to questioning existing ones that exclude them? Considering the assumptions of Kleemann-Göhring and Bremer, it should be explored whether, through this kind of promotion, young people are only suited to a game whose rules are already prescribed, or if they are simultaneously encouraged to establish new rules for the game? Some civic education programmes promoting competencies might intend to teach established rules with the purpose of cultivating the necessary understanding to be able to question them. In this case, a question remains over to what extent the existence and functioning of symbolic power (as described for the political field) constitutes a learning objective of these programmes. So, for example the fact that a very specific cultural capital is necessary to be able to obtain a hearing. If the different forms of capital and their different social recognitions (respectively, the socially predominant recognition) do not become a subject of discussion, then power structures are reproduced to an unnecessary extent, in light of the sociological state of research.

That current empowerment and emancipation promises run the risk of stabilising power structures, by (presumably unintentionally) concealing them, cannot only be from with the perspective of the political field, but also from that of so-called ‘anti-subject’ objections, which can be understood to provoke a sceptical questioning of human possibilities. From these ‘anti-subject’ objections, a question arises about whether the attention of civic education programmes toward addressing socially marginal-

ised youths is only directed towards the subject, or if we also declare the societal structures characterised by a growing precariousness, social inequality, and processes of de-democratisation as a topic *within* these programmes.

Carsten Bünger remarks that civic education tends to ‘take sides and stand up for the strength of the subject und define the individual capacity of changing things as an objective of its own efforts’ (Bünger 2011: 315). One reason for this would be that subject-orientation is important for civic education, among other things, as a ‘didactic principle’, which takes every individual’s freedom of opinion and power of judgement seriously (Bünger 2011: 316). However, he criticises that the subject-orientation in civic education ‘[seems] to be accompanied by a focus on the individuals behind which the social structures are tending to disappear’ (Bünger 2011: 318). This argument can be underpinned by Ulrichs Bröcklings sociological analysis of the ‘entrepreneurial self’ [unternehmerische Selbst] as a societal role model (Bröckling 2007). Within this analysis, he addresses the concept of empowerment and interprets the theory of power upon which current empowerment concepts draw. This theory of power does not focus ‘on power structures themselves, but on the feeling of powerlessness [...], that they create amongst powerless people’ (Bröckling 2007: 192). Their potential for power should thereby increase, because ‘the more powerful they feel the fewer problems they will have – and the less cause of them’ (Bröckling 2007: 193). Bröckling states:

Empowerment aims only secondly at a redistribution of power, first it aims at overcoming the paralysing feelings of powerlessness. In the foreground it does not focus on how to solve problems but on how to build competencies to solve problems.

*Bröckling 2007: 194*

He concedes that one has to be conscious of the convertibility of power structures, in order to change them. However, ‘in practice results in an imbalanced situation’ (Bröckling 2007: 194). One begins ‘on the side of the subjects. They are those whose sense of self and political consciousness should be changed, in order to eliminate power blockages by these means’ (Bröckling 2007: 194). As evidence, Bröckling (2007) quotes a study concerning ‘citizen empowerment’.<sup>8</sup> The study shows that activists among grass root groups ‘did not have the impression to *possess* more power, but *felt* more powerful’ (Kieffer 1984: 32). In empowerment theories, power

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8 Kieffer (1984): 9–36.

is best understood as the ‘expectation of self-efficacy, internal controlling convictions and [...] internal force’, which can be termed an ‘expanding resource’ (Bröckling 2007: 194).

To foster such an expanding resource does not hurt the powerful because it does not question their power automatically: ‘when some people win power, this does not necessarily mean a loss of power for others’ (Bröckling 2007: 194). One might consider this a ‘win-win situation’; however, Bröckling criticises this view as a ‘harmonistic social utopia [...] from which all traces of the struggle for power are removed’ (Bröckling 2007: 195). Indeed, programmes of empowerment are often based on the assumption that people ‘only feel powerlessness because they have not recognised their own power and experienced it in action’ (Bröckling 2007: 196). Thus, to foster the ‘underused potential for self-control’ problems must be framed in such a way ‘that they appear to be problems of lack of self-control’. Doubtless in this case, individualisation is inherent to, if not the causes of the problems, but a way to solve them (Bröckling 2007). Here, Bröckling is highlighting a critical argument also recognised by representatives of empowerment concepts. The argument points to a reduction of the empowerment concept; to attendant de-politicisation, and to the excessive focus on the autonomous subject (Bröckling 2007: 197).

The skewedness of prevailing empowerment ideology is also criticised within the field of civic education. Bittlingmayer, who recommended the promotion of self-efficacy in an expert assessment for the bpb in 2005, returned to the topic in an essay in 2013. In the more recent piece, he reflects on the ‘field of tension of individual, self-centred competencies, on the one hand and political-institutional framework conditions [...] and participation opportunities, on the other hand’ (Bittlingmayer *et al.* 2013: 254). In this context, he warns of the ‘risk to serve the meanwhile predominant ideology of the activating State which tends to shift structural and systemic conditions of social inequality to the level of individual competence deficits and their treatment’ (Bittlingmayer *et al.* 2013: 269).

To accept the relevance of ‘social structures’ is one of the merits of so called anti-subject objections. These anti-subject objections question for example the far reaching spread (and often implied) assumption that an autonomous and self-transparent subject exists. However, the problem is that anti-subject objections are ‘largely ignored to date’ in the discourse on civic education (Bünger 2011: 315), although they offer numerous thought-provoking impulses about critical reflection. So, one anti-subject objection (discussed under the keyword ‘decentration of the subject’) states that subjects,



[Are] multiple conditioned in their understanding and in their capacity of self-determination: by experiences of encouragement or refused recognition, by the socially effective discourse about what can be deemed to be a self-determined life, by material resources as well as the symbolic repertoire of the expression of self-determination, etc. Autonomy and heteronomy thus have to be determined as much more entangled than the traditional subject character suggests.  
*Bünger 2011: 320*

This assumption might not be novel, but it seems that it had become obsolete when considering Bröckling's assumptions about the theory of power to which empowerment concepts seem to refer. This theory of power suggests that it does not promise success to explore the roots of powerlessness, but to request exposure of the remaining sources of power (Bröckling 2007: 201–202). In other words: It does not ask what makes us ill, but what makes us healthy (Bröckling 2007: 202).

Bünger, who discusses different theoretical anti-subject references with regard to civic education, hints at the term 'subjectivation', which, among others, can be traced back to Michel Foucault (Bünger 2011: 321–323; Foucault 1987). Subjectivation explores 'what kind of procedures are considered to appropriately mould' a subject (Bröckling 2007: 23; quote after Bünger 2011: 321). With regard to the promotion of competencies, which one can often identify as an aim of civic education in Germany (Wolf 2010; Eis 2013), the question to be asked is drawn from Foucault: How are power structures shifted nowadays *into* the subject and what kinds of socially organised incentives are set for self-guidance? These incentives for self-guidance are termed 'the arts of government' by Foucault, and they establish:

[K]nowledge, techniques, and procedures which help to identify states, groups, and individuals and to allocate them to a purpose – or more precisely: [they establish arts of government; remark A. H.] by which they can be caused to usefully guide themselves.  
*(Bünger 2011: 322)*

Civic education that questions power structures should therefore reflect and discuss what kind of subject it is aiming to 'mould' and for what reasons. To explore such practices of societal formation, special attention must be directed toward the points of contact between guidance by others and self-guidance. I will illustrate this with an example: One can find such points of contact regarding the practice of rewarding youths for

specific behaviours or actions (like giving grades when attending a programme). Concerning competence-oriented civic education, De Moll *et al.* (324) opine that when applying the term of competence, a point of contact between the guidance by others and self-guidance is been created. Hence, they understand the term competence as ‘a further subtle instrument of the technique and reciprocity of the guidance by others and self-guidance (De Moll *et al.* 2013: 299). That is, it can be thought of as being an “internal” capacity of individuals which has to get disposed as products of endeavour/effort and commitment’ (De Moll *et al.* 2013: 299).

In addition, Graefe highlights the link between competence-oriented civic education and current practices of societal formation, emphasising that the emancipatory education ideal (of civic education) overlaps with self-guidance qualities that are socially intended (Graefe 2011: 175–176). This is important as, ‘to be able to critically think and judge’ is not only an ideal (it is fragile anyhow from an anti-subject point of view) of democratic civic education which, for example, also asks for processes of de-democratisation. Critical thinking and judgment is also a societal demand addressing the subject in the post-Fordist knowledge-based economy.

In my opinion, and with these assumptions in mind, the competence and self-efficacy as an orientation can be critically reflected. This orientation points to a discourse in which the actors of civic education are ‘embedded’, and one that we can assume shapes their perception and programmes. Currently, many civic education programmes in Germany addressing socially marginalised youth seem to strive for a kind of individual emancipation as the individual young person educates himself/herself, learns the German language, enhances his/her skills of linguistic expression (and so on) – hence the individual has to advance toward something that he or she might have been barred from by society previously. This form of individual emancipation imposes other burdens on persons living in socially marginalised conditions and excluded by (educational, migration-related, job market-related, social) political measures.<sup>9</sup>

Also formats intended to link with the topics, interests, talents, and ‘resources’ that youths desire need to be critically questioned: To what extent do recognising formats and setting social incentives also contain

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9 At a conference on the German network ‘Verstärker’ (financed and run by the bpb) in November 2014, this thesis was stated by the social scientist Bettina Lösch, with regard to current civic education programmes that address socially marginalised youth.

aspects of subordination?<sup>10</sup> In what kind of socio-political context and by which incentive systems does civic education try to create socially, politically, and democratically competent youths? Does civic education question in its projects, the attribution of what is predominantly recognised as ‘socially competent’ and does it broach the issue of why children and young people do not have these predominantly recognised social competencies? For example, we must remember that, if youths have to live below the poverty line and in social flashpoints in a rich country like Germany, if they do not have access to language courses as migrants, or due to a missing residency status do not receive social benefits, rendering them not as ‘socially competent’ as society desires, the causes lie not in the ‘failed individuals’ but in society and politics itself. Here arises potential for a civic education that is critical of society.<sup>11</sup> To address anti-subject objections does not necessarily suggest the conclusion that it would not be beneficial to work in a subject-orientated manner. Bünger pleads for the use of anti-subject objections to ‘analyse the historically prevailing ideas of subject with regard to the things they mask and to their effects concerning power structures’ (Bünger 2011: 323). Conversely, it can be said that any civic education that does not analyse the historically prevailing ideas of the subject runs the risk of concealing power structures. The anti-subject analyses should be interpreted as a ‘challenge’, in order ‘to review or newly define the possibilities of political actions’ (Bünger 2011: 323).

When examining the anti-subject objections, for example, the argument could derive from the belief that young people should not only be addressed as persons whose voices counts and who are potentially powerful subjects. Such a one-sided subject-orientation ignores the conditionality of the subjects and their corresponding experiences; for example, the experience (or perception) that one’s own voice is not heard or does not count, and that one cannot influence anything. From the perspective of political science, such personal perceptions are absolutely covered by analyses concerning the current condition of democracy, whereby the tendencies

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10 Most recent critical theory deals with the relationship between recognition and subordination. Amy Allen states in this context: ‘The allegation that recognition and subordination would often co-occur raises questions which concern the normative status of the recognition itself’ (Allen 2014: 260–278, 271).

11 The ‘criticism of power’ is another demand for emancipatory-critical civic education as ‘autonomous thinking and action are limited by dependencies and structural social inequalities. These relations of power and domination should be detected and analysed’ (Frankfurt Declaration 2015). Hence, civic education should reflect on ‘how exclusions are produced and how barriers are created’ (Frankfurt Declaration 2015).

of de-democratisation are discussed i. e. under the keyword ‘Post-democracy’. Feelings of powerlessness and limitation should be discussed in civic education spaces. In this context, Bünger speaks of an ‘anti-heroic [...] corrective’ (2011: 323).

Furthermore, it could be concluded from the anti-subject objections-raised here that civic education programmes today take into consideration the socio-political context more intensely than before. If so, Lösch *et al.* (2014) demand that civic education dealing with social inequality should consider the categories race, gender and class as ‘categories of social inequality [that] hierarchically structure the social spaces and societal realities in a multiple and interlocked manner’ (Lösch *et al.* 2014: 51). Following up on this, I would like to add in summary that civic education that dedicatedly addresses persons in socially marginalised living conditions and seeks to contribute to their ‘empowerment’ should thematically deal with social inequality and power structures. Failing to do so would equate with the subject becoming a tool for silencing those they aim to emancipate, those most disadvantaged by these structures.

## Conclusion: Reflection of one’s own entanglement

It should be strongly welcomed that educational institutions, like the bpb, are seeking out ways to develop new offerings, address socially marginalised youth, and adopt new topics. However, with regard to bpb education programmes addressing socially and educationally deprived youth and promoting self-efficacy and so-called democratic competencies, the very ‘competence and activation discourse’ is recognisable – and this discourse itself should be ‘critically examined’ (Bünger 2011: 323). So far, this mainly happens only at a theoretical level, and there is no substantial empirical research, e. g. with ethnographic approaches, about how emancipatory ideals are interpreted in the context of an activation ideology. The call for reflexivity (as a criteria for an emancipatory education) would mean for the bpb and other educational institutions *not* to ask ‘how (...) politically active citizens can be “produced” in sufficient numbers and sufficient quality’ (Massing 1999: 52), but to work out their entanglement within power structures (Bünger 2011: 323).<sup>12</sup> Such reflexivity would necessarily also need to reflect the question of how one’s self, as an institution or individual, benefits from the existing power structures.

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12 Bünger does not demand this for the bpb as an institution, but for civic education in general and especially when considering anti-subject objections.

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## Dialogue at School: Reaching out to the hard to reach in German schools

### Introduction

This chapter describes and evaluates a practical project of citizenship education, designed and implemented for and with so-called ‘hard to reach learners’<sup>1</sup> in Germany. A growing network across different cities in Germany, involving more than 30 schools and more than 2000 pupils, supports this ‘Dialogue at School’ project (the original title in German is *Dialog macht Schule*<sup>2</sup>). Its purpose is to develop innovative forms of citizenship education for delivery to socially marginalised groups of students/pupils learning in ethnically segregated schools in Germany. While examining the rationale for, and the implementation of this project, this chapter will present a number of findings relevant to the concepts ‘hard to reachness’ and ‘hard to reach groups’ discussed throughout this volume.

Our main argument, developed in the following pages, calls for a rethinking and reconceptualising of mainstream approaches to addressing hard to reach groups. We argue that the realities and challenges proceeding from Germany’s immigration society are not (yet) reflected adequately in the political, cultural and educational context of school-based

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1 There are several German terms describing this specific group, including ‘*bildungsfern*’ (meaning ‘educationally distanced’) or ‘*bildungsbenachteiligt*’ (‘educationally disadvantaged’). In an attempt to avoid any discriminatory notion in naming this specific group, some citizenship educators have begun using the term ‘special target groups’ in recent studies, in order to include everyone considered not to belong to the mainstream of citizens able to access democratic citizenship resources. However, there is no general opinion or consensus in Germany about the correct definition of ‘hard to reach’ learners.

2 The project is being funded on the federal level through the Programme “Living Democracy” of the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, the Federal Agency for Civic Education and the Robert Bosch Foundation.



citizenship education in the country. Indeed, mainstream norms continue to inform pedagogy and education, and these norms are often still embedded/rooted in the notion of a homogenous national/cultural identity. Although increasingly contested in academia and progressive circles, traditional pedagogies can be considered a strong force ‘on the ground’, shaping school structures and the mindsets and behaviour of many teachers. In addition, the ethnic and social segregation that occurs in a considerable number of schools has served to aggravate ‘hard to reachness’ among socially marginalised students.

Thus, we ask: how then can citizenship education most effectively intervene and act in such an environment? We suggest interventions on three levels to reduce the ‘Othering’ (see Chapter 12 for further elaboration) of students/pupils excluded by formats of citizenship education designed for the mainstream. The first level is to encourage schools to view cultural difference as the starting point of teaching, utilising resources outside the school system; for example, the Dialogue at School project strongly suggests multicultural ‘peer educators’ (referred to as dialogue facilitators in the following pages) should be integrated into the (civic) education process. As authentic figures with whom students can identify, and who work within schools but are not part of the school system, these peer educators would fill the gap between students and teachers.

The second level utilises a dialogical approach regarding sensitive issues (often either not regarded as sensitive, or altogether avoided by teachers and school administrators), such as national, religious, cultural identities/norms/values, political attitudes and opinions on international conflicts, especially in the context of the Palestinian issue and the civil wars in the Islamic world. In the following we reflect on our experience with the Dialogue at School project to illustrate how ‘dialogue’ can be implemented as an open educational process that takes the needs, stories, themes and students’ resources as the starting point of didactical intervention.

Thirdly, we suggest a much more open and de-limited concept of citizenship education regarding formats, topics and methods. Individual needs (including emotional and psychosocial ones) and the thematic interests of the ‘target group’ (including so-called apolitical ones) have to be explored, considered and then met and supported by moderators and teachers. A much more individualistic and holistic approach is required instead of the classic top-down citizenship education approach of discussing political institutions, values and norms.

In order to support our argument for this new approach, we first present the findings of recent studies and reports in Germany describing the political, institutional and psychological risks and side effects of operating

a segregated and largely dysfunctional school system. We then proceed to describe the concepts and approaches developed and tested over the last five years within the Dialogue at School project. Finally, we present the results from interviews, data collected during our work, and the first self-evaluation of Dialogue at School, to show the potential, strengths, weaknesses and limitations of our approach, which will then lead to preliminary conclusions about some of the routes that may be followed when dealing with hard to reach learners.

## I. How is the concept of hard to reach determined in Germany, and why is it a concern?

To understand how the concept of hard to reachness has been determined in the context of German citizenship education, we must first refer to the historical background and evolution of the field following the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949 (leaving aside the Stalinist form of political education (political instruction) established in the Soviet dominated part of Germany until 1989). In 1950s West Germany, citizenship education was primarily seen as a tool that could be employed by the German state to continue the task of re-educating ‘Germans’ to consolidate democracy, a process started by the American occupation forces after 1945.

Citizens and students in this context were (implicitly) seen as a homogeneous group, disregarding social and cultural differences. From the perspective of education and citizenship educators, the concept of people being hard to reach simply did not exist at that time, and it is not mentioned in the literature. Certainly, the political, social, and economic dynamics of the German postwar society facilitated such disregard for heterogeneity. Politically, the East-West confrontation and the defence of democracy dominated debate over the concepts, aims and tools of citizenship education. The expansion of educational facilities in the 1960s and 1970s (as a consequence of the boom and growth of the German economy) were crucial in facilitating and enhancing access to higher level education for educated students with a lower social/working class status (Bude 2011:38 ff.). This may help to explain why, for decades, the topic of reaching out to citizens and students at the margins of society (or hard to reach learners) did not enter the agenda in reference to citizenship education.

The recognition of education as an enforcer of social distance dates to around the year 2000, when the results of the international Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA 2000) entered the realm of public debate. PISA highlighted the serious shortcomings of the German

education system when measured against international standards, particularly in relation to areas of lower competence among German students (Baumert et al. 2002; Bude 2011). The study reported that the structure of the education system in Germany was reproducing social inequality and disadvantaging lower class students to an ever-increasing extent. Moreover, it provided evidence of a correlation between social origin, immigration background and lack of success in the education system (resulting in subsequent disadvantages in opportunities and scope for political participation). This particular issue became a key focus of public debate in the early 2000s. Citizenship educators began paying more attention to people on the margins of the education system. In addition, demographic trends were given more attention than had previously been the case, and these studies in the earlier 2000s predicted a dramatic ageing of the workforce and a shortage of skilled labour after 2025. Thus, public debate began in earnest to determine how to reach out to the nation's 'educational reserves' and how to mobilise hidden 'human resources' (women as well as socially marginalised students) in a more effective way. Consequently, schools and education institutions were assigned a key role in reaching out to, and including, formerly excluded or hard to reach groups, not least out of concern for the future competitiveness of German industry and Germany as a business location. Today, the mobilisation of 'human capital' remains one of the key strategies in place to prepare 'Germany for the 21st century' (Hoßmann/Karsch 2011; Aktionsrat Bildung 2016).

### Segregation of schools

In addition to the studies mentioned above, a more recent study by the Expert Council of German Foundations on Integration and Migration (SVR) authored by Morris-Lange et al. (2013), has played an important role in defining and clarifying the problem. It has shown the extent to which German schools are segregated ethnically and socially, thereby limiting the education opportunities of students of immigrant origin. Published in 2013, the study was widely discussed in the German media and quoted as a source, even by members of the German government. Since then it has become one of the main references supporting the argument that hard to reachness in the German education system is fundamentally linked to dysfunctional structures that discriminate against migrant children. According to the study, segregation starts in primary schools and continues in secondary schools, resulting in serious consequences because many young migrants' educational achievements are simultaneously disadvantaged by a lack of family support and impeded by their often poorly

performing classmates. This dual disadvantage is primarily caused by three factors, as the study findings explain: residential segregation in German cities, parental choice of school, and unequal access to the advanced academic track in Germany's secondary schools.

However, the study asserts that having a high percentage of migrants in the classroom does not necessarily have a negative effect on the performance of individual pupils. It is primarily the social background of the classmates, particularly their average achievement levels, which have an important impact. To lower the negative influence deriving from school segregation on pupil performance, the authors of the study recommended a set of measures to systematically improve learning opportunities at segregated schools (SVR 2013):

1. Systematic diversity training of teachers, in which diversity training is included as an early teaching experience and a compulsory part of teacher training.
2. Supporting student's language acquisition across the entire curriculum.
3. Allocating additional staff and funding to segregated schools based on social indicators.
4. Supporting local networks comprised of schools, kindergartens, and other non-school facilities, which can work together to improve the educational opportunities available at segregated schools.<sup>5)</sup> An inductive teaching style delivered to small groups, taking the student's state of knowledge and abilities as the starting point for building didactic concepts.

### Inductive versus deductive teaching styles

The last recommendation from the report, regarding the reform of teaching style, gave further evidence to the Dialogue at School initiative to support their idea to implement an inductive-dialogical method of citizenship education in schools. This inductive educational process takes the individual social, educational and cultural abilities and resources available as the starting point of the didactical intervention. Thus, the core assumption of teaching in this context is that diversity is the norm (Beck et al. 2008, El-Mafaalani and Toprak 2013). This contrasts with the still widespread deductive approach (top down), which aims to promote a curriculum designed around learning goals, to prepare students for exams in a target-oriented way. Instead of taking the different capabilities of the students as the point of reference, the established curriculum provides the starting point for key didactical guiding principles. The underlying assumption of teaching is founded on the principle of a homogenous learning group, which is deeply rooted in the German tradition of school education (SVR

2013). Based on this principle, all students are expected to attain pre-defined learning goals. Anyone not reaching these goals is required to repeat the class or move to another, lower, type of school. Therefore, the perspective is structurally deficit-oriented.

Against this backdrop of inequality in the German educational system, and the compelling evidence of segregation in schools, we can narrow down a group of pupils/students in German schools perceived as hard to reach by mainstream educational institutions due to alleged deficits in language/cognitive skills, and/or their social, cultural and religious backgrounds. In the words of the German sociologist Heinz Bude, we can speak of a group characterised by a ‘fatal interplay between personal vulnerability because of (damaged) family relations and collective/group based discrimination because of the ethnic origin’ (Bude 2011: 47).

Considering this issue from another vantage point, we might conclude that ‘hard to reachness’ emerges as the inevitable result of hierarchical and exclusive structures in education, heightened, not least, by the lack of qualifications/awareness of teaching staff with respect to the diversity of capabilities, qualifications and mindsets present in their institutions.

### Narratives of ‘Us’ versus ‘Them’

In addition to the dysfunctionalities discussed thus far, we need to highlight another key issue which has to be taken into account when debating citizenship education vis à vis hard to reach learners. The wars and crises in the Islamic world and the series of terrorist attacks in Western cities since ‘9/11’ have been fuelling an ever more polarised public debate throughout Europe concerning ‘Islam’, ‘democracy’ and in particular ‘young Muslims’ (Caldwell 2009; Roy 2009). Recent attacks in Paris, Brussels, Nice and Germany, the debate about the attraction of the so-called ‘Islamic State’ and the problem of religious extremism have triggered a ‘securitisation’ of the discourse about ‘Muslim youths’ in particular and ‘Islam’ in general. Public narratives focused on fears and Otherness are part of the ‘white noise’ affecting young adults of migrant origin, for whom answers to questions about identity and belonging play a crucial role in the formation of personality. Thus, young adults who identify themselves with the Muslim faith may increasingly perceive themselves as ‘negative’ as they strive to find their feet in what they feel is a hostile environment. Radical and Islamist narratives may then find a fertile ground in these young people.

Projects for ‘prevention and deradicalisation’ are therefore proliferating (not only in Germany), as the federal government and other actors have opened up new avenues of funding in recent years. Projects targeted

at ‘young Muslims’ therefore will have to be very cautious in their project design in order to avoid creating a new ‘tribe’ of young people in schools, and thereby unwillingly contribute to an intensification and consolidation of pre-existing stigmatisation, alienation and ‘Othering’ of ‘young Muslims’ (Ceylan; Kiefer 2013; Kiefer 2015; Brubaker 2006).

## II. Dialogue at School: Concepts and methods for reaching out to the hard to reach

Against this complex backdrop of political, social and economic trends which shaped the debate on immigration, education and citizenship in the first two decades of the 2000s, citizenship education institutions, as well as actors from civil society, started to explore new ways of reaching out to young people living and learning under adverse conditions, such as:

- a school system with structural dysfunctions regarding ethnic and social segregation; and
- subject to national and international mainstream discourses on ‘Us’ vs. ‘Them’ along national, cultural, and religious frontlines.

The project ‘Dialogue at School’ can be seen as part of a new movement of young academics of immigrant origin who were looking for their own ways to deal with the challenges and dysfunctional structures present in education, as described above. ‘Dialogue at School’ was established as an NGO in 2013 by young social entrepreneurs of immigrant origin after having been employed as freelance moderators for the Federal Agency for Civic Education in Berlin schools. It was designed as a learning project, negotiated through intensive exchanges with experts in schools, school administration, policy makers and civil society. Its aim is to contribute to an incremental improvement of adverse learning conditions in segregated schools in the major cities of Germany (refer to [www.dialogmachtschule.de](http://www.dialogmachtschule.de) for more information on aims and the institutional setting.)

### Who are the ‘hard to reach’?

Dialogue at School is a peer-based<sup>3</sup> educational programme combining concepts of personality development, civic education and participation,

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3 Peer education in our context refers to educators who are not far removed from the living realities of the target group they work with, i. e. with regard to social and cultural background. This does mean necessarily that they share the exact age group, even though the age difference is not larger than 10 years on average.

centring on segregated schools (as described above). The aim is to foster student's democratic agency from the 7<sup>th</sup> grade onwards, by considering both psychosocial and cognitive aspects of learning. Our main target group is generally perceived as hard to reach, as outlined in the introduction. Accordingly, we see the hard to reachness of this group as brought about through the interplay of the following factors:

1. Socially disadvantaged family background and residential segregation.
2. Migration background: This correlates strongly with a low socioeconomic background in Germany, and often with high psychosocial pressure on identity formation during the period of adolescence. A growing number of students with a Muslim background belong to this group; they are often more likely to feel excluded or to have a lower sense of belonging to mainstream society when compared with students from other migration backgrounds. (Lokhande 2016)
3. Insufficient educational language competencies.
4. Assumptions of normality and homogeneity in schools: Educationally low-performing students learn mostly together in a school environment that does not normally take diversity as a frame of reference, as only two per cent of teachers in German schools have a migrant background. Furthermore, studies show that German textbooks/materials do not reflect images, themes, and narratives reflecting a migration society. (Schulbuchstudie Migration und Integration 2015). In addition, the set curriculum is based on the assumption of normality, whereas 'assimilation' is perceived as a way to circumvent or avoid the inclusion of a diversity of mindsets. Based on the principle of formal equality, all students are expected to achieve defined learning goals, which, as stated above, creates an approach that is structurally deficit-oriented.

### Who is reaching out?

University students or young graduates aged from 21–29, with basic social and pedagogic competencies and experiences, many from immigrant families. Over the course of two years, they are trained and continuously coached to help them apply innovative approaches to civic education, experiential pedagogy, developmental, motivational and positive psychology. After two years practicing in schools, they become certified as dialogue facilitators, able to apply their acquired competencies to their future jobs (e.g. teaching, social work etc.). By employing young (migrant) academics as dialogue facilitators, the aim is to provide role models for young students in segregated schools, helping them to deal with the challenges of constructing an identity and sense of citizenship in German society.

## How do dialogue facilitators reach out?

### 1. Inductive approach

Dialogue facilitation involves an inductive, open educational process that takes the needs, stories, themes, and resources of the students as the starting point for didactical intervention. The inductive approach is based on the assumption of difference, from which the central idea of diversity as normality is derived. The focus is therefore placed on the students' personal development, which is considered part of citizenship. Thus, the approach offered contrasts with the deductive approach, which continues to dominate in the schools where Dialogue at School is active.

To implement this approach, a non-judgmental attitude is key to determining what really interests and preoccupies the students themselves. They are experts about their own lives and permit access to their world when they sense that they are being taken seriously and valued. In addition, dialogue facilitators seek to meet students' frustrations with acknowledgement and a search for potential and strength.

### 2. Helping to explore and recognise the potentials of multicultural identities

Dialogue facilitators start from the assumption that multicultural identities in German society should be seen as a personal asset and as potentially enriching for society. Students often feel confronted when they encounter school teachers who (more implicitly than explicitly) expect compliance with 'German' cultural and social norms; dialogue facilitators can help them to deal with these often ambivalent expectations. As role models, they support students to see aspects of their multicultural identity as representing a potential rather than a deficit. Meanwhile, they further encourage students to emancipate themselves from the rigidities of a linear/homogenous expression of 'identity' by adopting a perspective that is more self-reflective. Thus, the dialogue facilitators aim to counteract deficit narratives from public discourse with an attitude of a perspective on potentials.

### 3. Trust building and exploration of themes

Once they commence their work, dialogue facilitators devote at least six months to building trust among the target group and between themselves and the group; this trust is a key prerequisite for their future work with the students. At this time, dialogue facilitators focus on understanding the dynamics of the group, and the roles and strengths/weaknesses of each student. Furthermore, the rules of dialogue are established, highlighting listening to and respecting one another's views.



After a trusting atmosphere has been established, dialogue facilitators begin to explore the themes of the group by drawing out their everyday stories through role plays or narrative questioning techniques in a circle setting. They ask questions about processes, relationships and feelings that have a personal relevance and influence their worldview – these are open questions, such as ‘How come you see it this way?’ ‘Do you have an example?’ ‘Can you imagine how your best-friend/sister would feel if somebody told him that?’ ‘Help me to imagine what is going on when you get angry?’ ‘What would you see as a fair solution to such and such a problem?’ – to name but a few.

In addition, dialogue facilitators contribute to the process by sharing their own experiences and perspectives. Through this process, discussion themes emerge organically. For instance, the theme of gender equality can emerge when talking about the topic of dream boys or dream girls. Observations to date suggest the most frequently occurring themes are: identity, fairness and justice, sexuality and gender equality, future perspectives, the Middle East conflict, and current affairs topics.

#### 4. Facilitating participation and visibility

Once identified, themes are elaborated either through controversially framed debates, activities/trips to locations outside the school, or projects that might involve either the whole school or the local neighbourhood. For instance, anti-racism campaigns, biographical work, videos on political or personal issues or theatrical performances. Dialogue facilitators act as coaches at this stage, motivating students to reach their goals and experience self-efficacy. The aim at this crucial stage is to let them acquire a sense of self-esteem, by speaking out and ‘making things happen’ in their daily environment.

At the final stage of the two-year long process, the project outcomes from the dialogue groups should be made visible for others. The students ought to be given the opportunity to present or express their work in exhibitions for the public, (theatre) performance, film festivals/events or certification ceremonies. A confirmatory closure of the project phase is crucial in perceiving a sense of positive acknowledgement from the public sphere, and thereby increasing not only the sense of self-esteem, but also reinforcing a sense of ‘participatory citizenship’.

### III. Some empirical data

In the following section, we will present findings collected for an internal evaluation, carried out in 2015, into the strengths, weaknesses and limitations of the Dialogue at School programme. More than 20 structured interviews,

conducted with teachers, students and dialogue facilitators, provided insights into the thoughts, perceptions and mentalities of the key stakeholders.

The interviews were conducted at three schools in Berlin and Stuttgart between April 2015 and September 2015. The schools selected were similar in their composition; i. e. on average more than 80 per cent of the students came from immigrant families, and more than half of the students were being raised in socially disadvantaged families. Thus, all three schools qualified as socially and ethnically segregated according to the definition given by the SVR (2013)<sup>4</sup>. Over half of the students in the Berlin schools had a Turkish, Kurdish or Arabic background, whereas the ethnic composition of the school in Stuttgart included more students from eastern and southern Europe and more students without a migration background.

Summarising the answers we received from students, teachers and dialogue facilitators, we identified the most important strengths and weaknesses of the project and arranged them into the three following areas. First and foremost the project succeeded in creating a separate, new and 'safe' space for students where they could meet peer educators and learn to build trust, overcoming the daily 'Othering' encountered in their classrooms; secondly this space could then be used to explore and discuss challenges – the sensitive and emotional issues prominent on the mind map of students. Thirdly, we learned that the project had the potential to reach out to teachers as well, by transferring and disseminating the experiences and approaches of the dialogue groups into the regular classroom.

## A safe space for students and dialogue facilitators: Key requirements

### 1. Trust

Dialogue facilitators were found to be able to build a trusting working environment. Two factors seemed to play a crucial role in this. First, the dialogue facilitators were viewed as role models. When students reflected on their experiences with their dialogue facilitators, they often viewed them as slightly older friends in whom they could confide their everyday experiences and personal stories. Second, the extended duration of the programme: over the period of two years, the dialogue facilitators conducted over 34 weekly sessions, investing a great deal of time in the initial phases of the dialogue sessions to trust building. This seemed to pay off, as summarised by student Sinan<sup>5</sup>:

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4 Stating that more than 50% of the students in a school have a migration background.

5 All names of participants given in the following pages are pseudonyms.

S: We looked upon him [the dialogue facilitator] as a friend; that is why we were able to open up to him. After all, we had him once a week. During this time, we also got to know him well. He was part of our lives for two years and you could say he watched us grow up.

Other students emphasised how important it was that dialogue facilitators shared their own personal stories, experiences and opinions in the dialogue. This open-minded and engaged attitude made it easier for them to speak about personal issues surrounding family, school and partnership.

Student Ahmed from Berlin says:

A: When he [the dialogue facilitator] talks about his own personal stories, we know that we can open up to him and talk about ourselves.

When the dialogue facilitators speak about themselves, the students look upon them as authentic partners who can understand their perspective. The dialogue facilitators emphasised that having a thorough understanding of teenage slang and of the world they live in (i. e. youth culture, and conflicts of expectation when forming their hybrid identity) helps the students to open up to them. Dialogue facilitator Mariam explains:

You need to try above all to speak the young people's language in order to be accepted by them. If you are not the type who can deal with this colloquial language, you will need to find other ways of building trust. The best way to build trust is to tell them about your own personal stories.

## 2. Boundaries

Asked what she would do differently if she were to start a group in the future, dialogue facilitator Rana responded:

R: I would state clearly at the beginning of the dialogue sessions that students must adhere to the dialogue rules. Our students eventually asked me to do so themselves. They would like to be treated with a certain level of well-meaning strictness that enables the safe space to be maintained and they certainly have very fine antennas for fairness. They respect you if you are consistent and fair.

Here it appears that building trust and setting boundaries are intertwined. Making rules and boundaries transparent from the beginning and being consistent in enforcing them is crucial to building a safe and trusting work-

ing atmosphere. However, some of the dialogue facilitators seemed to perceive trust-building and enforcing rules as contradictory. In their training, dialogue facilitators learn how to strike a reasonable balance between proximity and distance, and to adopt a measured attitude from the outset, when meeting their groups. This is extremely important to help dialogue facilitators obtain adequate responses when confronted with challenging opinions and behavioural conduct in their groups. Rana, a dialogue facilitator, offers this example:

R: Of course, I also drew clear boundaries and adopted a stance when one student said women are more stupid than men and that women are supposed to obey the man. I told him in no uncertain terms that as a woman I found this attitude both disrespectful and insulting. Then I asked him what prompted him to come out with such a comment [...] I wanted to know where he was coming from, whether he was trying to provoke the female students in his class or whether he genuinely believed what he was saying.

This example shows how to set boundaries, and how to take a clear stand against attitudes and ideologies of inequality. At the same time, dialogue facilitators invest considerable time, energy and creativity in maintaining a keen interest in their students, in order to find out what factors formed their opinion. Listening carefully and engaging in an in-depth dialogue about the issues discussed renders it possible to put what has been said to the test, and to encourage self-reflection. The fact that the dialogue facilitators listen to their students does not necessarily mean they accept blindly what they have to say. This avoids the trap of derogatory confrontation and patronising behaviour, which typically provokes resistance and an end of the conversation. However, the aim is also to avoid an equally problematic attitude of silent approval or blind acceptance, which runs contrary to the intention when starting an authentic dialogue.

### 3. Transcultural approach

The fact that many of the dialogue facilitators have a migration background themselves seemed to be of particular interest at the start of the dialogue. They too have had to deal with issues relating to identity, religion (Islam), gender roles and a sense of belonging, and they can use these experiences to empathise with young people. Dialogue facilitators from immigrant families also seem to unhinge student's received deficit concepts of themselves as a migrant group. They are often surprised when they learn that their dialogue facilitators are academics from an Arab or Turk-

ish background. Hamudi, a dialogue facilitator in Berlin with a Lebanese background, spoke about this in relation to his first dialogue session, when he was asked many personal questions about his origin, religion and level of education:

H: Two comments really surprised me: One student (who has a Palestinian background) asked me after hearing I had gone to university ‘But you are an Arab. How come you are so clever?’ As we were leaving the school premises, one of our students called across to another student from a parallel class [to say] how cool it is that I speak such good German, wondering if she had just discovered a new species.

These and similar comments highlight the limited experiences and social contacts many students have had in segregated urban districts and the respective social milieu. In long-term work with the dialogue facilitators, identity patterns in relation to ‘us’ and ‘them’ can be questioned, creating scope for forging new identities.

However, shared cultural background only appears to be of interest to the students during the first few sessions. In the course of the two years in which the facilitators and students worked together, the cultural background became less important. It is the attitude and personality of the dialogue facilitator ultimately makes a lasting impression. Student Emre from Berlin stated:

E: I don’t think it would have made any difference if they had been German with or without a migration background [...] I think Dialogue at School attracts a certain type of person. And this type of person wants to get involved and gets along well with students.

The dialogue facilitators themselves neither concealed nor focused on their own cultural backgrounds, as observed by dialogue facilitator Tahssin from Berlin:

T: At the beginning I suppose I did [...] there were two kids in the class who had a Lebanese background like me. For some reason, this really pleased them and they started calling me ‘Bro’ and stuff like that. But it was irrelevant in the end because we never really emphasised it. Neither my colleagues nor I highlighted the fact that we had a migration background. In the end, they saw us, [as] Mariam (colleague of Tahssin) and Tahssin, and not as people who had an Assyrian or Lebanese background.

In accordance with the transcultural approach that Dialogue at School pursues, the work performed with the students did not attach any importance to cultural or religious backgrounds. The dialogue was aimed at individuals and centred on their attitudes and actions. This attitude, which makes no distinction between ‘us’ and ‘them’ in cultural terms, provides the basis for an educational strategy that gradually counteracts ‘othering’ processes, and in doing so removes the boundaries between the interaction partners. Nevertheless, we value the immigration background of many of our dialogue facilitators as an asset, as they can introduce new narratives, memories, and cultural codes into the daily educational practice and conversations taking place in German schools.

In summary, it can be ascertained that developing an atmosphere of trust depends on a large number of prerequisites, only the most important of which will be mentioned here.: On a meta level, we propose that a ‘transcultural approach’ be adopted that avoids making cultural and religious ascriptions. Dialogue facilitators invest considerable time in building relationships, by sharing their own personal stories and by adopting a curious, accepting approach, albeit not avoiding controversy if necessary. The young people see them as persons they can identify with (as ‘friends’, ‘older siblings’ etc.) who reach out to them at a personal and social level. As such, their role and function differs from those of teachers in the school setting. Not only do teachers lack the necessary time and resources for structural reasons, young people frequently use teachers as a source of friction, highlighting differences that can make or break a child (Bude 2011). Even if dialogue facilitators manage to soften this difference, as well as the distance from the world the students live in, a question remains regarding how they can effectively leverage the benefits afforded by their relationship to foster political debate and action.

### Challenges: Politics, controversies, conspiracy theories

It was found that, contrary to widespread assumptions, the individuals who participated in the dialogue groups under review are very interested in current political affairs when they perceive them as relevant to their own depth of experience and the identity they have forged for themselves. We have also learned from our group that, for example, the current crises and wars in the Islamic world and associated disturbances are affecting young people in our classrooms in multifarious ways. This is also true for the (often polarised and stereotyped) debates about Islam and identity presented by the German media. The interest in national and international political issues among the members of the dialogue groups is welcome, and

provides a good starting point for discussion and an opportunity to address popular assumptions and conspiracy theories raised in the borderless world of social media.

A dialogue facilitator, Tariq from Berlin, for instance, recalled a discussion that he had had with his dialogue group about the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the USA:

T: Themes relating to anti-Semitism were very popular amongst the kids, and they believed in theories such as – the Americans carried out the attacks [9/11] themselves, claiming there was evidence to back this theory [...] That is why we tackled the issue of conspiracy theories. And the kids were obviously very interested in them. We didn't say from the outset: "All conspiracy theories are rubbish, they are all bullshit." We took stock of the conspiracy theories circulating and then asked ourselves: "What is a conspiracy theory, what are conspiracy theories trying to tell us and how are they presented on YouTube?" We then asked the young people to develop a conspiracy theory of their own, to enable them to experience first-hand how simple it is to come up with one.

Instead of engaging in confrontation by arguing, a participatory approach was adopted to demonstrate to the young people how simple it is to build a conspiracy theory. However, deciding upon approaches to counter misinformation is very challenging for dialogue facilitators, as they need to show sensitivity when dealing with such issues, and avoid generating resistance among students. Once again, dialogue facilitators consider adopting a stance that accepts dialogue when dealing with students without avoiding controversy. Karima, a dialogue facilitator from Berlin, sought to summarise the basics:

K: Under no circumstances would you go into the classroom thinking that these students are losers or that they know nothing about politics. Nor would you go into the classroom thinking they know everything and are always right.

Nonetheless, it is always a difficult balancing act, and sometimes dialogue facilitators become despondent:

R: They came out with things like "Jews own Coca Cola" and all large companies, and that they control the world. I thought to myself "I can't start a dialogue about this". They are obviously misinformed [about] really funny stuff, which I cannot hold a reasoned discussion about.

The experiences reported by some of the dialogue facilitators in the context of the terrorist attacks in Paris on the *Charlie Hebdo* satirical magazine and on a Jewish supermarket demonstrate how important it is to respond to highly charged emotional issues, which polarise opinion in the media. Rana said many of her students stated that there is a double standard when it comes to discussing topics of justice. ‘Why should we show solidarity with Paris and not with Beirut!’ is a query asked by many dialogue groups, showing the sense of injustice/unfairness felt by the students concerning public discourse (as they perceive it). Furthermore, they felt that they were not being taken seriously and perceived a reluctance from their teachers to listen to their viewpoints. Dialogue facilitator Hamudi, who discussed the 9/11 terrorist attacks in his dialogue session, said:

H: They were feeling under so much pressure to justify themselves, and felt they had to prove themselves to us. They said things like “Well, once again there is propaganda against Muslims everywhere”, and you had the impression that they wanted to justify themselves even though we saw no reason why they should [do] so, just because some Islamist terrorists had run amok.

Here the safe space offered by the dialogue sessions gave students the opportunity to voice their frustrations about what they experienced as one-sided islamophobic coverage. At this stage, dialogue facilitators are trained to distinguish between feelings and content. First, the focus is placed on feelings, exploring where they come from and accepting that they exist without judging them. Dialogue facilitators concur with regard to the importance of giving students space and a sense that they are understood, to manage their feelings of frustration before working on content. Dialogue facilitator Hamudi summarises thus:

H: I had the same frustration when I was in school. My anger was fuelled by teachers who were not taking my views seriously and who were not trying to understand where I came from. After giving students the space to vent their frustration, I tried to work with them on accepting how things are. After that, I usually asked, “What is the smallest next step in order to change something?” I learnt that this question leads to working on the content. What you should never do is to cover up double standard issues – then you run the risk of losing the kids. You are safe if you take human rights as the point of reference when you discuss topics like this.



## Overcoming the gap between teachers and students

In the interviews we carried out it emerged that many of the teachers are apparently unfamiliar with, or have great difficulty understanding, the hybrid identities<sup>6</sup> of their students. Conflicts arose repeatedly around the notion of ‘homeland’ (*Heimat* in German), ‘a sense of belonging’, and the question ‘What is German?’

The experience reported by dialogue facilitator Karima exemplifies this. Over a period of six months she produced short video clips with her students who decided themselves what issues to address and how to produce them. The videos were then presented to teachers, parents and fellow students in a public showing organised by the students themselves. However, the school principal and several of the teachers were extremely perplexed by two videos: one showed a peer group conversation about wearing headscarves/hijabs, and the other one asked what country German-born students whose parents were immigrants should refer to as their ‘homeland’. The young film-makers were criticised for claiming that some young women chose to wear a headscarf/hijab of their own volition. They asked the authors of the video clips about their parents’ homeland: ‘Do you not realise that Germany is your homeland?’ Comments such as ‘We are not a Muslim school!’ but also ‘She has a German passport, why isn’t she saying she is German?’ caused controversy at the film screening, revealing the conflict. The student was expected to make a clear decision about belonging to one side, based on the assumption of a ‘binary identity construction’. The example given above highlights the fact that segregated schools are yet to conceive of culture as dynamic, and multicultural students in particular represent a microcosm in which the conflicts that are apparent in an immigration society are highlighted. Indeed, the process involved in formulating an identity outside the common realm of experience generates uncertainty, causing tension between students and teachers, also confirming an observation made by German scholar Naika Foroutan (Foroutan 2013), who observed that, according to Reuter,

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6 The concept of hybrid identity refers to people who feel a sense of belonging to more than one cultural sphere. The term is gradually used in Germany as a positive marker for the potentials of multi- and transnational identities who may not necessarily experience their personality as being in-between cultures, between chairs, but being able to recombine (games of belonging) and integrate their multi-faceted identities beyond binary constructs of identity formation, a third chair (Foroutan and Schäfer, 2009).

[S]ocial conflicts emerge particularly [...] where different cultural codes clash in local areas and when particularisation tendencies counteract what appears to be the generalised nature of globalisation, [...] time and again – as currently witnessed in European immigrant societies. People perceive this [...] as being incompatible with their own culture or identity.

*(Reuter 2002:26 in Foroutan 2013:86)*

Exploring the issue of identity and homeland further, dialogue facilitator Faruk aimed to address the attitude and resentment of some of his students towards classmates from refugee families. First, the dialogue facilitator was surprised at how deep resentment vis-à-vis refugees ran:

F: I know [...] that older students from grade 11 came into our classroom, basically pontificating to our students that it is not alright to call these (refugee) students ‘gypsies’ or ‘filthy Afghans’ or to say things like ‘You rob us blind’ or ‘You are filthy’ or the like. I think they were spouting out the likes of this.

This is why he asked his students to discuss the immigration biographies of their parents during the dialogue sessions; they not only used open dialogue, but also role plays, to reconstruct different immigration biographies. Dealing with students’ own family biographies extended beyond the scope of the weekly dialogue sessions and triggered broad discussions and debate within the students’ families. Visits to a refugee shelter, for example, can give students a first-hand impression of the conditions refugees are living in. This intervention raises awareness of the issue among the young people, and in many cases, the students learned what they have in common with, and the areas of overlap between their own family biographies and those of refugees. Dialogue facilitator Rana recalled:

F: We spoke about it again in order to emphasise that refugees frequently come to Germany in great distress, needing all the help they can get [...] They understood in the end because many had refugee experience through their parents. This explains why they came to the conclusion themselves: It is not okay to be so hostile towards these people.

The above-mentioned examples demonstrate that experientially-based projects outside school, as well self-reflective biographical work, may allow students to better understand themselves and initiate discussion/reflections based on first-hand experiences. Understanding provocations, con-

controversial suggestions and requests such as ‘we (Muslim) students asked for a prayer room’ not as something alien with no basis for discussion in school, but as an invitation for controversial dialogue/debate or experience that is crucial for emancipatory civic education. Thus, a key attitude regarding working with hard to reach learners was again related to the willingness to dive into a sea of controversy or conflict, rather than avoiding it.

Furthermore, these examples suggest that teachers and students are alienated from one another. The dialogue facilitators were able to fill this ‘intercultural as well as participatory gap’ by approaching them from a different perspective, taking affective, personal and social competencies into account rather than focussing on the typical cognitive competencies as measured by schools. Moreover, they are able to deliberate over controversial issues, extending their horizons and their experiences outside school.

In summation, we argue that dialogue facilitators should be integrated into everyday school life in the long term. If students are to feel comfortable discussing hot topics such as identity, origin, stereotypes, or the above-mentioned emotionalised controversies surrounding ‘Islam’, they need trust and a safe space. External players (who are closer in age to the students and who often have a similar biography) can create this safe space. Integrating peer educators in the long term to reflect the existing diversity of society in the context of segregated schools is – as we have tried to demonstrate – an important tool that may help young people with their personal and political socialisation. The interviews and discussions with teachers, outlined below serve to illustrate the potential of the Dialogue at School project to create a new school culture further.

### Integrating the teachers

All of the female teachers interviewed agreed they had benefited from the interventions through the Dialogue at School project. Ms. Murrhaus from Berlin concluded that the weekly dialogue session have become very important for the class, because the dialogue facilitators had been integrated into everyday school life as additional dialogue partners. From her perspective, students were taken seriously during the sessions. Moreover, she learned more about her class:

MM: One thing I found particularly good was that the students had another dialogue partner who could work with them in a different way, and could discuss meaningful issues outside the traditional classroom setting. And you certainly noticed from the atmosphere in the class that the students benefited, that they felt they were being taken seriously. I

liked the fact that we had a good exchange with the dialogue facilitators about their experience with the students. I often received information or insight from them that I did not have myself or that confirmed my own impression. That too was helpful.

Ms. Kandel from Stuttgart also reported that she had learned a lot from the dialogue facilitators. She particularly noted that she now listens a lot more carefully to her students, an approach she learned from the dialogue facilitators:

K: I learned a lot from the dialogue facilitators. Now, I listen much more carefully to what the students have to say.

Ms. Luhmann from Berlin also considers the project to have greatly enriched the culture at her school. She believes that the female students in particular benefit from the close relationship they develop with the dialogue facilitators over the space of two years. However, she regrets that members of the teaching staff seem unable to create this closeness in the majority of cases.

L: This was the greatest benefit of these dialogue groups. They managed to establish a personal rapport with the students very quickly [...] That, I think, this is exactly what we are missing in this respect. We do not always manage to establish this personal rapport so quickly.

These comments show that the intervention by the dialogue facilitators has potential to support teachers, and possibly to influence the way they teach. This creates a secondary group, alongside the primary target group of students, which the project can positively influence. The multidimensional affect of the project was observed to create a positive ripple effect on the school system as a whole, as it won the support of many of the teachers. There are additional benefits that extend beyond the school to incorporate the social and living environment as a learning space, as touched on below.

### Incorporating extra-curricular learning space

The dialogue facilitators provided additional important impetus by integrating the social environment outside the school setting. The visit to a refugee shelter, a film project about the issue of sustainability in the public arena, interviews with passers-by about refugees and visiting a theatre festival about the conflicts in the Middle East offer several examples of extra-curricular activities. Meanwhile, representatives of civil society are also deliberately invited into the classrooms. These activities made the dialogue

sessions much more attractive to many of the students than their regular lessons. The most striking thing about them was that they made a lasting impression on many of the students. Student Erkan says:

E: What I enjoyed most about the project was that we were able to go outside. The fact that we didn't just talk, but that we interviewed people outside, went on excursions instead of just sitting around the classroom all day.

To provide an example, the campaign launched by a dialogue group in Berlin was described in the interviews as exemplifying the process of opening up the classroom. The decision was taken to change the learning environment and to leave the classroom on a regular basis due to the difficult group dynamics. This led to the idea of exploring the *Kiez* (the immediate neighbourhood of the school) with the class. The students were asked to take photographs and write down their personal impressions. Using these notes, they introduced a personal area within the district of importance to them. Sound was added to the recordings of the stories in cooperation with a city museum, and they were subsequently presented to a wider audience at a public event.

Such activities and small projects were approved by teachers and the school administration, but at the same time, some teachers expressed doubts and reservations about integrating such activities into their own curriculum:

M: I think a lot of teachers are reluctant to do so, because these kind of activities are of course tiring. You have to keep discipline, which is always tiring. If the students start acting up, you end up arguing with them in the Underground, perhaps even getting into an argument with other people and having to intervene. That is why a lot of teachers do hardly any excursions or school trips, and I can understand why.

This stance and assessment of the teachers is unfortunate. However, it also shows how necessary and meaningful it is to involve external facilitators, who can utilise the students' social environment as learning space. Naturally, the public space cannot replace the school as the central venue of shared learning, but it can certainly complement it and add diversity. In this format, the school should be perceived as a laboratory of ideas in which topical themes are discussed and viewpoints expressed. The issues and assumptions developed in this laboratory can then be 'taken onto the street' and reviewed.

## Conclusion

If we look more closely at the opportunities and boundaries of emancipatory citizenship education projects such as Dialogue at School, as in this chapter, a mixed picture emerges. On a positive note, it needs to be emphasised that the approach is one way of overcoming the problems and shortcomings of citizenship education with so-called hard to reach learners, some of which we have highlighted in the first part of this chapter. Combining a dialogue approach to tackle any issue by developing long-term, personal and trusting relationships helps mitigate the risk of a paternalistic and stigmatising top-down relationship.

When dealing with the most diverse narratives and identities through a process of dialogue, as observed in the dialogue groups, it is possible, simultaneously, to counteract alienation processes between teachers and students. It becomes evident from this context that the dialogue facilitators play a key role in students' educational process as persons in a position of trust; their input can therefore be an important addition to that of specialist subject teachers. Many sensitive issues such as identity and homeland, but also the stereotypes students have in relation to Islam, Jews or conspiracy theories, and the permanent (small) conflicts caused by unempathetic responses from schools, highlight the need to create a safe space for constructive discussion.

The results of the internal evaluation illustrate the huge untapped potential of this type of strategy. Dialogue facilitators are able to build bridges between students and teaching staff. As external players, they can explore new possibilities and opportunities: The heterogeneous biographies and different identities of the students are seen as potential strengths, and the students become more aware of their own diversity as the dialogue progresses. This means acceptance and recognition counteract the public and structural 'Othering' processes and the many characteristic deficits of the German education system which have been described above, and which can be equally observed within the framework of the internal evaluation.

Additional steps must be taken into account to expand the impact of the project in the long term. The Dialogue at School project will therefore focus more on teachers and support for them, either directly or indirectly, by sharing our experience as part of the inductive teaching approach recommended by many education experts. It is possible to raise awareness of intercultural themes through training and advanced training and through shared project work. In addition, the knowledge gathered in a project will be further evaluated and made publicly accessible on an ongoing basis.

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# Dialogue at School: Reaching out to the hard to reach in German schools

## Introduction

### I. How is the concept of hard to reach determined in Germany, and why is it a concern?

Segregation of schools  
Inductive versus deductive teaching styles  
Narratives of 'Us' versus 'Them'

### II. Dialogue at School: Concepts and methods for reaching out to the hard to reach

Who are the 'hard to reach'?  
Who is reaching out?  
How do dialogue facilitators reach out?  
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2. Boundaries  
3. Transcultural approach  
Challenges: Politics, controversies, conspiracy theories  
Overcoming the gap between teachers and students  
Integrating the teachers  
Incorporating extra-curricular learning space  
Conclusion



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## Complementary schools and state schools cooperating in England: Benefits for ethnic minority children

This century has seen significant levels of movement of groups of people into and across Europe, and there is little prospect that this migration will reduce or cease in the near future. This has led to State education services in European cities being subjected to continuously shifting demographic patterns, prompting a constant search for strategies and structures to provide effective schooling to diverse populations of young people. Many of those who have arrived recently have a native language other than the language of instruction, and families that are unfamiliar with the norms and practices of the school system. In 2015, 30.4 per cent of the children in state-funded primary schools in England were from minority ethnic backgrounds, a statistic that has shown an increase of more than 60 per cent in ten years (Department for Education 2015). The percentage of schoolchildren speaking English as an additional language also rose from 7.6 per cent to 16.2 per cent between 1997 and 2013 (Ramalingam and Griffith 2015, Strand et al. 2015). Latest government figures suggest further increases in both parameters of about 1 per cent each year (Department for Education 2015). In addition, education is likely to be affected further in the future as birth rates for immigrant women are reportedly higher than for indigenous women (Office for National Statistics 2015).

There are marked differences between the average educational attainments of different minority ethnic groups in England, with some ethnic groups consistently exceeding the levels attained by indigenous children, while others languish at the bottom of attainment tables (Department for Education 2015). Simultaneously meeting the needs of these young learners whilst providing the requisite education for indigenous pupils in the same schools presents a challenge to increasing numbers of school leaders and government policy makers. When the desired educational outcomes for certain minority groups are not achieved, schools may choose to clas-

sify the children and families from these groups as hard to reach. It is apparent from the wide variation in educational attainment that the label ‘hard to reach’ only applies to certain low-achieving groups, and not to those minority groups who appear to be successfully engaged in the education system. This chapter will explore whether better coordination between education providers can improve the learning outcomes of those minority ethnic groups considered hard to reach by presenting a case study conducted in an English city.

In addition to the drive for academic attainment for all, education systems also bear central responsibility for instilling the personal qualities required to build democratically cohesive communities in the face of mounting threats to cohesion, brought about by the coalescence of economic inequality and cultural and religious diversity. There has never been a greater need for educational resources to combine efforts to eliminate inequalities and reinforce those aspects of learning that will promote harmonious citizenship in the context of increasing diversity. In this chapter, it will be argued that forging closer links between the formal and informal schools attended by some minority ethnic and ‘hard to reach’ children can help them, and the children around them, learn the attitudes and skills necessary to operate successfully in multicultural communities.

As major demographic changes have occurred over the last half-century in England, a variety of informal, community-led educational organisations, collectively called ‘complementary’ schools by some professionals, have been established within migrant communities to provide additional education to children outside of normal school hours (Maylor *et al.* 2010). The term ‘supplementary schools’ is also commonly used to denote this provision, but conveys, in its literal meaning, less suggestion of compatibility with mainstream schooling than the term ‘complementary schools’, which is henceforth adopted here.

Before exploring the issues surrounding complementary schools’ links with mainstream schools, this chapter will discuss the significance of complementary schools in their contribution to the education of hard to reach learners, and consider their role in promoting cohesion and social integration. Firstly, some of the aims stated by complementary schools will be discussed. Secondly, the various benefits related to social integration that are attributed to the complementary school sector will be examined. The final section of the chapter will discuss the potential benefits of greater collaboration between complementary and mainstream schools and describe a pilot project, undertaken in the City of Leicester in England, in which schools in both sectors were supported to form networks, hold regular meetings and engage in collaborative training. An evaluation of this

project suggests collaboration of this kind could enhance educational outcomes and assist mainstream schools to engage with ‘hard to reach’ communities. In conclusion, it will also be suggested that, wherever complementary schools operate in close geographical proximity to mainstream schools, similar collaborative projects could enhance the educational outcomes for hard to reach learners in both types of school, and improve social cohesion in surrounding communities.

## Educational underachievement and labelling

The labelling of minority groups as hard to reach is a problematic endeavour, as discussed elsewhere in this volume. This chapter will not revisit that debate, but will assume that when the term is used in reference to mainstream educational settings, the learners identified are perceived as failing to reach certain educational objectives, and communications between school and home are seen as problematic. National examination statistics have repeatedly highlighted significantly different average examination pass rates between different ethnic groups (e.g. Department for Education (2015), Connolly (2006), and Strand (2014)). This long-standing discrepancy should focus attention on complementary schools, as they serve a wide variety of minority ethnic pupils, including those who persistently attain low average examination results. The use of the label hard to reach could be seen as a convenient ploy to reduce schools’ responsibility for educational failures, by implying that educating these particular learners is significantly harder than educating ‘normal’ young people. Alternatively, using the label as shorthand for the recognition that communication barriers contribute to underachievement for identified groups might lead mainstream schools to re-shape and resource appropriate provision. It is suggested in this chapter that to improve outcomes for hard to reach pupils, one element of this re-shaping should necessarily include developing partnerships with any local complementary schools that serve them.

## Complementary schools

The range and number of complementary schools active at any given time in a particular town is difficult to determine; factors influencing this number include the status of various ethnic or religious groups and the age-profiles and social and educational resources available to those groups. In England, there are no legal requirements to control the establishment

of complementary schools, and no obligation to register with local authorities. The total number of such institutions operating across the UK was estimated at between 3 000 and 5 000 in 2008 (Ives and Wyvill 2008, cited in Ramalingam and Griffith 2015: 3, Evans and Vassie 2012). The Institute for Public Policy Research (2011), however, reported an estimated figure of 2 000, solely in reference to the number of Islamic *madrassas* in the UK (Cherti and Bradley 2011). Given continuing demographic changes, it is likely that the number is continually rising.

Wide variations exist in the organisational models and educational objectives of complementary schools,. Some are small volunteer-run community groups, whilst others have organised professional, paid, staffing structures (Maylor et al. 2010, Ramalingam and Griffith 2015).

Minty et al. (2008) offer a typology of complementary schools, comprising three broad, partially overlapping categories characterised by the following aims:

1. Supplementing the mainstream school curriculum to boost academic attainment;
2. Maintaining cultural and linguistic heritage, in some cases emphasising religious education in a particular faith; and
3. Promoting values and learning experiences to a particular ethnic group which are distinctly different from those provided by mainstream education.

Simon (2013) conducted ethnographic research at 16 complementary schools in Birmingham. She offers a more sophisticated categorisation of apparent aims, based on detailed interviews and observation. Her study findings demonstrated that complementary schools have complex and multiple aims which straddle any externally devised category boundaries. Her classifications were as follows:

1. Means of preserving and maintaining traditional culture and language;
2. Supportive environment that engenders a sense of belonging;
3. Responses to the shortcomings of mainstream schooling;
4. Spaces where common conceptions or discourses can be challenged; ‘Safe space’ where identities can be formulated, explored and managed;
5. Means of parental empowerment; and
6. Means of raising social standing and mobility.

(Simon 2013: 28–39)

## Developing identities: Inclusion and cohesion

As cities become more culturally diverse, education systems probably provide the only locations where young people of minority and majority heritage can be equipped to communicate effectively and contribute to community cohesion. Education settings are uniquely positioned to assist all young people in the process of exploring and collaborating with others, enabling them to negotiate the choices, opportunities and contradictions they face as they approach adulthood in a multicultural society. Mainstream schools are, however, widely reported as failing to offer spaces in which minority ethnic cultures, languages and traditions are afforded sufficient prominence to allow these complex processes to take place for all young people (John 2015, Mirza and Reay 2000; Nwulu 2015, Ramalingam and Griffith 2015, Simon 2013). Since 2010, the reduction in curriculum time devoted to various types of creative education in England's mainstream schools (due to strong and continual government emphasis on other subjects) is likely to limit the opportunities for this kind of exploration and exacerbate these failure (Cultural Learning Alliance 2015, Ramalingam and Griffith 2015: 7, The Warwick Commission 2015).

Some evidence suggests that complementary schools are frequently succeeding where mainstream schools are failing to support these identity-building processes. For example, Nwulu (2015) mentioned that instilling a rigid vision of minority ethnic identity could create tension, but concluded that complementary schools provide essential spaces for identity development in multicultural communities.

[T]he supplementary school is often a place of negotiation where fluid and hybrid identities are formed and performed, which are less reductive than in mainstream settings. Others have argued that the very preservation of culture and language within a supplementary school can lead to a rigid vision of identity, which creates a tension with younger generations who need to reconfigure their identities within the context of a new country. Nevertheless, within these spaces, BME [black and minority ethnic] pupils are able to explore and celebrate their multiple identities, instead of having to negotiate and often suppress them within mainstream educational settings.

*(Nwulu 2015: 16–17)*

Simon argues that 'supplementary schools are recognised as socially constructed spaces within which community identity, and other connected social elements are discursively constructed through the interactive school-

ing processes' (2013: 54). Previously, Creese et al. (2008 cited in Simon 2013: 37) suggested supplementary schools also provide opportunities for the expression and construction of discourses that offer an alternative to those of the dominant mainstream. In particular, the supplementary school context allows students and teachers to establish narratives in which their bilingual and multicultural identities are central. These discourses conceptualise ethnicity as both ambiguous and stable, and facilitate the valuing of bilingualism; something seen as lacking in the mainstream.

Many complementary schools, therefore, are playing an important role in social integration by providing learning spaces for minority ethnic young people, and by offering them reflective time with peers facing similar issues and older role models (teachers and volunteers) from their own communities who have already navigated the process of growing up in a multicultural society. This social integration role could be of great significance to the educational futures of children otherwise classified as hard to reach. Many mainstream schools are unable to offer such a specifically, culturally attuned learning environment. Indeed, it would be impossible for a mainstream school in a diverse community to assume the mantle of all the local complementary schools and fully reconfigure its culture and curriculum in line with the different minority groups represented in local communities.

This brings us to the focus of this chapter, which is to question whether developing and enhancing collaborative arrangements between the mainstream and complementary schools could amplify the positive impact of both types of school on hard to reach pupils, bringing about worthwhile benefits, which include:

1. Improving mainstream schools' effectiveness for working with pupils considered hard to reach in academic attainment, as well as recognising and supporting their capacity to explore personal identities; and
2. Assisting mainstream schools in communicating with some of the pupils' communities that they consider to be hard to reach, the school thus becoming less 'hard to reach' from the perspective of the people within these communities.

## Orientation of complementary schools and their users

When exploring the benefits of collaboration between mainstream and complementary schools, it is relevant to consider the orientation of complementary schools toward mainstream education, as this will influence their propensity to collaborate.

Whilst the decision to send children to any complementary school logically implies parents require educational provision that differs from that available in mainstream schools, there have been markedly different perspectives on whether complementary schools set out to support or counteract the effects of mainstream education. A number of authors have expressed views from the African-Caribbean community that are far more critical of mainstream education than simply finding it inadequate. These criticisms characterise British mainstream schooling variously as ‘white-biased’, racist, Euro-centric and oppressively damaging to the healthy development of African-Caribbean children (e.g. John (2015)). Some literature offers evidence of stereotyping of black children by white teachers, who transmit low academic expectations and apply unfair sanctions for misbehaviour. This viewpoint is supported by evidence of vastly different rates of school exclusion and consistently lower attainment for Black Caribbean children (Gillborn 1990, Mirza and Reay 2000). Maylor et al. (2010) observe that the founders of schools for Black Caribbean children (both in the UK and America in the 1960s and 1970s) wished to challenge the dominant Euro-centric ideology and attune children to their African ancestry. In contrast, however, they describe the aims of complementary schools serving the Bengali, Turkish, Chinese, Gujerati and Somali communities as typically focused on academic achievement, supporting mainstream learning and promoting ‘learner identity’. No evidence was offered of any opposition to mainstream school culture in these cases. Similarly, the Leicester Cluster study, described later in this chapter, found no evidence of an oppositional orientation amongst the complementary schools. It is noteworthy that improvements to inclusion efforts in mainstream schools over recent years (Mistry and Sood 2011) may have invalidated the research evidence upon which some of these previous views were based. More recent analysis suggests direct opposition to mainstream schools is less prevalent, as ‘many [Black Caribbean] supplementary schools appear to have moved beyond their original mandate and are now less inclined to challenge the orthodoxies and practices of mainstream education’ (Nwulu 2015: 30).

There may still be significant differences between complementary schools in terms of their attitudes towards mainstream schools; thus, any attempts to arrange collaborative structures need to be negotiated carefully. The balance of evidence, however, appears to suggest that a majority of complementary schools would welcome opportunities to form partnerships with mainstream schools.



## Educational Benefits

Two strands of evidence in the literature support the assertion that pupils attending complementary schools experience general improvements in their educational outcomes. Complementary schools are widely found to instil improved motivation to learn, sometimes termed ‘learner identity’ (Creese et al. 2006: 35, 36). With regard to measurable outcomes, a number of studies have investigated examination results, mainstream school absenteeism, and behavioural data for pupils from complementary schools and compared them with local averages. Once again, the pattern of evidence suggests more positive averages for children attending complementary schools (Evans and Vassie 2012). The improvement is greater when the comparison is limited to pupils eligible for free school meals (an indicator of economic deprivation) (Evans and Gillan-Thomas 2015:6). It is interesting to note that only 18 of the 52 complementary schools included in Evans and Gillan-Thomas’ sample were teaching National Curriculum subjects. This suggests complementary schools that focus on culture and language also provide educational benefits that have a positive impact in other areas of learning.

## Collaboration between complementary and mainstream schools

Kenner and Ruby (2012) reported that the mainstream teachers they surveyed knew very little about the kinds of teaching and learning operating in local complementary schools. They described an action research project set up to establish partnerships between teachers in the two sectors, including reciprocal visits, joint topic planning and lesson observations. There was a considerable change of attitudes during the course of the project, and a recognition that the bilingual teaching methodologies in use in complementary schools could inform better work in the mainstream school.

The mutual benefits of collaboration have the potential to extend beyond the sharing of teaching methodologies. Ramalingam and Griffiths (2015: 9) identify seven features of complementary schools, with

[T]he potential to reduce the pressures that diverse mainstream schools face:

1. Extended learning and enrichment;
2. Rich and personalised learning;
3. Confidence and cultural competence;

4. Mother-tongue proficiency and bilingualism;
5. Role models;
6. Parental involvement; and
7. Community mediation and social integration.

Nwulu (2015: 29) states that complementary schools

[C]an also play an important role in helping parents become more familiar and engaged with their child's mainstream education. Some supplementary school leaders and volunteers act as advocates, for example, accompanying parents to speak with teachers should their children face difficulties at school.

Developing links and broadening understanding of the different communities surrounding schools are also mentioned by Ramalingam and Griffiths (2015) as extremely useful for mainstream schools. These are also seen as improving communications between schools and local communities that might be classified as hard to reach:

Supplementary schools also facilitate critical dialogue between mainstream service-providers and migrant groups. The headteachers whom we spoke to saw the supplementary school sector as a source of critical cultural intelligence that could be tapped into in order to inform policies and practices in the classroom. We also heard that supplementary schools had stepped in to help resolve disputes on issues such as sexual education, and to develop greater liaison between parents and schools. *(Ramalingam and Griffiths 2015:12)*

As mentioned above, not all complementary school leaders are enthusiastic about the idea of close collaboration with mainstream schools. In addition to the desire to combat white 'Eurocentric' tendencies, some complementary schools are wary of interference from outside. Maylor et al. (2010) reported recognition amongst the leaders of both mainstream and complementary schools that links would be mutually beneficial, but tensions and misunderstandings between the two sectors created some barriers. There was also a fear that links with the mainstream might impose unwanted accountability on the complementary sector. It is therefore important to re-emphasise here, that any general recommendations for collaboration between different types of schools must reflect awareness of the extensive diversity of complementary schools, which inevitably means establishing meaningful links will be far easier for some than for others.

## Conclusions and summary of the above discussion

Some conclusions and suppositions to inform the remainder of this chapter may be drawn from the discussion presented above:

1. Mainstream schools' efforts to engage with some groups of hard to reach young people and their families and communities could be improved if effective partnerships were formed with relevant complementary schools;
2. Most complementary schools would welcome partnerships with supportive mainstream schools;
3. There is evidence to suggest that attendance at a complementary school boosts academic attainment and provides other educational benefits;
4. Mainstream schools could utilise techniques employed in complementary schools to improve their ability to meet individual learner's needs and ensure progress;
5. The process of identity development for minority ethnic young people who attend complementary schools and mainstream schools could be supported more effectively if the different schools they attend worked together to develop consistency and coherence in the ways that ethnicity and identity are discussed; and
6. Collaboration between mainstream and complementary schools, if publicly celebrated, could become a symbolic demonstration of mutual respect between mainstream and minority cultures and communities. This could provide a practical example of community cohesion that is clearly visible to young people and thus influence their developing social awareness.

## Ethnographic study of a collaborative project linking complementary and mainstream schools in Leicester, UK (2012–2015)

The remainder of this chapter summarises research conducted to evaluate a pilot project which aimed to develop partnerships between mainstream schools and complementary schools in the City of Leicester. The project established local 'clusters' or networks of complementary schools, each centred on, and facilitated by, a local mainstream school. The aim of the research was to compile an evaluation of the project based on the perceptions of a sample of 19 school leaders.

The research data was collected via a series of in-depth interviews carried out during the academic year 2014–2015. Interview transcripts were

analysed using a Grounded Theory methodology (Grounded Theory Institute 2008). The interviewees were management representatives from three mainstream schools and 16 complementary schools. The research sample was selected to represent complementary schools from different ethnic, national, religious and cultural communities (Islamic, Hindu, Sikh, Jain, Chinese, Somali, Tamil), as well as those whose focus was purely academic or more youth activity oriented. The overall findings were that, in the opinion of the staff involved, this initiative produced significant benefits to both types of school. As costs of facilitation were relatively low, this project provided a model that other cities' educational administrations would benefit from considering.

Leicester is located in the Midlands area of England, with a population of about 330 000. It is one of Britain's most ethnically diverse cities, having experienced significant waves of inward migration dating back to the mid-twentieth century. Figures from the 2011 population census reveal that less than half of the population were registered as 'white British' at that time. It is estimated that there are more than a hundred community-led complementary schools in the city, but accurate figures are not available to verify this.

The Leicester Complementary School Development Cluster Project (the 'Cluster Project') was initiated in October 2012. Its initial delivery period ran until August 2015. The Project was managed by the School Development and Support Agency (SDSA), in partnership with the Leicester Complementary Schools Trust. It was made possible by funding from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and Leicester City Council.

The objectives of the Cluster Project were to:

1. Increase knowledge of teaching methodologies and practical skills for teachers in complementary schools;
  2. Encourage mainstream schools to become involved in the cluster model and develop relationships with complementary schools;
  3. Improve relationships and understanding between mainstream and complementary schools; and
  4. Develop partnerships between mainstream and complementary schools.
- Six clusters were established, each comprising one coordinating mainstream school and five or six complementary schools. In total, 31 complementary schools were involved. Each cluster typically met once each term. An essential component of the model was the establishing of mentoring relationships for the managers/principals of complementary schools, supported by the head teachers from mainstream schools.

## Findings based on the interview evidence

### Mainstream schools improving links to their local communities through working with complementary schools

Mainstream managers proffered ten examples to explain how cluster relationships with complementary schools improved relationships with parents and local communities. They were seen as valuable ways to engage successfully with parents and raise the profile of the school in the eyes of community members, some of whom were identified as hard to reach using normal school communications. One mainstream school manager described a number of school events, such as parents' evenings and celebrations of achievement, hosted on complementary school premises. This location was seen as both more convenient and less formal than the mainstream school setting, and the events attracted high levels of attendance.

#### ► Benefits for mainstream schools' community links mentioned during interviews

- Improved communications with parents whose English language is limited
- Access to community representatives who can offer specific cultural and/or religious information
- Assistance with mediation and negotiation with parents over cultural issues
- An improved network through which to disseminate school information
- A source of current information about trends and changes in various groups in the local community (such as the changing needs of new arrivals to the area)
- A potential forum to meet parents in unthreatening settings and explain how they can support their children's education
- Access to complementary school venues in parents' residential areas in which to host mainstream school events, such as parent consultations and celebration events.
- Direct language and cultural inputs to the curriculum provided by complementary school staff (or students) acting as visiting speakers.
- Access to translation services (on paper and in person during parents' evenings)
- Access to local community members (with experience of working with children) to recruit as ancillary staff (teaching assistants, language assistants, clerical staff ...)

One of the complementary school managers reported several instances when guidance was requested by a mainstream school because parents had requested special provision for their children based on religious customs. Authoritative explanations of the relevant religious text (by the complementary school manager) clarified that the requested restrictions were not necessary, and the explanations given were respected by the parents.

## Benefits to the wider community

The complementary school managers interviewed clearly demonstrated their strong sense of civic responsibility, devoting a considerable amount of time each week to their professional duties. In most cases, they received no financial reward for this work. It became apparent during the interviews that some complementary school leaders saw themselves as contributing to their local communities, helping to build civic awareness within their target communities, improving integration and helping their parents to understand the British education system. Some were very proud of their role in providing opportunities for volunteering, and cited examples of their own ex-students becoming volunteer teachers, and gaining experiences they include on their CVs and job and university applications. At several complementary schools, some staff members had specific plans to move into ancillary jobs in mainstream schools, while others intended to qualify as mainstream teachers. Establishing stronger links with mainstream schools through cluster networks allowed information to be exchanged about the opportunities and skills needed in mainstream schools. It is unwise to make general assumptions based on this limited sample, as some of the complementary school leaders did not mention the wider impact of their school on their community, but this evidence suggests complementary schools could play a potentially valuable role in supporting ‘hard to reach’ communities gain access to mainstream opportunities and in promoting economic and social integration.

## Benefits mentioned by mainstream school managers

The mainstream school managers involved in the clusters expressed their recognition that time spent developing strong communication links with complementary schools could yield wide ranging mutual benefits. They commented that complementary schooling could contribute to the raising of standards for their pupils, as long as the quality and relevance of the

teaching was complementary to, and well coordinated with, each child's mainstream education. For this benefit to be significant, the mainstream staff felt that the learning opportunities for children in the complementary schools needed to be delivered using effective teaching skills pitched at the right level to benefit each child. Ideally, this required some communication between the schools to identify the level each child had reached. The closest relationships between the two sectors existed where complementary schools saw themselves as boosting National Curriculum attainment, and where mainstream school leaders were confident in the quality of teaching offered at the complementary school. In some cases, the recruitment of children to start at complementary schools was initiated by a recommendation to parents from mainstream school staff, based on assessment data held by the school. The shared use of pupil tracking data, the negotiation of appropriate study support packages to be delivered in the complementary school, and regular review meetings between mainstream and complementary managers appeared to be critical factors making these relationships highly valued by staff in both schools. Describing the process, one mainstream school leader explained:

We hand-pick individual kids based on assessment data. To make best use of the complementary provision, knowledge of the individual kids needs is absolutely essential. We need to use communication [with the complementary school] to pick the kids and identify their needs so the teaching can be at the right level.

*(Mainstream school manager)*

Where the complementary provision was not well targeted to the children's needs, it was seen as less useful by the mainstream schools, as expressed here:

If you're not careful, kids already on A\*, B and C [estimated grades] were being put into C/D borderline classes at complementary school, so I tried to set up communication so that they can know what is their current estimated grades and what areas would be most efficient to focus on. I offered training to the complementary school staff and laboured the point about using that information.

*(Mainstream school manager)*

Broader educational benefits for children, improving their learning capacity beyond the specific subjects being taught, were also recognised by mainstream staff; the value of cognitive development, supporting what was going on in their own schools was mentioned:

As a linguist, I believe the skills employed to learn a language have an impact on our brains and they improve our learning across the curriculum.  
*(Mainstream school manager)*

I believe everything a child is learning in complementary schools is a help, as long as it is quality learning. It will have an impact on their learning in the classroom as well and hopefully, open their eyes and ears to learning.  
*(Mainstream school manager)*

## Offering a curriculum unavailable in mainstream schools

Some complementary school staff felt that mainstream schooling could not support certain aspects of personal development and establish behavioural norms which the parents in their community believe are important. It is unsurprising that the value of this learning was more clearly articulated by complementary school managers than by mainstream school managers. It was described in terms such as ‘character building’ and ‘learning for life’. This may reflect the views held by complementary school staff, in support of the assertion cited earlier, that mainstream schools are unable to devote adequate time and resources to creativity and deeper areas of personal exploration, and this has reduced their capacity to provide the less measurable aspects of personal development and creative expression (Cultural Learning Alliance 2015, Ramalingam and Griffith 2015, The Warwick Commission 2015). This evidence aligns with the suggestion, discussed previously, that complementary schools can support the development of identity in ways mainstream schools cannot.

Education for life is not taught at mainstream school, that’s where religion steps in, in the education [about] how to lead a life. Some things are character building not just academic. We have a saying: It’s very easy to educate a child, very difficult to educate “how to lead a life”.  
*(Complementary school manager)*

There are lots of things they only learn here: the ability to speak in front of an audience, teamwork, leadership, work sharing [...] the things you only learn when you are in a group environment. The group environment at mainstream school is very strongly led by teachers [and thus inhibits initiative taking]. Some stuff that’s never going to be touched on at school we are teaching here.  
*(Complementary school manager)*



We are different from some of the complementary schools that just do academic subjects; we feel we are trying to foster good behaviour which also helps them in mainstream school. We teach a subject called “Good Behaviour”. I think there is benefit to mainstream because our children are learning good behaviour.

*(Complementary school manager)*

In other cases complementary schools saw themselves as providing necessary educational support for children from a particular community, whose specific language needs were not being met at their mainstream school.

When we look at children from our community, they are not good at GCSEs, not all of them. Especially some children who came here recently and [...] were put in the mainstream classrooms, where no one engaged with them, they did not speak good English and we thought: “How can we support these children?”

*(Complementary school manager)*

## Styles of teaching and learning

There is wide variation in the teaching styles employed in the complementary schools studied. Some reflect the traditions of culture, religion, or country of origin of the ethnic communities they serve. In these cases, the teaching methods are more formal, more didactically teacher-led and more textbook-based than typical mainstream teaching (this was observed during visits, but not cited in interviews). This was not true of others that were able to take advantage of their relatively small class sizes and adopt less formal teaching styles that the staff felt succeed in engaging children who were not thriving in their state school. Some hard to reach children might benefit from more individual attention in less formal settings.

What we really want to do is have a very relaxed atmosphere. Children can feel more relaxed and feel as if they are not at school, in order to absorb that learning a bit more. I would say they don’t want to come to school on a Saturday morning for more of the same. It works quite well.

*(Complementary school manager)*

The approach is: “let’s come away from text books”, “let’s start giving them something they can really get their teeth into”, “give them a chance to do a lot of speaking, a chance to really get involved”. Because

we have been offered textbooks many times and we say, “no we don’t want them, let’s find an activity, say maths, more of an investigative activity and let’s look at this, lets pull it apart, even if we just go through one or two questions” and it’s like “that’s it!” we are not interested in just the answers, we are interested in the ins and outs of it, the process and how we get through it. And that’s what engages the children a lot more.

*(Complementary school manager)*

Although they do not come to do specific maths or numeracy, the activities are aimed at giving them confidence and involving them, enabling them to relax, feel confident, ask questions in order to take some of these things back into the classroom [...] so what we’ve been doing is drama and music [...] I think there is learning through confidence building.

*(Complementary school manager)*

I think some of the children – I see the children from both sides – for children who have behavioural issues, in the environment of the complementary school, those behavioural issues don’t show at all [in the complementary school setting]. I think it’s because of the delivery approach – the attitude is quite different – it’s amazing! I have never been able to get over the fact that on the weeks when we’ve had to cancel for some reason, say for Eid, and even those children who were off because of Eid saying “Why do we have to cancel?” they were missing it. Or because of snow, or holidays, I say “Sorry, but I actually need a holiday” but no, they want to continue.

*(Complementary school manager [who also works in a state primary school])*

## Complementary schools’ need for support

All the representatives of the complementary schools expressed enthusiasm for the continuation of networking between groups of complementary schools and mainstream schools, and viewed the links made in cluster meetings as providing valuable access to different kinds of support. The quote below illustrates how collaboration might lead to harmonisation between the practices shared across the two sectors; it could be argued that this would improve continuity of learning experiences for pupils attending mainstream and complementary schools.

We attended [the cluster meeting], and came out of the session saying

“Wow!” it was so useful, we got so much out of that. It was discussing performance management, the overall management of the complementary school and how the head teacher would be there supporting us. It was relating to staffing issues and getting the best out of volunteers.  
(*Complementary school manager*)

The range of issues that complementary school managers wanted discussed at cluster meetings were very similar to the issues facing the school managers in the mainstream sector.

► **Support needs mentioned by complementary school manager**

- Funding, availability of funds to bid for
- Transition from volunteer staff to paid staff
- Financial management
- Record keeping, data protection, pupil registration, induction
- Pupil assessment and tracking systems
- Premises
- Training for teaching staff in: Teaching skills (especially language teaching) Catering for special needs Use of software for teaching Classroom management Behaviour management Safeguarding/child protection First Aid
- Systems for rewards and sanctions
- Training for management committees
- Parent liaison
- Finding exam centres for GCSEs (national exams)
- Legal requirements
- Staff management, performance management
- Job descriptions
- Managing volunteers
- Managing pupil attendance
- Marketing the school and recruiting children
- Access to learning resources, stationery and computer equipment
- Sharing syllabus plans and resources

The enthusiasm for increased access to training opportunities was expressed by all the interviewees. Some of the more established complementary schools were found to organise their own in-house training, but the majority relied on external opportunities. Cluster meetings provided new opportunities to negotiate these offers. Developing teaching skills and

more professional techniques to manage classroom behaviour were frequently mentioned as highly desirable by complementary school managers. Additionally, cluster networks were seen as a way of securing places on Open College Network (OCN) training programmes (national teacher training courses locally administered by the SDSA), and of negotiating training support from the mainstream schools that led the clusters. Those who had attended either the OCN teaching courses or one-off events run by mainstream hub schools were generally impressed and very grateful, and saw them as highly relevant to improving their practice. The following quotations illustrate complementary managers' attitudes to training, as accessed through clusters.

At the meeting Abdish [the Cluster Project coordinator] said there were two places available on the OCN training. I said "I wanted three!" The same thing with first aid training; he said he had one, I said "No, I want two! I want all my teachers to be first aiders". There is big demand for training. People are participating. "It's important!"  
*(Complementary school manager)*

I went to the child protection course, which was very useful, because I never worked with children before, so I need to know [about] problems and how to deal with them.  
*(Complementary school manager)*

## Establishing a mentoring link with a mainstream head teacher

Opening an informal channel of communication between complementary school managers and an experienced mainstream head teacher was frequently mentioned as a highly valued benefit attained when joining a cluster. Twelve of the 16 managers of complementary schools surveyed had no formal teaching qualifications or experience of school management in the state education sector. Leadership of an institution and responsibility for staff recruitment and performance can be a lonely and stressful role in any school; those holding this role in complementary schools had had no regular access to professional support networks prior to the establishment of the clusters. Networking support between complementary school managers was seen as useful, but access to ad hoc advice from practicing mainstream head teachers was viewed as extremely precious, because they had detailed knowledge of school management issues from a full-time professional perspective. This is apparent from the following extracts:

The head teacher said just give me a ring any time, any problems, anything you're not sure about just give me a ring. So on little issues there's always help and that's good. Having someone available in the background is really good!

*(Complementary school manager)*

Having a phone number, someone you can just call is very important [...] Because we all want to move forward. That's very different from having to attend a meeting, but being able to move at my own pace, that's a different kind of support structure.

*(Complementary school manager)*

## Mainstream school staff visiting complementary schools

Some mainstream staff involved in the clusters invested time visiting the complementary schools. In some cases this was intended to demonstrate general goodwill, for fact-finding, or to meet staff and observe lessons, in other cases they attended events and distributed certificates to students. These visits were warmly welcomed by complementary school managers because of the encouragement they offered to both students and members of staff, and also for the implied recognition and approval from the mainstream school of the services being offered to children by the complementary school.

We had the head teacher come twice to see the kids and she introduced herself. That really helped the kids, having teachers come to see them.

*(Complementary school manager)*

Mainstream school staff involved in facilitating clusters seemed generous in investing their own time to develop good links with complementary schools, as described below:

I visited the ones we were working with at weekends. I see it as part of my job. I wanted to. I knew I could claim expenses but I didn't [...] It was an investment on our part, but the benefits were both ways.

*(Mainstream school manager)*

The school released me a couple of times during the day, but complementary school staff can't meet you during the day; they go to work. I've done it in my own time in the evenings, the school would fund release

if necessary, but that's not been appropriate.  
(*Mainstream school manager*)

## Mainstream schools organising training for teachers at complementary schools

The mainstream schools responsible for facilitating clusters also saw their role as providing training opportunities for complementary schools. Cluster meetings were sometimes run as training workshops rather than information exchange sessions, and a range of additional special events were set up. One secondary school, which was also a specialist language college, organised a day that included lesson observations, shadowing, and dedicated training activities, focusing on language teaching techniques. This required considerable input of organisation and planning for the staff leading the training, but was viewed by the school managers as a useful experience for the trainers:

The teachers doing the training were happy, they could have said no, but they didn't. It was both ways, the professional development that our teachers had in leading the training for others was valuable; there were four teachers involved, two of them weren't experienced in training.  
(*Mainstream school manager*)

Training events like this were seen as important for developing the relationship between this mainstream school (a specialist language college) and the complementary schools, especially set up to teach community languages. The mainstream school manager was clear about the potential benefits to local children when the teaching skills in the complementary schools were enhanced.

The use of the buildings is nothing; the relationship is much deeper and more complex. They pay us for the use of the buildings; it's the core of teaching and professional development that is crucial. We have lots of very enthusiastic young people teaching in the complementary schools without any experience of teaching so when they came here to see the different skills used here, then they could take that back [...] people have asked us for expertise that we have and we are prepared to share it [...] we've got fourteen language staff here, so we've got a huge resource.  
(*Mainstream school manager*)

The idea of an ongoing staff development relationship was welcomed by the complementary school managers, thus,

For some of our staff to observe live teaching would be very useful, and also, on the other hand, we would like them to maybe shadow us as well, maybe work [toward creating] a mentor relationship.

*(Complementary school manager)*

## Complementary schools enhancing mainstream schools' curriculum

Clusters were also seen as ideal opportunities for the staff of mainstream schools to learn about the skills used in local complementary schools. Language and cultural input that might complement the mainstream curriculum and which would not otherwise have been available were mentioned.

We had a couple of community language lessons from them back into school. We would definitely do that again – take it with both hands! We did it during activities week, a very tangible benefit that emerges from that relationship.

*(Mainstream school manager)*

The head wanted some of our students to perform a dance from our culture.

*(Complementary school manager)*

## Sharing of individual pupils' information

There are wide differences between complementary schools and they have varied interest in, and knowledge of, the pupil assessment tracking data used by mainstream schools. Some have established relationships with mainstream schools through which assessment and tracking data are regularly shared. This is most appropriate in cases where the complementary school is teaching National Curriculum subjects and data is directly applicable to both settings. One complementary school saw their role as providing a direct service to mainstream schools to boost progress through the levels of the National Curriculum. This school negotiated an annual fee from the mainstream schools, employed experienced, qualified teachers, and created bespoke packages for the schools they worked with. The school manager explained:

At least once every half term I would meet up with the schools to make sure we were doing what the schools wanted – a review meeting with the head teacher or head of year [...] There is adjustment. It would be done according to schools' needs – we've got a template, this is what we can run for you [...] my background is ten years teaching in years 5 and 6 so I know the SATs [national Standard Assessment Tests] quite well. We know exactly what the kids are going to need, however if there's anything you wish to focus on we can adjust it accordingly [...] In the first year [with one school] we ran writing and numeracy, second year they requested a change to grammar and numeracy. Also, when we teach things we make sure we have that link with the schools. We work very closely with the schools. For example, when we are teaching, we are teaching according to the school's calculation policies because that can vary from school to school.

*(Complementary school manager)*

Other complementary schools were less knowledgeable about the data systems in the mainstream schools but could see that there would be great benefits from having access to detailed information about the attainment levels of their pupils. Few had made direct requests or felt their relationship with the relevant schools was strong enough for this to work; some thought that mainstream schools would not wish to share this confidential information. For complementary schools whose children spread across many mainstream schools, such data sharing would prove complex and time-consuming. In other cases, the data held by schools would be less relevant, for example, to the teaching of cultural or religious curricula. Several complementary schools mentioned that opportunities to share information about individual pupils' special needs or behavioural issues would be valuable.

## Comments and reflections on the interview evidence

### Improving the quality of teaching and learning

Improving the quality of teaching in complementary schools was one of the principal aims of the project. The participants interviewed for the study unanimously believed that this had been achieved through increased access to training. The Cluster Project created a new forum in which training needs were identified, and a variety of options were set up to meet them with the support of mainstream schools. This clearly offered greater flexibility and responsiveness than a menu of centrally run courses.



## Untapped benefits and resources revealed through networking

The new relationships forged as a result of the Leicester City Cluster Project produced a wide range of benefits for schools in both sectors. This chapter has summarised the way that participants in the clusters reported them. The relationships and personal contacts that developed within the clusters offered flexibility for personal and individual needs to be discovered and met through informal negotiation. More formal central or local government support systems and training courses are less likely to facilitate such informal exchanges, which occurred after personal relationships had developed. As mainstream schools have become more familiar with the activities of complementary schools, the value of new kinds of access to community contacts and cultural knowledge has become clearer to them. Complementary school managers attending cluster meetings recognised the enormous benefits of establishing a personal link with an experienced practising head teacher. Such benefits could only emerge through the devolved network model of the Clusters, which operate on local and informal contacts. These benefits may not be apparent to schools not currently involved in such work.

## Competition versus cooperation

Rivalry between schools in a given locality exists in both the mainstream and the complementary sectors. It is almost inevitable that schools offering similar services to the same potential catchment of families will consider themselves to be in competition with each other. For complementary schools, however, overall numbers on rolls are small, and maintaining pupil numbers may be a critical factor in their survival. This may lead to a cautious approach to networking with schools nearby offering similar services. Overcoming such caution may take time and require the facilitation of an ‘honest broker’ to build mutual trust and emphasise the potential benefits from open communication and collaboration.

## Attitudes and awareness

There are many obvious reasons that explain why relationships between mainstream and complementary schools are asymmetric. The structural differences between the sectors, combined with a lack of knowledge about

the other's ways of working, can easily lead to misunderstandings and lack of trust. Mainstream schools might feel they have a monopoly on educational professionalism, and complementary schools might feel their contribution to children's progress and good behaviour is not acknowledged. Trust needs to be established before doors can be opened to closer cooperation. Once again, small, local groups in which personal relationships can be developed may be the best way for this trust to be established. Mainstream school leaders must bear responsibility for ensuring that complementary school staff do not feel threatened or undervalued when they engage with full-time professional teachers.

## Responsibility for promoting future collaboration

The Cluster Project demonstrated that mainstream schools are very well equipped and best placed to offer the support most needed and requested by complementary schools. The mainstream managers interviewed did not feel the investment required of them was high compared to the tangible benefits that emerged. The Project did require central planning to recruit schools and establish groups, and this process was managed by the SDSA agency in Leicester. Whilst some schools might acknowledge a need to set up this kind of partnership work without any external prompting, it is likely that promotion, recruitment and priming of partnerships are roles for local authority administrations or other central agencies. Accordingly, there are strong arguments for the deployment of their resources, to encourage collaboration between complementary and mainstream schools in their areas, in order to optimise and harmonise the substantial resources and human energies (both professional and voluntary) that are directed toward the education of future generations. Local authorities' remit might include information sharing, facilitating communication and cooperation, training local network facilitators, encouraging the sharing of resources, providing funding to establish networks, and releasing staff to participate, and publicly recognising and publicising the achievements of the complementary sector.

## Conclusion

The evidence discussed in this chapter supports the view that children benefit when liaisons and collaboration between mainstream and complementary schools is well managed. In cases where it is known by a main-

stream school that vulnerable or hard to reach children are attending complementary schooling, it would seem desirable for the schools to establish ongoing collaboration. It is worth noting that the role of complementary schools will become an increasingly important issue in parts of the UK, where inward migration continues. Birth rates in minority communities continue to exceed those in the indigenous population, and this accelerates the expansion of minority ethnic populations attending mainstream schooling. The numbers attending complementary schools are therefore likely to continue to rise steadily.

This chapter focuses only on the educational landscape of England in 2014–2015. It is recognised that the pattern of complementary schools serving minority ethnic communities in other parts of Europe might be very different. However, where similar minority community-led initiatives do exist to offer various types of informal education, local authorities or official education services would be wise to research and invest in promoting positive relationships between complementary providers and ‘official’ education providers. It was previously noted that the benefits of complementary schooling appeared greater for children from economically deprived backgrounds (Evans and Gillan-Thomas 2015:6). This suggests an interesting question: How might extra provision, similar to complementary schooling, benefit children from deprived backgrounds for whom no complementary school currently exists? There are no equivalent complementary schools for white, working class children in England, but in many schools, some children in this category suffer consistently low academic attainment and could be designated hard to reach. Is it possible that smaller, community-based educational settings, providing pedagogical approaches less formal than mainstream schools, might yield greater success for such pupils? Research into new forms of complementary education for indigenous hard to reach children might provide models for innovative interventions that address the long-standing problem of this group’s under-achievement.

It has been suggested that local authorities in England should assume responsibility for promoting collaboration between mainstream and complementary schools in their areas. Current government policy in England, however, is reducing the role, capacity and resources of local authorities to influence schools by requiring schools to become ‘academies free of local authority control’ (Education and Adoption Act 2016). Under this requirement, new administrative structures (Academy Trusts) assume responsibility for schooling. The same recommendation, however, applies to any agencies with responsibility for organising mainstream education. Namely, that they should seek to establish collaboration between their mainstream

schools and local complementary schools. Failure to do so would represent lost opportunities to improve the learning outcomes of some of our most vulnerable children and the failure to support an important pathway to better future integration and community cohesion. The weight of evidence outlined above suggests that, for a relatively low input of resources, the disparate and disconnected efforts of schools and community enthusiasts could be more closely aligned to produce long-term communal benefits greater than the sum of their parts, and as such may address some of the complex needs of children labelled hard to reach.

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Maria Pagoni

## Participatory citizenship initiatives to address dropping-out<sup>1</sup> in French schools

This chapter investigates participatory citizenship education as a form of innovative pedagogy that is utilised in France to help prevent students breaking away from the school system, and to stop those that do from becoming marginalised or hard to reach.

Although since the early twentieth century various pedagogical systems have proposed schemes that allow students to participate in decision making about curricula, school buildings and administration, these pedagogical systems have been developed at the margins of the school system, and have not actually challenged the system *per se*. The aim of this chapter is to question the political, sociological and pedagogical processes that have led the French state to introduce educational schemes and organisations to harness participatory citizenship for use as an alternative model to more traditional forms of school administration. Herein, I analyse these schemes specifically through the lens of institutions whose primary goal is to promote the educational and job-market integration of pupils in the process of dropping-out.

My hypothesis is that despite their innovative qualities, such schemes are proving unable to alter profoundly the schooling norms of learning and socialisation, as apprehended by the ‘schooling form’ concept suggested by Guy Vincent (1980, 1994). Participatory schemes in this context are tools fostering students’ school achievements, but they fail to change the evaluative norms of such schools, which are imposed most substantially by educational policy makers. They are not devoid of the tension at the heart of pupils’ activities or of the teachers involved.

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1 This is the generic English translation given here for the French, the usage of which is more current than ‘dropping-out’ in English. refers to the gradual and visible process whereby under-achieving students are breaking away from the school setting. It appeared in French public debate much more recently than the generic phrase in English.

The specific questions raised in this chapter are the following: In what way might the concept of ‘schooling form’ help us identify the workings of the French schooling system and any innovations? Which ‘hard to reach students’ are concerned about ‘dropping-out’ in France? How innovative are the schemes that have been created to prevent or address this issue? Finally, what is the role of participatory citizenship in these schemes and what are the conditions that determine its existence?

These questions, which guide the structure of the following sections, are answered in reference to the practice of participatory citizenship in schools.

## ‘Schooling form’ and the norms of the French schooling system

The concept of ‘schooling form’ in France, as introduced by Guy Vincent (1980, 1994), refers to a type of schooling socialisation legitimised by the emergence of so-called ‘schools of the Republic’ in the second half of the nineteenth century. This type of schooling is bound up with socialisation, obeying the following patterns: a space-time continuum and daily routines that allow for long and piecemeal learning processes; a moral, political and ideological function aimed at fashioning the totality of an individual (body, gestures, critical frame of mind); forms of action based on the authority of written knowledge; and scholarly types of knowledge divided into specific subjects. The way in which knowledge is divided into discrete topics, disciplinary codes and behavioural norms is imposed by adult authority, and the use of the written word as a tool to construct knowledge, are among the many elements of the French ‘schooling form’ that aim both to discipline the body and shape the mind.

Several sociological works demonstrate that this form of schooling organisation, mirroring as it does the norms and values of the privileged classes, is actually instrumental in generating under-achievement and learning inequalities. The studies prepared by the ESCOL research team at Paris-8 University revealed that the learning forms generally favoured at school are more easily comprehended by students from privileged backgrounds, since these necessitate abstraction and conceptualisation capacities, harnessing elaborate language and code, according to findings reported by Bernstein (1971). These norms are necessary to understand not only the tasks given to pupils as early as infant school (Joigneaux 2013), but also to answer teachers’ questions in situations prioritising verbal interaction (Bautier and Rochex 2007, Bautier and Rayou 2009, 2013).



Since the 1990s, the legitimacy of this socialisation model has been challenged for various reasons. These include growing unemployment, the widening divide between schools and the labour market, the questioning of traditional delineations of specific disciplines (Audigier 2010), and the multiplication of information and knowledge sources, which challenge the forms of knowledge being transmitted by schools (Malet eds. 2010), and the variety of curricular constructions based on interdisciplinary or action projects (Ross 2000). One of the ways in which this legitimacy issue could be resolved is by addressing some groups of under-achieving students through ‘intermediary’ schemes designed to connect the youths themselves reciprocally to the schooling form. These measures therefore question the entire schooling system, not least because of their capacity to take into account those elements specific to youth experience today, but also because of the capacity of youths themselves to devise and shape their educational projects. The challenge facing these measures is to try to demonstrate whether it is indeed possible to teach differently (Pirone and Rayou 2012). The school schemes aimed at targeting dropping-out also take on this challenge.

## Searching alternative school schemes to understand the failure of the French ‘schooling form’

Bernard (2014) explains that the French phrase that refers to dropping-out or early school-leaving (*décrochage scolaire*) took root in public policy on training and employment in order to legitimise public bodies that aimed to address initial increases in youth joblessness. Indeed, the first such initiatives occurred in the 1970s, and were projects launched by the Ministry of National Education aimed at preventing under-achievers from dropping-out, by proposing some schooling contracts including part-time immersion in the job market. However, it emerged early on that those youths breaking out of the school environment were no longer being dealt with by the Ministry of National Education, but by institutions dependent upon the Work and Employment administrations. An array of public actors (e.g. the National Association for the Professional Training of Adults) and associations (e.g. the Association for the Research and Operational Centre for Permanent Education<sup>2</sup>) began to rely on a public action rationale

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2 In French, respectively A. F. P. A. (Association Nationale pour la Formation Professionnelle des Adultes) and ACEREP (Association du Centre de Recherche et de Réalisations pour l’Education Permanente).

defined in terms of ‘missions to fulfil’ when initiating early schemes to integrate unskilled youths into the job market (Bernard 2014: 6).

In the 1980s, the broad objective set by the then-Minister of Education (Jean-Pierre Chevènement) was that 80 per cent of the rising generation should attain baccalaureate level qualifications. Alongside the career counselling legislation of 1989, a favourable political context emerged for granting the schooling system a mission of professional integration. Thus, the General Office of Professional Integration (in French, *Mission Générale d’Insertion*, M. G.I) was born; it was to be run by the Ministry of National Education, which produced a circular about the running of high schools on March 16th 1995. This General Office’s task was to deal with all students likely to drop out of school without any qualification. Over the same period, some academic conferences and workshops were organised to make the issue of dropping-out more public, as well as to place the schooling question at the very heart of the issue. It was then that the controversial phrase ‘dropping-out’ (*décrochage scolaire*) started to be used.<sup>3</sup>

Since 2008, a new impulse has driven the various MGIs that have taken over the several tasks associated with the issue of dropping-out. These tasks are identifying those in the process of dropping-out, coordinating actions on a local basis, and suggesting individual solutions, especially for youths at least 16 years of age who are officially under-achievers and more generally given assistance. In 2013, the M. G. I. later became known as General Office for Early School Leavers (*Mission de lutte contre le décrochage scolaire* (M. L. D. S)). This name change speaks volumes about the kind of evolution, as Bernard (2014) has already depicted. It indicates a shift from an issue centred on the association between training–employment and the job-market to an issue centred on schooling. This shift was connected both with the spread of lifelong training, which links the educational system to other training schemes, and the poor results of the French education system, be it in strictly academic terms or in terms of job-market integra-

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3 Noteworthy here was the conference held by the La Bouture association on January 23 rd and 24 th 1998 at Lyon, entitled ‘The high-school drop-outs’, bringing together education professionals, administrative staff from the Ministry, and also sociologists and researchers in education studies (Dominique Glasman, Michèle Guigue, Sylvain Broccolichi, Patrick Rayou, Jean-Yves Rochex, Michel Delvay among others). There was also the summer conference held the same year at ENS in Fontenay/Saint-Cloud, entitled ‘Rethinking school from the viewpoint of drop-outs’. Both events led to the publication of two books, respectively entitled *Les lycéens décrocheurs* for the Lyon conference (Bloch, Gerde, 1998), and *Les jeunes en rupture scolaire: du processus de confrontation à celui de remédiation* for the ENS event (Tanon, 2000). For further details, see Bernard, 2014.

tion. Indeed, a report published by the DEPP (Department of Evaluation, Planning and Performance) in November 2013 indicated that every year approximately 140 000 youths over the age of 16 drop out of school without any diploma or professional training, and that 620 000 youths aged from 18 to 24 are jobless and remain outside any training scheme (DEPP 2013).

This educational rationale rests upon the notion that ‘the normative balance maintained for about a century by a Republican school which is “blind to differences” and impervious to the outside world has reached a breaking point and needs a serious rethink’ (Pirone and Rayou 2012: 57). Thus, from the very start of the M. G. I, some innovative pedagogical schemes and institutions were created. These challenged the boundaries between the school and the social worlds themselves, by working *in situ* addressing the forms of socialisation that exist outside the school gates, whether these arise through the experience gathered during internship periods (school world/job market) or through neighbourhood related experience.

Micro-high schools constitute innovative structures introduced to address the problem of dropping-out. They were created in an area of Paris (Ile-de-France) in the early 2000s in alignment with the perspective of ‘Achievement for All’, a regional project, and then through national legislation on experimental schooling structures in 2005 (Ministry of National Education, 2005). According to their charter, micro-high schools aim to assist youths aged from 16 to 25 who have been out of school for at least a year. The ultimate goal is for these students to complete their French baccalaureate. In order to do so, a very willing and cohesive teaching staff serves the project, and there is a strong connection between teaching and education. The teaching staff benefit from special conditions that set them apart from mainstream state-financed schools: classes are small (a ration of 1:10), their budget is run autonomously, they have a common staff/student room, and they are hired by co-optation. In addition, the educational work is defined less by actual status or the kind of topic taught than by the pedagogical and educational project as a whole. There are fewer teaching hours each week, but longer hours of attendance within the school, and the teaching and non-teaching staff work closely as a team.

An action research study carried out by De Saint-Denis and Haeri (2012), focused on two micro-high schools in the Créteil area (Sénart and Vitry-sur-Seine, to the east and southeast of Paris) observed collaboration between the researchers and the school staff.<sup>4</sup> The results suggest that from 2008 to 2012 the pass rate lay between 60 and 70 per cent for the three

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4 The EXPERICE research team based at Paris-8 University (for Sénart’s micro-high school) and the research team called CIRCEFT –ESCOL based in the same university for Vitry-sur-Seine’s micro-high school.

types of general baccalaureate students (literature, science, economics), whereas the return to school rate was around 20 per cent. To determine the future of students following their micro-high school time, a study was carried out to assess them three to five years after leaving the school, for two cohorts of students, that of 2000–3 and that of 2003–6 (50 interviews were conducted for the first study and 54 for the second). The results of the second study were as follows: 50 per cent of the pupils have jobs (with 39 per cent having landed a permanent contract), 28 per cent are in further education (universities, short-term post-baccalaureate institutes, etc.), 9 per cent are in training, and 13 per cent are unemployed.

We might then ask: in what way might these pedagogical schemes be construed as a form of participatory citizenship? Before trying to address this specific question, it is important to make a few suggestions regarding the concept of ‘participatory citizenship’.

## The function of student participatory citizenship at school

Definitions of ‘citizenship’ (Canivez 1995, Audigier 2000) as a status rest on three distinct dimensions: a legal dimension, concerning the rights and duties of persons who act within a given social group and who abide by the same laws. A political dimension regarding the possibility for citizens to take an active role in power structures and in decision making, be it directly or indirectly through their elected representatives. Finally, an identity dimension, which conveys a feeling of belonging that is shared by citizens who adhere to communities of practice, traditions and values.

The notion of ‘participation’ is linked to participatory democracy, a concept that has developed over the past few years in civil society and within schools, and which stems from the broad realization that there is a ‘crisis of democracy’, a problem which had been further entrenched by the 1980s.<sup>5</sup> The growing interest in participatory schemes stems from a concern with improving both social equality and the democratisation of institutions, but also with devising a theoretical basis from which to rethink participation and, more particularly, with devising a deliberative paradigm in political philosophy. This does not mean that the concept of participation is anything new in itself (since it was at the very core of the democracy of Ancient Greece, Ancient Rome, and medieval city states), but that it developed theoretically,

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5 On the various crises of democracy, see Gauchet, M. (2007), *La Démocratie d’une crise à l’autre*, éd. Cécile Defaut; Mendel G (2003), *Pourquoi la démocratie est en panne ? Construire la démocratie participative*, Paris: La Découverte.

above all in Anglo-Saxon academia, following the works of American philosopher John Rawls (1971–1987, 1993–1995) and German philosopher Jürgen Habermas (1997). According to that paradigm, ‘a norm is legitimate only if it is founded upon public reasons themselves based on an inclusive and fair deliberative process, to which all citizens may participate, and in which they are led to cooperate freely’ (Blondiaux and Sintomer, 2002: 18).

This concern has a specific resonance in the school setting, where student participation in the educational and social running of school life is increasingly promoted. This is illustrated in the report published by Eurydice in 2006 entitled *Educating for Citizenship in European Schools*,<sup>6</sup> based upon research conducted in EU countries. It was also expressed in the Eurydice 2012–published report on the very same topic.<sup>7</sup> This document aims to lay the foundations for the application of the Council of Europe’s Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, unanimously agreed upon by all EU member states in 2010. Among other elements, the report establishes the promotion of equity, social cohesion and active citizenship in schooling as one of the key objectives of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training, which will run until 2020.<sup>8</sup>

Nevertheless, when one sums up the various participatory schemes elaborated in the French and also European schooling contexts (Huddleston 2007, Pagoni 2009, Row 2003, 2005), it is evident that they generate considerable tension in practice, among teachers and other teaching staff, not least because they tend to question the dominant *schooling form*. There is then a difficulty among tutors and teachers to adopt a common referential framework to organise these projects, and there are also some issues in terms of how to evaluate the competences and knowledge acquired by students, as well as issues concerning how best to integrate these experiences in the schedules laid out by schooling administrators.

What then is the specific meaning that these participatory schemes take on for students who are dropping out? How do these schemes adapt themselves to their needs and how are they apprehended not only by learners but also by teachers?

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6 Check Eurydice June 2006, pp. 2–3, [www.eurydice.org](http://www.eurydice.org) and report published by Eurydice: *L’éducation à la citoyenneté à l’école en Europe*, 2005, European Commission.

7 See <[https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Publications:Citizenship\\_Education\\_in\\_Europe](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Publications:Citizenship_Education_in_Europe)>

8 Council conclusions on May 2009, on building a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (‘Education and Training 2020’), JO C 119 dated 28.5.2009.

## Participation as a Feeling of Belonging

Melin and Haeri's analysis (2012) shows that at the micro-high school in Sénart some teaching hours of 'choice education' are part of the schedule. During initial sessions, the students work on presentations. They must present to fellow students or to teachers their experiences of school situations—they encountered. They are slowly led to observe their own re-integration into the school structure (focusing on, for example, the peculiarities of classroom and space organisation, the depiction of teacher/student interaction within and outside the classroom). This work is then highlighted when the students themselves are invited to represent the Sénart micro-high school at exhibitions or workshops that give platforms to school structures that deal with dropping-out. The students thus interiorise the specificities of their school not only by observing them, but also by deconstructing the formal norms linked with schooling (the possibility, for instance, of moving within and out of the classroom during classes) and by debating with other students. In order to represent their school, students must feel legitimised and must therefore confront their own school perceptions and those of other students.

Regarding the effects of this work upon the students themselves, the authors of the study argue:

We have become aware that the work upon the structures of re-integration by students who had dropped out made it possible for them to devise re-integration process as an object which is external to their personal issues whilst reassuring them ... Such a specific understanding by the youths of the objectives and functioning of their new schooling institution promotes integration into the institution itself. Noteworthy is the fact that, for instance, many youths at Sénart's micro-high school make use of the first person plural when describing their schools to other people ("we do such and such activities, we have such and such type of relations ...").  
(*Melin and Haeri 2012: 167*)

Here, a feeling of belonging is fostered within a community of practice, which becomes at once a shaping of identities and a development of observations and verbalisation skills. This example is evocative of Lave and Wenger's theory, according to which to learn is not to accumulate but to participate. The learning process cannot possibly be separated from an engaging process in a practical situation. These authors develop a social theory of learning in a given situation, as the gradual shift from peripheral participation to full participation: 'The learning process is this movement within participation, which is at once transformation of a status, of an

identity and of everyone's responsibilities' (Brougère et Bézille 2007: 152). What seems important here is to interiorise practical culture by underlining the social dimensions of learning.

This approach may be connected with one of the aspects of citizenship education stressed above, i. e. students' identity construction. What is at stake here is the fostering of a feeling of belonging through engagement in a community, through interiorising its functioning processes, its practises and values. However, undeniably, this engagement dimension remains somewhat limited, and cannot be related back to those skills that students could mobilise in order to influence the decision making process at their institutions. Three types of participation, as delineated by Rossi and Baraldi (2009) can be distinguished here, depending on the type of task students are faced with: participation in the conceiving and planning of projects; participation in decision making projects or problems raised by adults; and, the free expression of viewpoints and opinions in debates and discussions. The next section of this chapter considers whether the awareness of this feeling of belonging, and students' impression of being actors in their schooling and professional project leads to the *actual* possibility of participation in schools' projects themselves.

## Participation of decision making bodies: Laying down the rules and objectifying the schooling experience

Inspired as they are by institutional pedagogy, as well as that of Célestin Freinet (1977), those institutions whose mission is to prevent and address the dropping-out of students also create participatory bodies for students that are about decision making on class and school projects, but also about the student's projects themselves. Therefore, the political dimension of citizenship stressed above becomes tied to its pedagogical dimension; i. e. to make the student responsible, leading them to develop a sense of responsibility for their personal development and the development of the institution to which they belong. Two schemes may be distinguished here: a participatory student council, and 'class life moments' which comprise spaces for debate and decision-making.

On Sénart's micro-high school website,<sup>9</sup> one finds a depiction of the participatory student council, which establishes it as a means to assess student's schooling so far, in order to decide student's educational objectives for the coming year. For one hour, teachers and a group of ten students par-

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9 See <[http://mls77.fr/?page\\_id=295](http://mls77.fr/?page_id=295)>

ticipate on the student council with students present. One student starts the discussion and evaluates their experience at the school thus far. Whatever they say is crucial in determining what follows during the ensuing debate. Each teacher then responds in a relatively benevolent way. Any student or person who attends the debate can respond freely. The teacher who is the academic advisor then wraps up and submits concluding remarks for all present. Should any disagreement be aired, corrections are written down on the school report. This synthesis aims to stress the positive elements, offer pieces of advice and lay out some goals, which can be generally established during the discussion, to result in benefits in the near future. Finally, the student reviews their school report and writes down their understanding of it before signing it. This procedure, which differs significantly from common practice in other schools, is perceived by students as a symbolic form of respect for them. It is an acknowledgement of their place as actors of their own itineraries as students. What follows is a testimony shared by a former student, who studied at Sénart micro-high school for three years<sup>10</sup>:

During student council, where you sit speaks volumes. Places are not attributed according to status. One student may be sitting next to a friend, or next to a teacher. Similarly, one teacher may be sitting next to a colleague or next to a student. At the micro-high school, no seating plan is imposed, it may vary according to which places are free but this has nothing whatsoever to do with your status. It's like at the pictures really: if you want your favourite seat, you better turn up early. Student council is akin to a meeting between partners, as long as you commit to certain things for the whole year.

Over my three years there, I never saw a teacher “hack off” a student and that such a thing may happen now sounds totally unheard-of to me! The whole idea is that the teachers work along with us and not in front of us.

The process of appraisal enacted by the student council mobilises an evaluation culture (Paillet and Cléry 2012) which aims not to impose adult control over students, but rather to analyse what is being initiated. Evaluation becomes an instrumental tool in this case in order to attain critical distance from one's practices. Therefore, every actor, whether a student or a teacher, is faced with his or her responsibilities in the service of a common objective, which is students' achievement.

Besides these participatory student councils, there are also opportunities given in the classroom for students to engage in discussions which aim

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10 See <[http://mls77.fr/?page\\_id=295](http://mls77.fr/?page_id=295)>



at introducing working rules or at finding solutions to specific issues. The debates that then take place give free rein to the students to express themselves. It is up to them to organise the events the way they see fit, and they are responsible for overseeing them. The teachers act as members of the group, integrated into it, although sometimes they offer leadership to bring back order or to remind students of certain rules. Such moments can help to create, in the long term, tools to regulate group life, since the students themselves become aware of the need to introduce rules so that the group can function effectively. Indeed, the internal set of rules that has been introduced at the school is on display and signed by all actors. The rules were established after two years and many group meetings, during which problems and incidents that had arisen at the institution had been debated (Pirone and Rayou 2012).

The process of debate is important, in the sense that it can help create institutions that are at once able to set functioning rules and to prepare rules that evolve according to collective need. This is what Pirone and Rayou (2012) discuss in reference to the observations they made at the Paris-region micro-high school. They state that innovation in schools is also about making certain new procedures routine, i. e. granting students permanent access to certain exigencies of schooling arrangements, while also devising tools and institutions that enable the teaching staff to fulfil their educational missions. In this way, the bottom-up expansion observed at the micro-high school does demonstrate that the institutionalisation of pedagogical devices is all-important for students and teachers seeking to constitute learning collectives that are durable, and whose very existence is explicitly acknowledged by all actors.

This remark may be associated with the results of research carried out in a Lille-area primary school, a school which adopted the Freinet pedagogy and which has welcomed many pupils who are struggling or who are expected to break away from the school environment (Carra and Pagoni, 2007). What we then observed showed the necessity for certain conditions for the construction of the meaning of schooling rules by students. These are:

- The construction of a space guaranteeing certain rights (Merle 2003) depends on how transparent the school rules and sanctions are for all members of the educational community (parents, teachers, and students); it also depends on the way they conjure up founding principles justifying their existence, and how far they are able to evolve through democratic decision-making.
- For rules to be accepted as legitimate, they need to be seen as fair by the students, but just as importantly they need to be seen as stemming

from student participation. Likewise, they need to be connected to how students conceive of the professional ethics of teachers (the sense of responsibility they display towards students) and the distance that exists between the prescribed rules and how they are interpreted in everyday life by students and teachers alike at the high school.

- The way debate and discussions are organised (student councils or cooperatives councils) to make it possible to alter rules and to constantly adapt them to collective needs. Verbal interactions at these councils have been analysed according to what is being discussed, but also according to the discourse modality used, i. e. prescriptive discourse, pragmatic explanatory discourse, conceptual discourse (discourse on the meaning of rules and of the values that founded them).

These analytic tools have made it possible to shed light on different ways these councils are handled, not only between more or less experienced teachers within the same school, but also between teachers at different schools, who have adopted other types of pedagogy (i. e. institutional pedagogy). The study has shown that cooperative councils harness specific professional skills among teachers (Pagoni 2011: 2014). These skills allow teachers to address individually the types of tensions at the heart of such councils, enacting: pacifying tools for students, problem-solving tools for school life, tools that help make sense of the schooling experience and the regulations that govern it. Therefore, depending on how they are run, cooperative councils can play an important role; not only in terms of decision-making, but also in the way decision making objectifies the schooling experience.

These results show student participation in decision making bodies (political aspects of citizenship) cannot be considered separately from the objectification of the schooling experience, or from a conceptual reflection on the functioning of the system, all of which preserves its flexibility and capacity to evolve constantly. If this cannot be guaranteed, student involvement in decision-making processes will inevitably dramatically decrease through lack of motivation (Pagoni 2009).

## Mutual construction of cooperative spaces that are constantly being negotiated

The participatory practices promoted in institutions designed for early school-leavers begin to reach out by constructing mediation spaces that allow youths and educational professionals to develop cooperation relationships around a common project. This construction disturbs the tradi-

tional borders delineating the teachers' role, and introduces relationships based on mutual respect and reciprocity to the educational community. Participatory practices are therefore not only about the students themselves, but also the teachers; their respective development is reciprocal and their evolution constant (Paillet and Cléry 2012).

In that respect, research carried out by Pirone (2014) shows that in these institutions students frequently call upon their teachers to ask them questions, to be recognised as 'youths' (not only as students) and to forge person to person educational bonds that are convivial and non-hierarchical. In addition, the team demands a degree of critical distance from the functioning norms of the existing schooling form, through the process of the mutual construction of 'intermediary spaces and times at school' (Pirone and Rayou 2012). These mediation processes allow teachers and students to act within and at the periphery of the schooling structure, by weaving individual relationships centred upon the personal motivation of students and teachers and built upon mutual trust. One example is 'the common room' as a place where teachers and students gather before starting the school activities. One example of intermediary time is 'reference', a weekly moment when each teacher 'welcomes' his students individually to reflect on their academic progress but also on their activities beyond the school gates. According to students' testimonies, collected during the research, this scheme allows a great many of them to 'reconnect' efficiently with their studies and to their position within the school system.

These schemes are primarily conceived as convivial educational places, designed to establish equality between students and teachers so that students may develop a feeling of trust in their own skills and towards the school and adults. This is a necessary first step in order for students to renew contact with the authority dimensions of the *schooling form* that are still present, especially as far as the process of revising exams is concerned. The distinction made between horizontal and vertical discourse can be a reference here to Bernstein's last work *Pedagogy, symbolic control and identity* (2000). In it, Bernstein elaborates a theory of language already developed in the book *Class, codes and control* (1990).<sup>11</sup> He suggests a categorisation of 'forms of discourses' as ways to organise forms of knowledge and vertical discourse structures. These are arranged hierarchically in the sciences, whereas horizontal discourse places various types of knowledge in situations that are segmented and contextualised, much as in daily life. The no-

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11 Bernstein draws a primary and fundamental distinction between regulative discourse, which aims at social organisation, human relations and identity-building, and instructional discourse, which is about transmitting knowledge and skills.

tion of categorisation itself is merely broached, although it nevertheless offers an interesting tool with which to comprehend the tensions present when formulating curricula and teachers' practices. In the case of micro-high school practices, Pirone (2014) acknowledges that their use of horizontal discourse in order to generate student trust does not prevent teachers from using vertical discourse in class or when helping students revise for exams. He also remarks that some teachers find it very hard to make the necessary effort to adapt to the dual-edged demand of these students (Pirone, 2014).

To work in these schools, one has to be very motivated by and mobilised around solid pedagogical values. Some of the teachers are militants who claim they felt 'stuck' within traditional systems. Here we raise the point that it is important that it should be a goal when recruiting teachers that students and teachers resemble each other. Thus, recruitment is by co-optation, not only based on professional skills (which have to go beyond a mere interest in discipline, i. e. extending to encompass research in education studies), but according to individual dispositions that have little to do with the school environment itself (being involved in associations, or participate in cultural or artistic common projects). This type of hiring contributes to a strong teaching team that can work together with all members supporting each other.

Educational teams working in these schools also highlight other forms of cooperation, which are independent from pupils, in order to promote their professional development. One such form of cooperation is peer training. Noteworthy here is the experiment depicted by Paillet and Cléry (2012), that the educational team in a 'traditional' high school mobilises around a project to tackle under-achievement among 12 and 13-year old students, with the result that they receive valuable advice from experienced teachers at Sénart's micro-high school. They share their rich experiences with the young drop-outs, thereby generalising their practices beyond the school itself.

Another type of cooperation is developed in co-operation with teams of academics. Professionals within these structures work alongside academics whilst participating in research-action projects aimed at observing teams and the effects on students and teacher-training (Montandon et Toubert-Duffort 2012).

## Conclusion: What does participatory citizenship do for hard to reach students?

Montandon et Toubert–Duffort (2012) suggest that school schemes devised to address the issue of dropping-out constitute laboratories of pedagogical innovation, and that participatory citizenship is a key aspect of these laboratories. This chapter has demonstrated that participatory citizenship as a tool to integrate hard to reach students that have become integrated into these school schemes rests on three distinct dimensions:

- *An identity dimension*: fostering a feeling of belonging among students through the development of observational and analytical skills, first through their own institution, and then through involvement with collective cultural or artistic projects. The promotion of this feeling of belonging is regarded as a necessary condition to motivate hard to reach students and to support the working of the institution, and the student's appropriation of their own role in realising their own projects.
- *A political dimension*: focusing on inviting students and teachers to become involved in the decision-making processes. These concern both the students' own projects and the evaluation of their advancement, as well as the setting out of rules governing collective life. Thus, they are brought together through socialisation and learning tasks within these schemes. That these rules should constantly evolve in alignment with the reality of the schooling experience is one of the conditions to ensure participatory processes will be efficient.
- *An institutional and symbolical dimension*, wherein students and teachers become involved in the realisation of a common project, i. e. student achievement. In order to achieve this, students and teachers try to build an appropriate pedagogical relationship together by devising mediation tools (intermediary places and times), thereby making it possible to think outside the box of the traditional schooling form.

These three dimensions in turn generate various types of tension. The first type of tension concerns the question of how far teachers are willing or able to get involved. Indeed, to build a relationship based on trust in the above-mentioned 'reference' is not always easy for those teachers who consider they do not have the proper skills to address some of their students' profound psychological or social problems; those that reach beyond the educational frame of reference. To achieve this goal necessitates a thorough personal and psychological commitment, which some teachers find hard to assume (Pirone and Rayou 2012). It is also difficult to combine personal and horizontal relationships with the fulfilment of tasks that rely on a vertical purveying of knowledge and alignment of behavioural norms.

A personal relationship with one's academic advisor and teachers in general seems to be a key factor in student's ability to adapt to the school itself.

Another tension arises from the 'twisted pedagogy' at work in these structures. Indeed, institutions rely on the belief that if they look after the students very proactively, then teaching staff will generate around them an atmosphere conducive to the autonomy needed for their involvement in the learning processes to further their academic achievement. Participatory schemes are not an end in themselves but rather a tool to promote students' successful adaptation to the schooling system, which might well seem contradictory at first sight. These schemes must be able to re-establish the disrupted balance of schooling form, as well as to rise to the challenges that today's world imposes upon schools, i. e. achievement goals for all pupils. Pirone (2014: 258) highlights the fact that some of the interviewed teachers lament that students appear 'remain stuck in baccalaureate-passing rationales', and that this may well prevent them from progressing further in their schooling activities. He then underlines that this excessive focus on individual academic achievement (itself quantifiable) is one of the main ways of granting meaning to processes of observed individual and collective efforts. Since these institutions are evaluated according to the achievements of students, the only objective unifying element to which all actors may submit is the expectation of achievement following the accomplishment of their respective tasks.

The institutions that address students dropping-out must deliver in domains where the traditional system has failed, and in this case participatory practises seem to be the only effective way to reach that goal. In this respect, they embody 'schooling intermediaries' in the sense defined by Pirone. Thus, they are active modes conceived and implemented by teaching personnel to reshape the schooling form to make it workable for everyone. The word 'intermediary' does indicate that the favourite means applied to enable struggling students to master the forms of knowledge that are part of the verticality of the schooling form is to use pedagogical relationships rather than horizontal and personal ones, based on a mutual trust and stemming from everyone's motivation to 'succeed' at school. Such practices and tools are utilised to adapt to the heterogeneous modes of schooling socialisation introduced by varying actors within the schooling system.

These appreciations notwithstanding, the pedagogical quality and efficiency of participatory practices to benefit students remains. However, these practices are marginal in the context of what is largely a very normative schooling system. The hypotheses drawn in this chapter still require further validation through a more systematic analysis of the practices followed across a larger sample of innovative institutions.

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## ‘Them versus Us’ – Constructing mindsets in citizenship education: A European survey

### Introduction

Constructing a category of young people labelled ‘hard to reach’ raises numerous questions and issues. It implies there a set of young people, or possibly more than one set, who can be defined as ‘difficult’ to communicate with, and in the context of this book, particularly hard for citizenship educators to reach. This then leads to the question, who are these citizenship educators? In particular: which members of this group are encountering difficulties reaching some categories of young people? Why are they concerned about reaching them? Do the young people in question ‘recognise themselves’ as a hard to reach group? Certainly, this category is extremely unlikely to be homogeneous; indeed, it is likely to be comprised of many groups, displaying very varied characteristics. If we accept such groups exist, we must then decide if it is even ethical to target them if they do not want to be reached. This is a particularly germane question for citizenship education in a democratic society that respects individual freedom and autonomy, including the freedom *not* to participate.

This chapter begins by examining the ‘notoriously polyvalent concept’ of citizenship (Joppke 2010: 1); because, whilst in the context of citizenship education in most European states the term is not usually employed to promote a particular national identity or sense of patriotism, it is often used elsewhere to define exclusive membership of and identity with a particular state. Moreover, popular discourse often treats the terms ‘nation’ and ‘state’ as equivalent or interchangeable, and even academics such as Rustow (1967) do so. Arguably, such lack of precision is a source of tension when delivering citizenship education, particularly in the increasingly diverse states of Europe. The presence of minorities and migrants can at times test the extent to which citizenship of a state is understood to be the same as possessing a national identity. Whilst ‘the other’ may be a useful, and indeed necessary, construct when defining aspects of identity, a notion

of ‘citizenship identity’ may create tensions between both nationals and non-nationals, that render the area of citizenship education one in which both parties assume the other is hard to reach.

In this chapter I illustrate the locus of such conflict with examples drawn from my recent research across Europe, which examined constructs of self-identity, particularly identification with a specific country and with Europe, as expressed by over two thousand 12 to 19-year olds, in 29 European countries. Here, I focus on three specific categories in which ‘the other’ sometimes becomes classified as hard to reach in terms of citizenship education: indigenous or long-standing minorities, such as the Roma; minorities who are perceived, and who perceive themselves, to be nationals of a different country; and migrants to a country, some of whom may not (yet) have formal citizenship. I argue that the young people from each of these groups pose an interesting challenge for civic educators because of the confusion that exists between citizenship as membership of a state and the identity that this implies, and other markers of identity, such as ‘nationality’ or ‘ethnicity’. Finally, I suggest some ways in which this challenge might be met.

## Citizenship, identity and civic education

The term citizenship is used in a variety of contexts, with different emphases and meanings. In European liberal democracies, ‘citizenship education’ is generally used to refer to developing the requisite skills, attitudes and knowledge to participate in and understand the political system at various levels, ranging from the local to the global. Typically, it is centred around further developing the values that these states are based on; for example the rule of law, democratic processes, universal human rights, the rights and obligations accorded one as a member of society, equality of all before the law, freedoms of speech and worship (often within certain limits), and respect for others and for social and cultural differences (Huddleston and Kerr 2006, Davies 2008). However, in citizenship education in European states a generally limited emphasis is placed upon conceptions such as patriotism, national distinctiveness, or national exceptionalism, unlike in other parts of the world, such as Japan or the United States of America.

It is important to emphasise that the term citizenship often can and does extend beyond the features listed above. It is also used to refer to a particular status, to confer a particular identity, and to grant particular rights. Joppke (2010) writes of how these three elements have become integrated into the discourse of citizenship since the end of World War Two, which signi-

fied 'the beginning of the contemporary era of human rights, which establishes the individual and his or her integrity as the benchmark and ulterior constraint of state policy' (Joppke 2010: 26–7). The issue of human rights has permeated the concept of citizenship since that time, and migration throws this facet into sharp relief. Citizenship designates the formal status of membership of a state, in that a citizen may hold a passport for the state to which they belong. Citizenship also confers an identity; the state ascribes this identity, presuming each citizen shares their identity with all other members of the state or the nation (the two terms used synonymously, especially during the post-colonial period of 'nation-building' (Almond and Coleman 1960, Bendix 1964, Deutsch and Folt 1966)). There are further very different understandings of nations as imaginary constructions (Anderson 1983), as inventions (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), or even as forgeries (Colley 1992).

The modern state is not simply defined by territory; it is a membership association in which members are defined by the possession of citizenship status. This kind of association is, to say the least, a rather peculiar form of association, because almost every other kind of membership of a group in the modern world is voluntary. As Joppke observes, this 'flies in the face of the modern state's own constitutive ideology of contract and consent, articulated in political philosophy from Hobbes to Rosseau' (2010: 354). Brubaker states that only those who formally possess citizenship have unfettered access to the territory of the state, but that only residents who do *not* have this right of access can ever aspire to meet the requirements to gain citizenship: 'this circularity permits nation-states to remain [...] relatively closed and self-perpetuating communities, reproducing their membership in a largely endogenous fashion, open only at the margin to the exogenous recruitment of new members' (1992: 34). Citizenship identity is thus for most people (97 per cent of the global population) an ascribed identity. Shachar describes this as *The Birthright Lottery* (2009); certainly most of those who are born in the poorer states of the world will have shorter and poorer lives than those born into citizenship of a western state, as membership of such a state confers privilege and conserves wealth akin to a feudal inheritance. Citizenship for most people manifests as a 'form of inherited property' (Shachar and Hirschl 2007: 254).

However, the majority of states construct themselves as more than a territory; they commonly describe themselves as nation states, applying the terms nation, state and country to mean the same thing. The citizenship status that a state confers on its members is often also presumed to be a national identity. This is problematic, not least within Europe, where the idea of the nation-state originated and developed in the western part of the con-

continent before it was later adopted, with the support of US President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points (outlined in USA (1918)), in eastern Europe. However, it was (and remains) impossible to determine state boundaries 'determined by friendly counsel along historically established lines of allegiance and nationality' (USA, point 7 1918), even with the mass movement of populations and 'ethnic cleansing' on a grand scale.

This conflation of nation and state is at the crux of the problem, because it means most European countries cannot be seen as nation states, in the original meaning of the term. O'Connor (1978) observed that just 9 per cent of states in the world at that time could justifiably be described as nation states, and the proportion would be even smaller now (see Brubaker (1996: 26)). The assumption that all citizens of a state in some way have the identity of 'nationals' of that state is rarely true. EU citizenship itself compromises the near-exclusive national identities that some people (perhaps particularly elites of countries) require of a nation state. These innovations necessarily affect the way in which young people learn about their nation and the characteristics of the national identity they may construct. Citizenship can then seem to be an imposed identity.

In most European countries, with the exceptions of France and the United Kingdom, citizenship was historically based on the principle of *jus sanguinis* (by descent). One's parentage determined one's citizenship identity. For example, up until 1999, a person of non-German descent could only and exceptionally be naturalised as a German citizen if they were both wholly assimilated into German culture and it was 'in the interest of Germany' (Miller-Idriss 2009). This policy allowed those of distant Germanic descent, for example the Transylvanian Saxons of Romania, the *Rumäniendeutsche* who had settled there in the twelfth century, to be welcomed back into the Germany of the late twentieth century as Germans, but at the same time excluded the possibility of second and third generation German-born people of Turkish origin from attaining citizenship. After 1999, Germany also permitted the principle of *jus solis* (citizenship by birthplace), so that those born within the territory of the state might become citizens. This has also been Republican France's policy, so that anyone born in a French territory is automatically a French citizen; this has proved an equally problematic policy (Brubaker 1992). Howard (2009) has shown that the majority of western European states have become more liberal about allowing both the *jus sanguinis* and the *jus solis* principles and permitting dual nationality since the 1980s. However, these changes in the law have not necessarily been reflected in popular perceptions of citizenship (indeed, migrants and the descendants of migrants, up to the third or fourth generations, are termed *alloch-*

toons in the Netherlands, *alochtonie* in the Czech Republic, and *alochton* in Poland).<sup>1</sup>

Thus, migrants to Europe who become citizens test the boundaries of citizenship, as not only a status and an entitlement to rights, but also in terms of acceptance by the popular indigenous population. Equally, the assumption that citizenship status confers a national identity might not match the perceptions of those of migrant origin, who may still have cultural and family ties with their countries of origin, even after several generations, which they may perceive as being denied by such a presumption of identity.

The practice of citizenship education in schools might thus at times fall into a maelstrom of meanings of citizenship. The minority population might reasonably question the intentions of such education, asking if it aims to assimilate them into *national* state culture. They might also query whether it gives them a new identity, as citizens of the nation (-state), or if it merely seeks to acquaint them with the rights (and concomitant obligations) that attend the status of citizenship. Alternatively, its aim may be perceived as affording students who are citizens and non-citizens alike the necessary knowledge and skills to take up their rights and meet their obligations as residents of the state.

## Constructing citizen identities: How ‘the other’ can become hard to reach’

The concept of ‘the other’ is a necessary counterpoint to the idea of the self when expressing one’s identity (Husserl 1931, Lacan 1997). That is, the way in which humans construct borders and order to include some, and exclude others (Van Houtum and Van Naerssen 2002), or the way in which we construct *Imagined Communities* to constitute the country to which we each judge ourselves to belong (Anderson, 1983). The process of defining the identity of a group is achieved through a process of inclusion that inevitably requires non-members be excluded, or ‘othered’. While as a broad generalisation any group of people that is thought of as being hard to reach by a particular population has, in some ways, been ‘othered’ by that population, the converse is not necessarily true: all those constructed as ‘the other’ are not necessarily also hard to reach. Issues may arise when

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1 In English, French and German, the term allochthonous (French allachtone; German allochthon) appears to be used exclusively in geological and sometimes botanical contexts.

some members, generally a majority, within the state consider some inhabitants are not ‘real members’ in some way, possibly because they are perhaps not seen as ‘real’ members, perhaps not citizens, perhaps not nationals, or natives. As a consequence of the modern trivalent characteristics of citizenship (stated above), it is possible that some citizens might regard the citizenship they have acquired as conferring status and rights, but not identity, while others might consider that conferring citizenship on those whose origins lie outside the state’s territory is invalid in terms of entitlement to rights and identity. The creation of the internal other is one way in which group(s) become hard to reach; therefore, it is the dominant group, responsible for providing the definition, that constructs ‘othered’ group(s) as distant, or difficult to communicate with.

Nevertheless, I wish to stress that the term hard to reach must be used with caution. Individuals and groups categorised in this way are not hard to reach per se – they are clearly being reached by many, and reaching out to many – rather, they are *perceived by some* as being difficult to make contact with in *particular* contexts; thus, the term must be used contingently. The category exists because a self-defined group that calls itself ‘we’ constructs certain other ‘them’ who appear to resist contact. It does not necessarily follow that this non-contactable group would perceive themselves to have this characteristic, or even see themselves as a group. Crozier and Reay (2005) challenged the notion of some groups of parents being designated hard to reach, and Brackertz (2007) charted inconsistencies apparent in the use of the term. Osgood *et al.* (2013) suggested that use of the term exposes political and policy making tensions that have as yet been inadequately discussed.

### Some empirical data: Young European’s constructions of identities

At this point, I would like to introduce some data, and discuss a number of examples illustrating how some young people in Europe sometimes categorise others as being not simply ‘other’, but as constituting categories of hard to reach. In each case, the distinctions are drawn around who is perceived as a ‘true’ citizen or ‘real’ national of the state, and whose citizenship is held to be questionable. These distinctions are also created through a two way process; ‘true citizens’ identify a group they consider non-citizens, and the ‘othered’ group (who may or may not hold citizenship status) distinguishes a group of ‘real citizens’ from whom they feel alienated due to stereotyping and discrimination they have encountered. Among this data, some examples are drawn from groups described elsewhere in this volume as hard to reach.

The information presented in this chapter is taken from research I have been conducting in the form of a one-person study to explore how young people construct their identities with reference to place, particularly their sense of identification with their country of residence and with Europe, but in some cases also with their town, local area, and region of Europe. During the data collection process, I have spoken with focus groups comprised typically of six 12 to 19-year olds. I have encouraged my participants to discuss their sense of identification with these locations, offering them different lenses through which to express themselves. These include, for example, how their views might differ from the views of older generations, or those in different parts of the country, or those from counties with rather different political systems or cultural practices. Their identifications are kaleidoscopic, framed contingently by the comparisons they are making. I also encouraged them to discuss elements of similarity as well as difference. Between January 2010 and January 2016 I spoke with 320 groups, comprised of 2000 young people, in 29 different countries, European Union States and candidate countries. I have visited over 100 locations and nearly 200 different schools in an attempt to cover a variety of regions and social classes within each of these countries. The first half of this study, including my findings from fifteen states that joined the EU after 2004 and candidate countries, was described in Ross (2015), and a second book containing information gathered in fourteen western European states is in preparation.

This study was not specifically focussed on citizenship, a term I only used when it was introduced by my informants. The complexities of the issue, and an illustration of the points about the assumption that an identity is coterminous with a nationality, is shown in the following response by İbrahim, a 19-year old young man in Istanbul (father unemployed, mother a housewife), when I asked him how he would describe his identity:

I am Kurdish, I describe myself as “I am, Kurdish”. Sometimes we are discussing with other friends and they ask me “what is written on your Identity [Card]” and I say “It’s Turkish”, so then they say “you are Turkish”, but I say “No, I’m Kurdish”. They say “You are what is written on your Identity”. I don’t believe this: it would be good if I could have some identity which shows that I am Kurdish. I would love to change my identity in this way to prove that I am Kurdish, if it could be possible.

İbrahim feels that his identity is prescribed as that which his Turkish identity card necessarily proclaims, and he is thus not merely ‘othered’ by the Turkish Republic, but also has a national identity imposed on him because



of his citizenship of the state of Turkey. By saying that he is Kurdish, he puts himself into a group that is perceived as hard to reach, as he expresses an identity that is not recognised by the state.

To generalise across my data, much of it suggests many young people are establishing a more dynamic set of relationships between groups that might be considered indigenous and immigrant: there is a fluidity about the borders between such groups. In the following sub-sections, I explore three particular situations in which the sub-sets of a country's population appear not simply to be 'othered', but to be constructed into groups where issues of citizenship seem to designate them as at least potentially hard to reach for the citizenship educator. However, it should be stressed that these categories are not always or inevitably hard to reach: there are many states in which this is *not* the case. Firstly, there are the Roma, many with ancestors who have been living in Europe since the fourteenth century. Secondly, there are those I call 'internal others'; they are found when the nationals of one country involuntarily find themselves living in a state that is predominantly composed of people of a different nationality, generally this is involuntary, and often of several generations standing. In Europe, this is typically the outcome of border creations, border changes and population movements (for example, in 1918–22, 1945–48, and 1989–99) which have left them isolated. Finally, there are the refugees and third-country migrants<sup>2</sup> of contemporary Europe, and their children and grandchildren.

## Internal others: The Roma

Across much of Europe the Roma are seen as a group that is not only outside mainstream society, but also alien, not members of the states in which they reside, and considered hard to reach (Ringold *et al.* 2005, Loizos *et al.* 2009, Tremlett and McGarry 2013).

Antagonism towards this group (Antiziganism) is particularly high in the Czech Republic (Amnesty 2010). The young Czechs I spoke with in Ostrava were derogatory about the Roma on the outskirts of the city. Eliška (♀13) said 'they cause that much trouble [...] and instead of behaving normally [...] they often steal [...] And they needn't work! They don't do anything, and they get money for it.' Verushka (♀12) approved of the council relocating them to the city outskirts, where they became hard to see, as

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2 'Third country' because within the European Union those moving from one EU state to another under the provision for the freedom of movement are regarded as non-migrants or 'second country migrants'.

well as hard to reach, although ‘the city has to build houses for them – And they have a lot of children, because they get welfare for them.’ Zora (♀14) described the Roma as behaving ‘according to the rules [of] their country, as if nothing has changed’, and I asked if these Roma were Czechs. ‘No, they are not!’, she retorted; the Roma did not belong in the country. They had been ‘othered’ by a series of boundary markers: criminality, low levels of employment, family size, body shape, benefit seeking, and primarily by being not Czech. At the same time, this group of young people also characterised itself as tolerant, stating that they were prepared to accept the ‘native customs’ of non-Czechs ‘to a certain extent’.

The idea that Roma were somehow immigrants and ‘not white’ was also expressed in Slovakia, where Lenka (♀16) remarked ‘the Roma people aren’t white like other Europeans.’ In Hungary, Fábíán (♂15) suggested the Roma were not full Hungarians: ‘they are living for free – they expect Hungarians to love them while they receive taxpayers’ money from the state.’

In Romania, hostility was more frequently expressed. Many claimed that the poor image of Romanians held by other Europeans was at least partially a consequence of perceived Roma behaviour. Thus, in Timișoara, Olga (♀16) complained ‘gypsies aren’t even Romanians, and the foreigners think they are, and they associate us with Roma’. In Iași, Nina (14♀) saw only ‘ethnic’ Romanians as citizens of Romania; she complained that ‘the gypsies are not Romanian, they are different from the Romanian people – Europeans make this confusion, that Romanians and gypsies are the same.’ Thus having a different ‘national’ identity was seen as precluding them from an identity as Romanian citizens.

However, such attitudes were not found everywhere. There was an alternative narrative in an elementary school in the Polish city of Olsztyn. Unusually, the school included a number of classes for Roma children, who were taught in parallel classes to other students. The group used the term *Romowie* to refer to the Roma, rather than the more usual and less complimentary *Cygan*. There was still othering, but this was mediated by personal contact; thus, there was a debate between Paulina (12♀), who thought it appropriate that ‘the *Romowie* have their own class in school, because this is what helps them to keep their own culture’ and Aleksandra (12♀), who argued that if they were in the same classes as themselves ‘we could get to know each other better and see what the *Romowie* culture is, and the customs [...]’. This was supported by Maigozata (12♀), who contended, ‘it shouldn’t be just one *Romowie* in a whole class of Poles, it should be balanced, so that at each desk there should be one Pole and one *Romowie*. This would be ideal’. Although the Roma were constructed as non-Poles, it is significant that the antagonism seen elsewhere was lacking.

What of the Roma young people's views? In a large elementary school in south-east Slovenia, about 15 per cent of the school's intake was from a large local Roma settlement: I spoke with a group of nine Roma young people, aged between 11 and 14. The majority gave their identity as Roma, although Ela (♀11) said she was both, 'Romenski, Sloveni. Roma first', and Sara (♀13) viewed herself as 'Roma and half Serbian'. They referred to non-Roma Slovenians as either *civili* (the general population) or as *gađi* (officials). Anže (♂13) complained that the *civili* 'accuse Roma – if there's stealing, the *civili* say that Roma are stealing.' This was unfair, said Matic (♂14): 'sometimes [both] Roma and *civili* are stealing, but the *civili* are always saying that Roma are the thieves.' 'Roma [...] are treated differently to other people – in the shops, in the streets. *civili* always look as though they are avoiding Roma,' added Anže. Yet these young people appeared to see themselves as part of Slovenian society. Matic said 'I am a part of this society, a bit of *civili* society.' When I asked how they would like Slovenians to respond to them, they told me that they wanted the Roma to be spoken of more politely, for people to behave better towards them and speak more kindly to them. 'Civili turn away from us whenever they see us. They should accept us' (Matic). Many of them had modest ambitions for employment in *civili* life: to go to technical school, to work on the railways, to become a beautician or a waitress. Anže said he wanted to be seen as Slovenian, and when I asked he told me that his parents and grandparents would agree with him that 'we should be part of *civili* society. They'd say it was a good thing for us to marry Slovenians and become part of Slovenian society'. However, these ambitions were unlikely to be achieved; since 2008, only five Roma students had completed their education at the school where I met them.

## Internal migrants

Groups also suffer from being stigmatised as hard to reach non-nationals when states break up or borders are moved, with the result that those who moved to within the former state are seen as internal migrants. This is particularly true of the former USSR and Yugoslavia, where in both cases 'the national question'<sup>3</sup> was resolved by requiring all citizens to have a regis-

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3 Stalin (1913). When in power, Stalin allowed titular nationalities to coexist with Soviet nationality, so that internal migrants within the USSR retained a home nationality, based on a theoretical homeland that was, or was part of, one of the fifteen ethnically-based Republics of the USSR. A similar approach was adopted in Yugoslavia in the late 1940s (see Brubaker (1996) chapters 2 and 5).

tered nationality, based on ethnic assumptions that tied them to a 'national homeland' within a constituent republic of either the USSR or Yugoslavia.

Countries that had been part of the USSR engaged in this type of positioning. The Russian minority in the Baltic States was often marginal, with some choosing to take up citizenship of the country, while others did not. Many adopted the language of the country in which they now lived, but not all. Some of these people might refer to themselves as being of Russian origin (*rusскиye*) and speak Russian. In this context, the term *rusскиye* is used to refer to members of one of a number of ethnic groups, not to citizenship of Russia (*rossiyanin*).

In Tallinn (Estonia) the two populations were largely residentially segregated, and taught in different languages and different schools. The *rusскиye* young people in Tallinn did not always feel accepted. Dina (♀14) described herself as 'a Russian in Estonia.' Lada (♀16) saw her formal Estonian citizenship purely through the lens of European Union citizenship; thus, she was learning Estonian in order to attain a sufficiently good school leaving qualifications to gain entrance to a university in another EU country. Many Estonian-origin young people also saw the *rusскиye* as not Estonian, or not as 'real' Estonians.

In Latvia, there were a number of *rusскиye*-origin young people in Latvian-speaking schools. Here, students like Matis (♂13) were seen by their fellows as Latvian; he said 'I feel like a Latvian. I speak pretty good Latvian, my friends are Latvian, and my dad is Latvian. I don't feel I am Russian.' However, members of this group were also sceptical about other *rusскиye*: Anna (♀13) said 'many Russians who live in Latvia don't want to learn Latvian language, they don't even try. I feel offended.' But, she went on, 'Matis is my friend. And he knows Latvian, it's OK.' The binary oppositions (Maclure 2003: 77) drawn between *rusскиye* and Estonians, and to a lesser extent the Latvians, are striking, offering typical examples of how another group can be constructed as different, and therefore difficult to reach. However, it was striking that in situations where both *rusскиye* and non-*rusскиye* young people attended the same school, there was generally far less stereotyping of the other.

Following the dismemberment of Yugoslavia, hundreds of thousands of people discovered they were living in a new state in which they were considered aliens. In Ljubljana (Slovenia), I spoke to young people in an all-Slovenian-origin school about their perceptions of the Croats and Bosnians living in the city. Larisa (♀14) was tolerant and accepting of difference, noting that those born outside Slovenia 'are not accepted the same way as someone who's born here [...] I don't think it's right to behave like that'. She thought these Croats might feel angry at this, and 'feel like they are not worth as much as someone who's really Slovenian'. I asked what

she meant by ‘*really* Slovenian’, and she explained that some Slovenians thought themselves more important than non-Slovenes, and quoted a girl she knew who had said ‘well, they’re from *there*, they would probably steal things’. In another Ljubljana school, with an almost wholly non-Slovenian population, I spoke with young people from such backgrounds. Some with two parents from the same country would describe themselves as that nationality, and those with mixed parentage might offer hybridised identities, such as ‘Serbian-Slovenian’, or, if their father was Slovenian, they would say they were also Slovenian. However, they all complained that they were treated differently because of their non-Slovene origins.

In Macedonia (FYROM) there were much greater tensions about ‘others’ between Albanians and Macedonians. The substantial Albanian minority had been cut off from the rest of Albania since the establishment of the 1918 frontiers. Some Macedonians spoke of the Albanian minority as interlopers; for example Lidija (Q14) said they ‘don’t really appreciate Macedonia – they are coming to Macedonia just to make more money with their jobs.’ The Albanians I spoke with saw the Macedonians as excluding them, not recognising their nationality.

Such identification of other nationalities as non-citizens was rife in the Balkans; tensions that had often erupted into bloodshed in the previous seventy years were still remembered and, when thought appropriate, revived to create distinctions at frontiers between ‘them’ and ‘us’, that excluded non-nationals identities from being viewed as true citizens.

## External migrants

Migration from countries outside the European Union result initially in a population that does not have citizenship status, but this group of migrants may at some point wish to acquire citizenship through naturalisation. The children of such migrants may have citizenship of the state, or may acquire it while still in their teens. Thus, some migrants and some people of migrant origin are citizens, while others are not. The acquisition of citizenship does not necessarily mean the acquisition of identity with the nation, and national identities may variously be described as that of the country(ies) of parental origin, as a hybridised identity (such as ‘British-Caribbean’, or ‘French of Moroccan origin’), or as the nation of their new state. Among my 2000 young interviewees, I spoke with at least 200 that fell into the category of either migrant/migrant origin or internal other, and all three forms were commonly used when they were asked to give their ‘nationality’, as opposed to their ‘citizenship’.

A substantial majority of young people broadly welcomed refugees and migrants, and were highly critical of those opposed to welcoming them, whom they frequently categorised as racist, and often characterised as older people (including their own parents and grandparents). However, in some localities the view that migrants and those of migrant origin did not properly belong to the country was more prevalent. For example, in one Belgian small town (almost all white), Pim (16♂) was vehement: ‘They want to build *their* church on *our* grounds – mosques,’ and he saw this as an imposition on Belgian culture. In Vevey, in francophone Switzerland, Julien<sup>4</sup> (15♂, of Kurdish Turk parentage, and a Swiss-born citizen) observed that ‘racism has always been present in Switzerland, and always will be – because people judge without knowing us – or well, in quotes – “the foreigner”’, indicating his sense of a precarious civic identity. His classmates, all of Swiss descent, disagreed: Isaac (14♂) claimed ‘we don’t really have religious problems in Switzerland – we have Catholic, Protestant, Jews equally, and the Swiss people really respect these different religions.’

Those of immigrant origin commonly complained of petty racism from some people they believed had excluded them in the eyes of these people from being identified as citizens. In Linz in Austria, Elkin (16♀, born in Linz, currently with Turkish citizenship but planning to apply for Austrian citizenship when she is 18) was clear that she felt ‘more Austrian than Turkish, if that makes sense, because I’ve lived here since I was born, and I just feel at home.’ But she felt she was subject to racism: ‘in Austria it’s mostly against Muslim people – for example, my mum wears a headscarf, and whenever we go shopping, to the grocers or whatever, and we are outside and in the city, people kind of stare at her – and I think it’s so fucking rude – and I don’t like that. I kind of get really mad.’ In Gavle (Sweden), Marcus (M♂, born in Korea and adopted by Swedish parents) spoke of the lack of racism amongst his peers, but added ‘there are people here that don’t feel like we do – they don’t feel there should be other peoples in Sweden– they feel that Sweden is just for Swedish people’. I responded to him (including Haldhaa, ♀ a 15-year old Swedish born citizen of Somali origin) by asking: ‘but you are Swedish people?’. Marcus explained ‘Yes, but they mean white-skinned, blond hair – that sort of thing. Of course I’m Swedish, but there are people who think I’m not.’

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4 All names are pseudonyms, but they are chosen to reflect the original name: an Afghan young person with an Afghan forename is given an Afghani pseudonym. This young man, although a Turkish Kurd, had a typically French forename, and thus he has been given the pseudonym ‘Julien’.

There were two common aspects stated when defining which groups were racist; although neither of these was uncontested. One discourse centred around age and generational differences: older people were stereotyped as more likely to be prejudiced. The second group that was more likely to show prejudice was individuals living in the more rural areas. Both explanations were based on the belief that contiguity with immigrant communities, either growing up with them at school or having them as neighbours, led to less racist behaviour and greater acceptance of diversity.

Parents and grandparents were sometimes described as making racist remarks or ‘jokes’. In København, Alvilda (♀18, with parents prominent in politics and business) said ‘the most racist jokes I hear are from my parents and my parents’ friends, and they don’t ever realise that they are being racist, most of the time.’ But racism – and racist ‘jokes’ – were not confined to older people. In Jyväskylä, Teija (♀16) spoke of how the older generation ‘call black people *neekeri* [the ‘n-word’] – it’s normal to them, because they were told to call them that. But for us it’s very offensive – though if we say it to our friends, like it’s a joke’.

## Compounding issues

The issue that complicates citizenship education and which might lead to the identification of some groups as hard to reach is that some groups in a state can conflate the citizenship education curriculum with an agenda that suggests citizenship of a state is necessarily confined to, or imposes, a national identity. Thus, I have suggested that the citizenship education curriculum is, in many Western European cases, largely concerned with the promotion of the rights and obligations of citizenship, and so with the status of being a citizen, rather than with an individual’s identity as a ‘national’ of the country.

However, in popular perceptions citizenship is often conflated with national identity. Country, nation and state are treated as synonyms. If a significant proportion of the original indigenous population of the state needs to believe their state is in essence a nation-state, then nationals are constructed either as purely through *jus sanguinis* (so that no one can become a national other than by descent, by blood lineage), or purely through *jus solis* (so that everyone born within the territory of the state is, willy-nilly, a citizen, irrespective of their own or their parents’ wishes and feelings). In addition, this is exacerbated if there are minority groups (whether citizens of the state or not) within the territory of the state, who construct their identities as nationals of a different nation, or have other identities

(for example, ethnic, linguistic or religious) that they feel are incompatible with the national identity of the state in which they live.

The legal construction of citizenship has been changed in many European states over the past forty years (Howard 2009). However, there are many cases where popular opinion has not caught up with these changes, such as in states where many of the population believe that no one not of their own descent should acquire ‘their national citizenship’, or conversely, that everyone born within their territory must be a national. There are also a number of localities across Europe where there are inter-state tensions with a ‘national’ dimension, particularly in the Baltic states and in the Balkans. The continued existence of irredentist movements, such as the *Magyarkodó* in Hungary, the *Ustaše* in Croatia, and the *Velika Srbija* in Serbia, suggest national identity is still seen by some in these areas in essentialist terms. The Serbian young migrants I spoke with were adamantly Serbian *jus sanguinis*; for example, in Denmark, Janko (♂15) admitted that while ‘you can feel Danish if you’re not born Danish – but I feel more like Serbian, because I’m Serbian, it’s in my blood [...] if I marry a Serbian girl, [my children] will be Serbian’.

There are widespread beliefs that view the Roma identity as perpetual outsiders, without state identities, and other beliefs that third-country migrants and refugees who may be of a visibly different appearance and have cultural practices and beliefs that are seen as very different from those of the states in which they now live, whether as citizens or not, are also outsiders.

But they need to be approached in a way that recognises their agenda and respects their positions. Not by agreement with these positions, but a willingness to genuinely debate and question their ideas, rather than to reduce them with ‘the facts’ and to patronise them as unworkable or half-baked – attitudes which some of them report encountering from teachers.

## Possible solutions

The above raises the question of how citizenship educators can reach groups of young people who are being othered, and who may be considered hard to reach in terms of their nationality, ethnicity, economic, cultural identity, and/or minority status? There is no universal answer to this; however, I offer here some suggestions for approaches that might be attempted. The preliminary stage must be to make oneself aware of who marginalised and hard to reach groups might be, where they might be found, and what might make them appear alienated. This chapter has provided a num-



ber of examples, but they do not constitute a comprehensive list: the critical consideration is to recognise the *contingent* nature of the category. Local conditions, specific moments, and particular cultural and social contexts all contribute to a situation in which *some* young people feel they are alienated and consequently behave in a hard to reach manner.

Notwithstanding the central problem of national identity politics as developed above, I suggest three particular approaches which arise at the institutional level that are of potential importance in the task of developing citizenship education with alienated, or potentially alienated, groups in European states.

Firstly, we should consider the nature of citizenship education in situations of such intense othering that groups are considered hard to reach. Secondly, we need to consider how making contact between different groups, by being educated together, reduces the acute stereotyping that creates hard to reach groups also perceived as other. Finally, we should examine the nature of the teachers themselves, and those characteristics that could impede their effectiveness as citizenship educators. This last point is not based on the current research introduced above, but on earlier research considering the issue of teacher recruitment (Ross 2002, 2012).

## Curriculum

There is a continuum of degrees of ‘hardness to reach’. Some young people do not want to engage, and perhaps we need to respect that position. However, the majority, I suggest, are not hard to reach, but simply suspicious of the motivations, messages, and the people who are trying to reach them. It appears that it is important to dissociate citizenship education from the promotion of a particular national identity and the proselytisation of traditional civic participation. Instead, it would be beneficial to focus on engagement with the political and social agendas that young people want to engage with at a specific state or country level, emphasising explicitly how this encompasses diverse identities (whether expressed nationally, ethnically, or by faith group).

I have been concerned throughout this chapter with the tasks faced by those wishing to promote a greater awareness of broad-based citizenship among those young people. That is, those seeking to encourage socio-political understanding amongst the young, and to develop their social and political skills so that they can contribute and in their own way enact social change, should they wish to do so. A first institutional approach, which also applies at the level of the individual citizenship educator, is to follow the imperatives of young people, and to begin focussing on issues that con-

cern them. This will involve developing the procedural values of debate and discussion and listening to their issues, and that teachers should only be concerned with developing ‘knowledge’ regarding formal political processes when and if young people desire to do so.

## Contact

The second approach, as illustrated in each of the above examples, is to recognise that the development of hard to reach groups is not inevitable. Whether a group is comprised of internal others, the Roma, or the migrants, I have shown examples where they are not regarded as others, aliens to the state. Common to all these cases is the way in which the young people from different groups have been educated together in the same schools. The Roma classes in the school in Olsztyn (Poland), the Russian-origin students in Jurmala (Latvia), and the various migrant groups in Gavle (Sweden), all illustrate how articulate young people are about expressing this. They assert that they are not racist in the way that they perceive older generations to be racist, because they have been brought up and educated as part of a diverse community. This is not always the case (as the example from Vevey (Switzerland) suggests; but the most extreme othering, which apparently rendered some groups literally ‘beyond the pale’<sup>5</sup>, occurred where schools were largely segregated (for example in the Belgian town), where there was residential segregation (e.g. of the Roma in Romania and Ostrava (Czechia), or in schools that mainly taught in different languages (as in Tallinn, Estonia). This clearly illustrates the validity of Allport’s contact approach theory (Allport 1954), which hypothesised that inter-group prejudice was reduced under optimal conditions between the prejudiced and the targets of prejudice. ‘In particular, Allport held that reduced prejudice will result when four features of the contact situation are present: equal status between the groups in the situation; common goals; intergroup cooperation; and the support of authorities, law, or custom’ (Pettigrew and Tropp 2006 752). Pettigrew and Tropp undertook a meta-analysis of over 500 studies that clearly demonstrated intergroup contact was associated with reduced prejudice:

[I]ntergroup contact effects typically generalize beyond participants in the immediate contact situation [...] Not only do attitudes toward the immediate participants usually become more favorable, but so do atti-

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5 ‘Beyond the pale’ is a term used in England from the seventeenth century, meaning those outside or beyond the jurisdiction of a state,

tudes toward the entire outgroup, outgroup members in other situations, and even outgroups not involved in the contact [...] establishing Allport's optimal conditions in the contact situation generally enhances the positive effects of intergroup contact [...] Allport's conditions [...] act as facilitating conditions that enhance the tendency for positive contact outcomes to emerge. Moreover [...] institutional support may be an especially important condition for facilitating positive contact effects. (Pettigrew and Tropp 2006: 766)

This suggests a second institutional approach to facilitating the incorporation of potentially hard to reach groups: ensuring that all schools have a diverse population, as far as is practical, typical of the ethnic/national/linguistic/religious mix of the state. Moreover, the 'message', if there is a message, is that there is an audience for debate, that there should be a debate, and that decisions for change or continuity *require* debate. The message that such debate requires a set of procedural values, of respect for other views, of an understanding of values, and of recognising rules of exchange is conveyed through the demonstration and practice of such values, not by teaching them. Respect means engaging in a sympathetic debate about ideas, not a sycophantic acceptance of whatever is put forward. The chapter on Dialogue in schools by Behrendt, Ahmadi and Müller-Hofstede in this volume illustrates this well.

### Civic educators

One of the critical factors in creating the misgiving that the citizenship education programme may be impressing an identity that is at variance with a young person's preferred construction of a different national identity may arise from the perceived 'national' or ethnic identity of the citizenship educators. Amongst the minority community, this may create some distrust of the process amongst the host community; this may also reinforce the conception that the citizenship being discussed is 'ours', that of the educator and the in group, and not that of any individual in an 'out' group (Carrington and Tomlin 2000).

When a team I led investigated the recruitment of teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds in the teaching force in England (Hutchings *et al.* 2000, Ross 2002, Smart and Ross 2006), we suggested that the relatively low number of such teachers did not reflect the percentage of such students in schools. This was observed to have a potentially two-fold impact on learning; minority students did not see themselves reflected in the teachers that stood before them, and the majority students perceived teach-

ers were drawn very much from their own background. This was reinforced by a further study into the implementation of the English National Curriculum subject, Citizenship Education, with respect to how minority identities were represented in the process (Maylor *et al.* 2007); in this case we found that young people were confused about the conception of British identities. The argument we made then also holds true more generally in Europe in the case of the citizenship education of potentially hard to reach students.

This leads to the question: why should the teaching profession include representatives of those minorities who potentially construct their identities as different from the norm? There are several arguments that suggest it is important because of the specific characteristics of the nature of formal education, and the way in which learning in schools is organised. Schooling is a formative activity for young people, conducted through both explicit processes (such as the formal curriculum) and subtle processes, which include learner's perceptions about *who* conducts the process. It is also a social process, involving interactions between teacher and learner, in which the teacher is in a position of authority, trust and power. Most children/young people learn in schools over a long period, whereas most of our other experiences of social provisions are episodic and accidental in nature. These factors can be read by minority group pupils and majority group pupils in different ways. A minority group student might ask:

1. If all teachers have an identity that appears different to mine, then does the citizenship that is being taught include me?
2. If people like me seem not to be given the civic status of a teacher, does this imply that I also am not part of this civic culture?

The majority group student might assert:

3. If all teachers appear to have an identity that they share with me, then the citizenship being taught clearly includes the teacher and me, but not necessarily people who appear in some way different.
4. If only people like me are given the powerful civic position of teachers, then those who are not like me are not part of the same civic community.

All school education, through the medium of teachers, involves regular social interaction and is a formative activity, involving putting designated individuals in positions of power and trust over all young people, for most days, and for many years. No other state provision is as pervasive, as powerful, or as dominant. Having a representative proportion of teachers and particularly citizenship teachers is critical, because of the character, ubiquity, pervasiveness, duration and importance of teaching as a social activity. There are three specific reasons why we need more citizenship educators from minority communities:

Firstly, these teachers need to reflect the full spectrum of cultural and social traditions and systems in their collective professional practice. Each individual teacher brings to their work a set of cultural norms and expectations, and while good teachers are reflective and critically self-aware, no one can recognise all the culturally and socially determined mores they carry. It is important the teaching profession overall can match the range of cultural and social diversity that our society contains. If the profession is explicitly drawn from a range of cultures and ethnicities in society, it can aspire to deliver a citizenship education that has the subtlety and the nuance to make each individual feel her or his identity is acknowledged and respected.

Secondly, racism and xenophobia, individual, institutional and otherwise, continue to be major issues among young people, as this research has shown. Racism in schools needs to be very explicitly and forcefully confronted, otherwise minorities will continue to be disempowered and disenfranchised as citizens and as learners, and majority groups will develop attitudes of intolerance, which will include an inability to value diversity. Teachers from the majority community, however well intentioned, trained and experienced they are in their anti-racist work, will still be unaware of and unable to identify and analyse much of the xenophobia, chauvinism and racism in society.

Thirdly, we need aspirational role models for our pupils, particularly minority pupils. These minorities are poorly represented in positions of power, authority and prestige in our society. Teachers are a particular and special category, being the one face of civil society that every child will meet, every working day, throughout their formal education. It is, therefore, particularly critical that this 'face' of civil power be seen, visibly and explicitly, to represent all of our society.

The presence of teachers drawn from all groups of our society will mean that *all* students will recognise members of the minorities have as much power and prestige as any other citizen, and secondly, that minority students will recognise that they too can and should aspire to excellence, esteem and authority. The argument is not for 'Roma teachers for Roma students', but for some Roma teachers to be teaching all kinds of students.

We need to recognise that many groups might be harder to reach in different ways. The reasons some young people might be cautious about 'being reached' will vary; those who feel part of some stigmatised other will need to have their alienation recognised, acknowledged, and discussed. Different groups will require different approaches, based on a recognition and a respect for their sense of identity and isolation.

If the essence of the category 'hard to reach' is that it is based on a 'we' that others 'them', then 'we' need to consider why we think they are dif-

ferent, what the boundaries between our presumed identities are, and how we are perceived by ‘them’. The solution may be to create and demonstrate more flexible and permeable boundaries between us and them.

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Mick Carpenter and Marti Taru

## Asking the questions the right way round? Young people's political participation in Europe: Reflections on the MYPLACE study

### Introduction: A general disconnect of youth?

In this chapter we ask: are young people hard to reach, or are politicians reluctant to reach out to them because of an unwillingness to address their needs and aspirations? Are young people unwilling to engage with political institutions, or do the political institutions of European democracies create barriers to their participation? If the answers to these questions place the fault on those in power, then citizenship education, while vitally necessary, might not be sufficient; especially if policy makers see it as a means of placing the primary responsibility for participation and engagement on young people themselves. Instead, changes to institutions and policies of a more 'structural' nature might be required to support citizenship education, particularly where those in political authority wish to reach out to and engage with groups of young people who might otherwise be unresponsive to its messages.

This chapter explores these issues by drawing on newly available evidence, produced for the European Commission (EC) MYPLACE research project, funded under the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), which undertook comprehensive and holistic research into the social and political participation of young people aged 15–25 in 14 countries across Europe from 2011–2015. The results of the project are freely available (<https://myplaceresearch.wordpress.com/>). The 14 countries were Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany (East and West), Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Portugal, Russia, Slovakia, Spain, and the UK, representing the widest possible range of European societies.

MYPLACE is an acronym for Memory, Youth, Political Legacy, and Civic Engagement, and as the name indicates, the starting point for the

research was the need to understand the political and social responses of Europe's young people, both historically and holistically. Firstly, in historical terms, this meant examining how young people's political understandings and responses have been shaped by the cultural and structural inheritances of their nation's past. This included the legacy of the fascist or communist forms of totalitarianism that hang over the continent, and those from countries at various stages of the transition from industrial and Keynesianism to post-industrial and neoliberal economic and social policy environments. Secondly, the aim was to avoid investigating political ideologies or youth participation in isolation by situating these variables within a broad understanding of young people's lives, including their wider civic engagement and social attitudes. Thus, the intention was to offer a balanced assessment of whether any disconnect in the formal political sphere was matched by wider social and political engagement or disengagement, adopting a wider conception of what counts as 'political'.

Therefore, the overarching aim of the MYPLACE project was to replace prevailing 'moral panic' about the social and political orientations of Europe's youth with deeper and more situated understandings of their responses to contemporary life, by capturing the thoughts and reflections of young people themselves using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The research methods included a large scale quantitative survey and follow-up qualitative interviews at two economically and socially contrasting sites in each country. It also involved collaborative work with museum partners responsible for working with young people to enhance their understanding of the meaning of their national histories and the associated political significance. In addition, we conducted a large number of ethnographic case studies, three from each partner country, providing examples of young people's political and social agency in action.

In our efforts to draw out the policy and practice implications of the MYPLACE research, we collaborated with members of policy communities, setting up Youth Policy Advisory Groups (YPAGs) in each of the 14 partner countries. These YPAGs actively involved policy makers and practitioners, including those responsible for school and community educational projects that promote good citizenship practice among young people. This engagement through YPAGs informed the research design and provided a forum for discussing the practical implications of the results as they emerged. Although these discussions took place principally at the level of individual countries, on 20 November 2014, a project-wide Policy Forum, informally designated the 'European YPAG', was held in Brussels, to connect the researchers and their European partners to tease out the European-wide implications of the emerging findings.

Three Policy Briefs arose from the project: the first introduced the project, the second highlighted the most policy-relevant findings and their practical implications at country level, while the third and final Brief sought to synthesise all the project results as a foundation for European level policy discussions. In this chapter, we seek to draw out both national policy issues and more general European-level implications from the research data. All these publications, and the materials associated with them, can be found at the FP7 MYPLACE website (<https://myplacere-search.wordpress.com/> accessed 16 April 2016).

Given the scale of the MYPLACE project (it is the largest multi-method study of young people's civic, social and political participation ever undertaken), it is only possible in this short chapter to indicate the main implications of the research of relevance to the themes of the book. We are only too aware that there is a tendency to over-generalise about youth. For example, widespread assumptions prevail about an alleged disconnect between young people and the political system, and by inference, between them and the wider society, fuelling fears that they may be attracted to either political extremism or amoral lifestyles and asocial consumerism. Of course, such fears and moral panics about youth are not entirely new; rather, they are recurrent features of modern societies. We will therefore avoid over-generalising about the situation of youth within and across the wide range of countries that characterise themselves as 'European'. Our research did find common elements and similar responses concerning the 'youth situation' across the continent, but also different situations and divergent responses. Thus, the focus in this book on particular groups of hard to reach young people is welcome, because it avoids sweeping generalisations about young people, drawing attention to differential tendencies to marginalisation based on features including class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, language, disability and citizenship status.

Our research revealed that such processes of marginalisation are unevenly distributed within and between unequal European societies, and are shaped by centrifugal forces that impact on southern and eastern European societies with greater force than the European 'heartlands' of continental Europe and Scandinavia, the UK being a political and geographical 'northern' outlier. Nevertheless, we will argue that despite these differences, there are general tendencies towards greater marginalisation, due particularly to the increasing and prolonged nature of youth transitions. We will suggest this leads to a common structural youth situation, and set of associated experiences, which often transcend geographical differences, shaping political consciousness and actions in ways clearly reflected in the MYPLACE findings.

## Young people, citizenship and education: A structural analysis

There is strong evidence that the transition to compulsory schooling from the 19th century onwards was significantly shaped by concerns around political citizenship, in the context of broader shifts towards capitalist modernity and the modern political institutions of representative democracy. In other words, contrary to the utilitarian conception of education most memorably represented by Mr Gradgrind in Dickens's *Hard Times*, (Dickens, 1995 (1854)) the aim of state education never was simply to cram working class children's heads with 'facts' useful to their future sub-altern role and position in the society. Instead, the aim was to win hearts and minds to support nation-building projects at a time when established elites were increasingly being challenged from below. There was a positive element to this, which acknowledged the need to prepare citizens for the development of modern democracies, but a 'fear' of what the lower orders might do with their newly won democratic powers was also clearly present.

Traditionally, conceptions of citizenship have been divided into liberal and republican variants, the former emphasising rights and liberties, often of an individual nature, the latter the duty to participate and contribute to the collective life of the community; both are linked to negative and positive conceptions of freedom, and passive or active citizenship. Marshall (1950), writing after World War Two, viewed citizenship rights as evolving historically over time, with liberal, political and social rights being built on top of each other in mutually reinforcing ways. Unfortunately, this is an over-simplification as significant tensions between the liberal, participative and social dimensions of citizenship remain, and the era of advancing neoliberalism witnessed the reassertion of liberal conceptions of citizenship against social rights. Marshall's work has been widely critiqued, particularly on the basis that the narrow focus on class equality under the state obscured the fact that adult males enjoyed more preferential rights than those enjoyed by women (Lister 2003). The same arguments have also arisen in relation to other divisions, such as 'race' and ethnicity, age, religion, disability and sexuality. Traditional conceptions of citizenship typically exclude foreigners, also preventing refugees and asylum seekers from making valid claims to political and social rights (Dwyer, 2010).

The challenges of increasing globalisation and the claims for greater social justice and recognition between and within societies have been seen, in the eyes of some, as a basis for extending citizenship rights beyond the limits of the nation state. In the context of the European Union (EU), this is most substantively associated with the rights of free movement and residence, introduced by the 1992 Maastricht Treaty, as well as conditional

access to social rights in member countries. Meanwhile in the political sphere, participatory EU rights include the opportunity to vote in European elections to elect a European parliament whose powers are however attenuated by the commanding position of institutions such as the European Commission (EC) and European Central Bank (ECB). Clearly, the granting of such enhanced rights was intended to achieve more than economic integration, and to foster an emergent sense of European belonging, supplementary to that of citizenship of nation states. However some critics, such as Bourdieu (2001), argue that these procedural and substantive social rights have been insufficient to protect European citizens from the negative effects of global neoliberalism, which is undermining the protection offered by welfare states, and they have called for a more extensive 'social Europe'. For others, European citizenship rights, although in themselves only emergent, are part of a 'fortress Europe' aimed at excluding outsiders, needing to be countered with a more cosmopolitan conception of 'global citizenship' based on genuinely universalist principles of political, economic and social human rights (Dwyer 2010).

In this chapter, we consider the implications of such debates for young people by developing a structuralist approach to youth citizenship, which acknowledges that young people have agency, but also recognizes the ways in which their agency is institutionally constrained. Young people are generally disadvantaged and lacking in power, although this general tendency is subject to internal differentiation. Overall, however, young people cannot readily address their lack of power, because they are often excluded from procedural citizenship rights, including voting; viewed as future rather than existing citizens. In the majority of contexts, officially sanctioned youth participation is at best consultative, and does not extend beyond the lowest rungs of the 'ladder of participation' (Hart 1992). Thus, any substantive rights that young people have, for example to education, are conferred on them by adults. Even when they reach the age at which they are entitled to vote, young people form a relatively small segment in rapidly ageing European societies. In January 2014, those aged between 15 and 29 years represented around 18 per cent of the total population of the EU-28, a proportion that is in decline because of the combined effects of declining fertility rates and an ageing population (EC 2015). The youth cohort is shrinking particularly fast in central, eastern and southern European countries (EC 2015: 7–8). As a result, the median age of the population in Europe is rising, reported to be 42.2 years in January 2015; meaning over 50 per cent of Europeans are over that age (Eurostat 2015). Were it not for migration from outside the EU, the percentage of young people would be even lower.

Alongside this demographic change, there is evidence that young people, although to varying degrees, are experiencing transitions to adulthood and economic and social independence that are increasingly prolonged and more hazardous. Progressing through tertiary and higher education is more frequently seen as the norm, extending the period of economic dependency for young people to an age previously regarded as adulthood. Additionally, barriers to affordable housing and changing cultural norms are delaying household formation. Those who do not undertake this journey, those not in education, employment or training (so-called NEETS), face an uncertain future, as the disappearance of well-paid and secure semi-skilled industrial jobs, and rising educational requirements exclude them from the lesser number of well-paid and secure jobs. The costs of social reproduction are increasingly imposed on young people and their families, through reduced access to welfare benefits and the transfer of the costs of further and higher education to individuals (Mizen 2004), the extent of which varies across EU member countries. This then heightens divisions among young people, whose choices become highly dependent on the variable forms of economic, social and cultural capital that they are able to muster (Bourdieu 1986). Taking this structuralist approach to the problem makes it possible to dispute the claims that are sometimes made, suggesting that young people exercise greater individual choice in contemporary societies about the nature and length of their transitions to adulthood than previous generations did. Thus, Biggart *et al.* (2009) argue that social class and other structural divisions continue to limit the scope for such individualised ‘choice biographies’. Clearly class disadvantage is also compounded by other forms of disadvantage and identity which may make young people hard to reach, such as gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality and religion, necessitating an ‘intersectional’ approach, which takes such complexity into account (see Ross 2008, Krizsan *et al.* 2012).

These changing forms of structural disadvantage over the past 40 years of global neoliberal capitalism have widened inequalities in the labour market and society, and led to the growth of an insecure ‘precariat’ (Standing 2011). However, the fact that the precariat is predominantly composed of young people has not received sufficient emphasis, nor has the fact that precarity has become more pronounced since the economic crisis of 2008. Brugiavini and Weber (2014) have shown that economic shocks have pronounced longer term ‘scarring’ effects on economic fortune and health and well-being, particularly affecting those with fewer skills and qualifications. However, this impact is mediated by social protection, which is more accessible in Scandinavia than other northern European countries, and particularly lacking in the family-based welfare systems of southern

Europe. This correlates closely with the ‘stark findings’ of Bell and Blanchflower (2011: 36) concerning Europe and the United States, who found ‘evidence that youth unemployment reduces wages and happiness more than thirty-five years later’. The OECD (2014) has shown that the Great Recession exacerbated the tendency for rising inequality on a global scale, particularly impacting the young and the poor, with young people now subject to a higher risk of poverty than older people. The problems that have arisen, and that were previously most marked among NEETS groups, now extend to more educated and qualified layers of society, the group Mason (2012) has labelled ‘graduates without a future’. In summary, growing numbers of young people are becoming marginalised, and therefore potentially could be designated hard to reach, and this is being exacerbated by the centre-periphery relations in Europe, which separate the northern continental and Scandinavian countries from those of central, eastern and southern Europe.

Thus, while before the economic crisis youth transitions were more difficult and less regular, since the onset of the Great Recession they have become, for growing numbers of young people, increasingly blocked. Rather than seeing youth transitions as an ever-longer tunnel from which most people will eventually emerge, the journey to full autonomy as an adult is increasingly becoming a labyrinth from which it is difficult to escape. This reality might be expected to lead more young people to become disengaged, or actively alienated from politics, or alternatively to become attracted to radical or extremist politics. In the next section of this chapter, we will examine the evidence gathered for MYPLACE on the impact of extended youth transitions on democracy and citizenship, and consider the implications for policy makers and educators.

## The FP7 MYPLACE research findings. Low trust but high support for democracy

The 2008–9 financial crisis might have afforded policy makers an opportunity to take a different economic direction, but rather than being understood as indicating the failure of dominant neoliberal strategies, it was primarily understood in elite circles, at national and EU levels, as a crisis of state expenditure and interventionism. Consequently, while there has been state intervention for banks, welfare state support for vulnerable populations has been cut dramatically, particularly for young people; while the position of older groups who are a larger section of the population, and vote in greater numbers, has been relatively protected. The MYPLACE

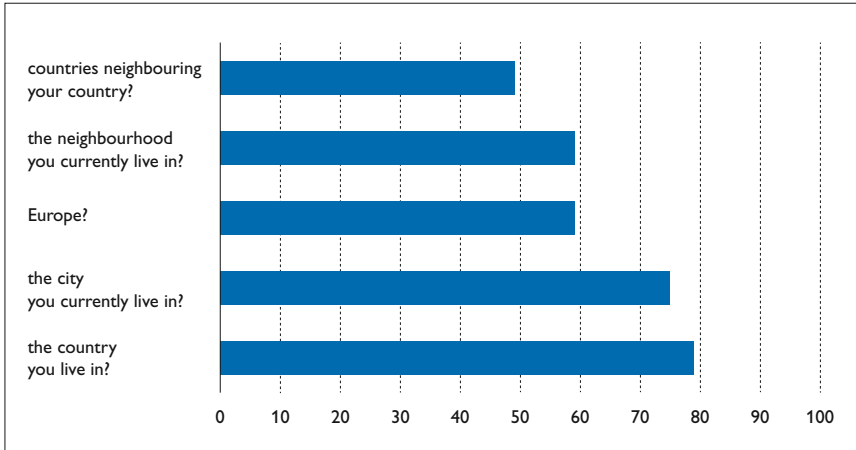
research was undertaken at the current peak of the economic crisis in Europe, in 2012–13. Prior to this there had been accumulating evidence of young people's growing disconnect with national political systems (e.g. Brooks 2009), so our research provided a good opportunity to assess how young people's social and political attitudes and actions have been impacted by the economic crisis.

There is evidence from our findings that the structural social, economic and political changes we have identified led to heightened disillusion with Europe's political systems; but we would dispute the view that this results in most instances from 'apathy'. The survey and qualitative evidence we have gathered from young people shows that some respondents actively chose not to vote, on the 'rational' grounds that European political regimes were not delivering for young people. In addition, Brooks (2009), Manning (2010) and Sloam (2013) suggest that when measuring engagement, 'politics' needs to be reconceptualised beyond formal politics and indicators, such as voting in national and local elections. When young people's involvement in political campaigns, social movements and civic activities, often involving use of internet technologies, is considered, analyses suggest a less condemnatory 'deficit' model, and a more engaged picture of youth emerges, demonstrating widespread interest in a range of issues, with young people often being at the forefront of movements campaigning for change in society. The fact that this often occurs outside the framework of currently existing formal politics, perhaps indicates that politicians and political structures are lagging behind. There therefore needs to be greater recognition of why significant numbers of young people *choose* not to vote, and an awareness of the need also to develop fuller forms of participative citizenship than allowed by periodic participation in elections.

In order to capture and appraise such issues, our quantitative and qualitative research sought to situate itself in the context of a broad understanding of young people's social and political attitudes, employing a range of ethnographic case studies to review young people's civic and political action across Europe. Without wanting to over-generalise, the findings in summary show a modest amount of interest in politics among many European young people, and widespread voting in national and local elections—among those eligible, although this is countered by a considerable lack of trust in politics and political institutions. Thus, Figure 1 shows that there is potentially a considerable degree of interest among young people which varies by social position and country location. Young people were likely to be more interested in the MYPLACE locations in Germany, Greece and Spain, but there were much lower levels of interest in the areas researched in Croatia, Latvia, Finland and Estonia.



Figure 1: Interest in Politics in MYPLACE countries, Survey results



However, many young people were found to be distrustful of politicians, with only 22 per cent agreeing that ‘politicians are interested in me’, 60 per cent believing them to be ‘corrupt’ and 69 per cent feeling that ‘the rich have too much influence on politicians’. Typical comments in qualitative interviews include the following: ‘A politician reminds me of one of those things we have today, it makes me think normally of fraud, bribes, corruption, it makes me think of all of this.’ ‘It’s like yeah, yeah, we’ll do it, we’re gonna do this, this and this, for the country and that and they ain’t done nothing.’ ‘But our government don’t listen to us, do you know what I mean [...] At the moment all they care about is giving the rich tax breaks and taking, hitting all the poor people.’

Once more, there were considerable differences apparent across the countries studied; trust levels were higher in northern European locations, and much lower in central, eastern and southern European locations. Additionally, despite their lack of trust and respect for politicians, voting levels – though declining and lower for young people than older citizens – were relatively high, especially in national elections amongst those eligible, 70.3 per cent of those surveyed having voted. For many young people this remains their chief form of participation in politics, even in the age of issue politics and internet activism. The percentage of youths voting was higher in northern European country locations such as Germany and Finland, where trust levels were also higher. The lowest levels (43 per cent) were found in Nuneaton, UK, a white working class area adversely affected by deindustrialisation and youth unemployment. Despite the diversity of the

locations, we found that the propensity to vote was strongly influenced by social structural factors, such as level of education, class, gender, religion and ethnicity. Both young males and those with a strong religious identity were more likely to vote.

Compared to other forms of participating in politics, Table 1 below shows that voting was generally considered the most effective.

**Table 1: Belief in the efficacy of various forms of political action, MYPLACE**  
*Survey results (0 – not at all effective to 10 – very effective)*

Voting in elections	6.9
Gaining publicity through media exposure	5.9
Participating in illegal protest	3.5
Participating in violent protest	2.9

However, the qualitative research results revealed that even those young people who voted did not necessarily believe in the system’s efficacy: ‘Whichever way you’re going to get screwed, is my personal opinion [...] I vote [...] people say if you don’t vote you don’t get to complain.’

This may also be the case for those participating in demonstrations: ‘My impression is that it is never very successful. But I think it is still better to demonstrate than to do nothing.’

Those choosing not to vote are not necessarily disengaged, but may have made a reasoned choice: ‘I don’t participate in the elections. I stopped doing it recently. Most probably because I think that my vote won’t change anything.’

There was some evidence that proportional representation and an interventionist state, as in Scandinavia and northern Europe, has a positive effect on participation, voting, and sense of closeness to a political party, when compared to countries with less state support and greater emphasis on individual or family responsibility, such as the UK, southern Europe and post-socialist countries.

Beyond voting there were also lower levels of participation in social movements and civic action. An overall composite measure of organisational involvement in 11 organisations, on a scale of 0 to 11 from low to high engagement, revealed an overall average of 0.3. Young people in Nordic locations in Finland and Denmark had the highest levels of membership of civic and political organisations, while the lowest levels were found in Mediterranean localities (Greece, Portugal, and Spain), and post-socialist localities (Hungary, Slovakia, Georgia, and Latvia). Socio-political involvement beyond organisational participation, as measured by 20 dif-

ferent political activities, also varied widely. For example, both locations in Hungary represented a level of participation some 25 times lower than some locations in Eastern Germany and Spain. Low levels of involvement were generally recorded in civic and political organisations, with 11 kinds identified, including political parties, religious organisations, peace and human rights organisations, and anti-globalisation movements. Protest activism was highest in those countries and locations most hit by the economic crisis such as Greece, Portugal, and Spain. As we have seen above, social class and educational level are strong predictors for voting, but this is not the case with involvement in protest activity.

European decision makers have become increasingly concerned that young people might be attracted, particularly at a time of crisis, to racism and xenophobia as a basis for aggressively exclusionary nationalist ideologies. Our survey found the most favourable attitudes toward minority groups were to be found in northern European locations, especially in Germany. The most negative views were to be found in post-socialist countries and in Greece and Portugal. In many countries, particularly Finland, Germany, Russia and the UK, those young people with less education and from a working class background were more likely to express hostility to migrant groups, and this was sometimes linked to perceived competition for resources. Hostility to Roma people emerged as a significant form of racism in a number of countries. We also found that general distrust of other people, and in the government, correlated with negative views of minorities and migrants. Males were also more likely to express such hostility.

An encouraging finding of the MYPLACE research was that there was widespread support among young people for the notion of democracy as the basis for the political system. As Figure 2 below shows, on a scale from 0 (low) to 10 (high) the mean level of support was 5.01, although this varied from 3.34 in one Greek location to 7.43 in a Danish location. Thus, the pattern of a divide between more 'encouraging' results in northern and Scandinavian locations on the one hand, and more 'troubling' results in post-socialist and southern European countries also fitted this domain. We also found an encouraging degree of support for the European project among young people. In many instances, the two locations in each country showed broadly similar results. Both locations in Portugal and Germany were in the top third in terms of degree of interest, while both locations in Slovakia, Russia and Croatia were in the bottom third. Overall 49 per cent of respondents in our study agreed, or strongly agreed, that 'membership of the EU greatly benefits our country'. High levels of trust for the European Commission were found in Georgia, Denmark and Germany,

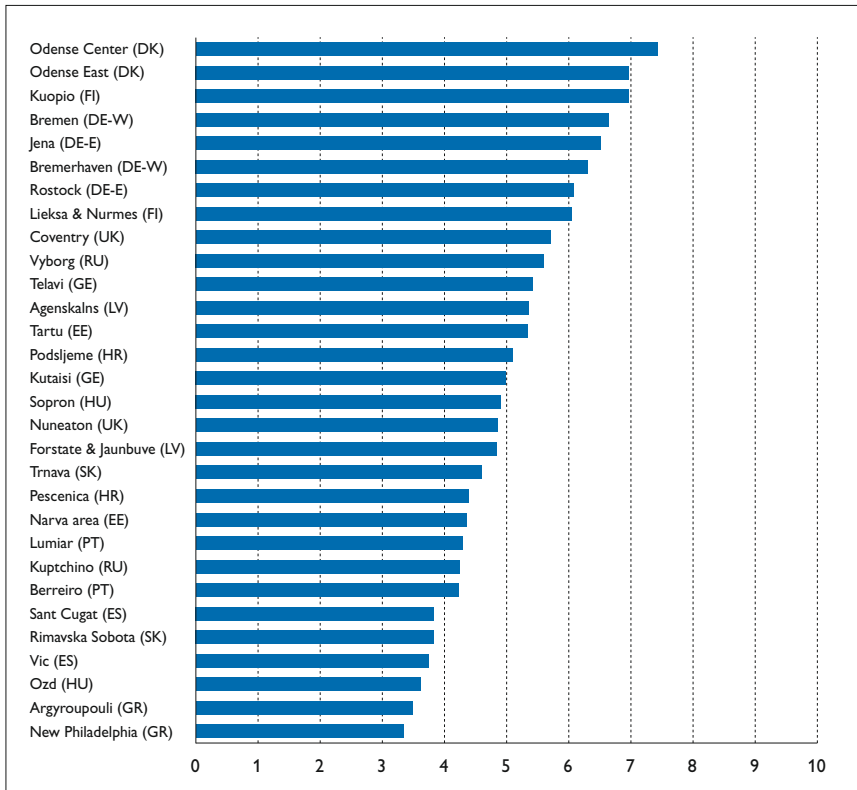
but lower levels were found in post-socialist locations like Hungary and Croatia, and also Greece.

A relatively small proportion of young people in the large scale quantitative survey were found to be involved in social movements and radical or extremist politics; but the project team were able to clarify this phenomenon further with ethnographic research into young people's social and political action. MYPLACE has accumulated a unique database of 44 ethnographic case studies illustrating young people's active involvement in social movements and political organisations. These provide invaluable insights for researchers, policy makers and educators into the motivations, experiences, and reflections of the young people involved. The ethnographic case studies included examples of young people's involvement in radical right wing and patriotic movements, such as the English Defence League in the UK West Midlands and the Greek Golden Dawn Party, as well as in Russian Run, a strongly nationalist pro-sport and sobriety movement. Other case studies included anti-capitalist and anti-racist/fascist organisations such as Anti-fascist Punk Activism (Antifa Punk) in Croatia and the anti-discrimination movement of football fans (Anti Dis AG) in Germany. The research team followed a number of anti-austerity movements, including 'squares' movements such as Occupy in the UK, Los Indignados (The Indignants) in Barcelona, Spain, and their counterparts, the Aganaktismeni in Syntagma Square in Athens, Greece. Movements furthering gender and minority rights included activist organisations such as UK Feminista and the Estonian LGBT movement, who use social media prominently to underpin action.

Far right and patriotic organisations have often emphasised 'open' membership and solidarity, and 'the nation' as a key source of 'belonging' and identity, stressing historical commemoration. What might be termed more 'leftist' or egalitarian movements also stress open membership but more consistently valued informal action from below. They also underscore the importance of democratic participation and the expression of strong emotions, both of which might be seen as reactions to a political culture that constrains it. In many of these movements, the formal commitment to equality and non-hierarchical methods proved difficult to realise in practice, and the young participants themselves were often aware of this contradiction. The researchers also studied a number of the youth sections of political parties, labour organisations and state-sponsored organisations, such as of the right wing True Finns Party, the Christian Democratic Party in Slovakia and the German trade union IG Metal. A common finding was that young people sometimes felt frustration about being constrained by larger 'parent' organisations and their often rule-bound approaches.

Occupy movements had a variable legacy in that they helped to foster more enduring parliamentary challenges to power in southern Europe, with youth action as a mainspring of parties such as Podemos in Spain and Syriza in Greece. However, this transfer to formal politics did not occur in the northern European case studies conducted in Denmark and the UK.

**Figure 2: Satisfaction with democracy by country and location on a scale from 0 (extremely dissatisfied) to 10 (extremely satisfied), MYPLACE Survey results**



The reports are available as individual case studies ([http://www.fp7-myplace.eu/deliverable\\_7.php](http://www.fp7-myplace.eu/deliverable_7.php) accessed 16 April 2016) and a series of synthesis reports across different types or ‘clusters’ of youth movements ([http://www.fp7-myplace.eu/deliverable\\_7-2.php](http://www.fp7-myplace.eu/deliverable_7-2.php) accessed 16 April 2016). There thus seem to be substantive and procedural issues to consider. First the nar-

row agendas of formal politics in the face of challenges, such as immigration, austerity, inequality and climate change, and second the dissatisfaction with the styles of formal policies, which are seen to be at variance with youth values and culture, and the desire for more expressive, participative and even exciting forms of action. Overall there was a tendency for far right movements to attract marginalised young people, 'at risk of exclusion', with limited educational qualifications, and for 'leftist' and egalitarian movements to attract more educated and middle class recruits. However, this was not universally the case, as movements like Occupy attracted diverse groups of young people across these divides. However the sheer variety of types of youth actions mean these are only tentative observations, and so we would encourage readers to read the case study reports themselves and draw their own conclusions.

## Implications of the MYPLACE research for policy and education

Moving on from research findings to make implications for policy makers and educators is a complex process, even more so in the case of a large scale project such as MYPLACE. We therefore do not regard our recommendations as definitive, although we have consulted widely in formulating them through the project's Youth Policy Advisory Groups (YPAGs).

In some ways, the results were encouraging, dispelling the prevailing stereotype of apathetic youth widely disengaged from political and civic life. A significant number of young people are 'active citizens', interested in politics, and with relatively high voting levels, with a substantial minority being directly involved in social and political action. However, there is no room for complacency. Our research corresponds with and adds breadth and depth to other studies, indicating a similar direction; most recently, the Eurobarometer evidence found in the 2015 European Youth Report (EC 2015). The concerns expressed about falling voting rates and the growing lack of trust in politics and politicians seem to be well grounded. While there does not yet appear to be a widespread 'lost legitimacy' for democracy as a system across most European societies, there is considerable criticism of politics and politicians, and a strong feeling among many young people that the political system is failing to deliver for them. The young people engaged in the research often stated that they were 'turned off' by their perception that politics is conducted by older, formally dressed, 'boring people', often 'men in suits' (see Pilkington 2015, for further discussion of these aspects of the MYPLACE research). A significant num-

ber of young people also believed that political authorities were seeking to define all protests by students and other young people as a potential threat to ‘public order’, in order to deal with them restrictively, employing excessively punitive measures. Such perceptions may deter participation in protest movements and undermine society’s faith in democracy. In this respect young people’s disaffection should be regarded less as a ‘problem’ than as a positive desire for more meaningful and less remote forms of democracy, and responsive government, which if addressed could reinvigorate democracy for all.

In the qualitative interviews, many young people expressed the view that the education system had not sufficiently prepared them to engage in politics, and in this respect, the research provides evidence from young people themselves of a need for effective citizenship education, as well as for extra-curricular youth work projects to support their political engagement. Case studies of practical MYPLACE projects conducted with museum and archive partners have revealed that young people often trust family accounts more than the official versions of political history promulgated by schools and other public agencies. However, they were more receptive to official discourses when they were delivered with sufficient scope to enable them to develop their own political interpretations. Many respondents in the MYPLACE research stated that schools were not adequately preparing them to be active citizens, for example: ‘There should be more hours on social studies in school, maybe more history too.’ ‘What we need is education. Education is our weapon, nothing else.’

Where opportunities were provided through school Youth Councils, these were appreciated, and many students valued the participatory opportunities provided by student unions. This reflects many of the good practice principles identified in the citizenship education literature, which emphasises that citizenship education in schools is most likely to succeed when linked to more general opportunities to participate in decision-making in schools; principles that could also be extended to the wider society (Fahmy 2006, McCowan 2009, Ross 2015). Therefore, we can assert that more needs to be done to equip young people with the knowledge, insight into politics, and practical participation skills in schools and in other non-formal learning settings. This would enable young people to participate more effectively. Lowering the voting age could also be a positive move that would probably help to facilitate participation, as evidenced by the youth participation rates in the 2014 Scottish referendum on independence. The estimated voting rates of 16–17 year olds was 75 per cent compared to 54 per cent among those aged 18–24. However, it was 92 per cent for those aged 55 and over (Mackie, 2015).

Above all, our evidence shows that both before and since the economic crisis of 2008–9, a growing divide has developed between young people and formal politics, particularly pronounced between young people in northern Europe on the one hand and post-socialist and southern European countries on the other. This was reflected in the significant differences we found in the research locations across different types of European societies. Broadly speaking, in the more prosperous northern European countries, young people appeared more ‘integrated’, with the exception of economically and socially marginalised young people in former post-socialist countries, where ‘anomic’ disengagement from the political system seemed more common, and in the countries of southern Europe, where many young people, including middle class and educated youth, were often politically alienated.

So far, the response of policy elites seems insufficient, and there is evidence of a vicious circle, which needs to be addressed urgently, where young people, particularly but not exclusively the hardest to reach and most marginalised, disengage from the formal political system because they do not feel their views are taken seriously. In response, politicians pay more attention to those who do vote and participate, and those who tend to be the older, more educated and established members of society. While the responsibility for addressing this is reciprocal, we feel that politicians should be the first to take the initiative to prove they care about young people in order for this vicious circle to be broken. We do acknowledge that there has been some response to these issues at both national and European levels. The limited effects of previous strategies, for example, led to the introduction of the EU Youth Strategy for 2010–18 ([http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth\\_strategy/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth_strategy/index_en.htm)/accessed 16 April 2016), which was informed by the awareness that ‘Europe’s future depends on its youth, yet the life chances of many young people are blighted’. It has two overall objectives:

- Investing in youth, particularly by providing more and equal opportunities for young people in education and the job market;
- Empowering youth, by encouraging young people to participate actively in society in various ways.

In terms of empowering youth, the strategy recognises the continuing ‘gap’ between youth and state institutions, urging policy makers to address these issues by measures such as:

- Dialogue with young people, facilitating participation when shaping national and EU policies;
- Supporting youth organisations and national and local youth councils;
- Promoting participation among under-represented groups;



- Supporting ways of ‘learning to participate’ from an early age; and
- Promoting e-democracy to reach out to non-organised youth.

Overall, our evidence supports the EU Youth Strategy’s efforts to prioritise young people and widen the agenda from traditional concerns about their labour market participation to a broader holistic concern with young people’s ‘capabilities’. We have argued that young people’s concerns are not prioritised in contemporary political systems. Where they surface, there has been and remains a dualistic tendency to either treat young people as either – or both – an (economic) ‘resource’ or a (public order) ‘threat’, which has increased with the rise of neoliberalism since the 1980s, and intensified as the dominant response to the Great Recession (Muniglia *et al.* 2012). While elements of this dualism remain salient in the EU Youth Strategy, the new holistic agenda potentially goes beyond it. It is more consistent with a ‘capabilities’ policy discourse, as developed by Sen (1999) and others, which advocates agency for what young people themselves value, rather than prioritising the need for their economic and social integration within existing structures. Since it privileges democracy in social life above all else, it is therefore a promising framework for citizenship education. What we are saying then, based on the MYPLACE evidence, is that this seems consistent with the principles underlying this book, that citizenship education needs to be youth-centred, rather simply targeted on youth. It also needs not only to include young people in citizenship education but also to actively promote inclusive educational strategies.

Therefore, in light of the above, the message that emerges from what the young people in our research told us is that more needs to be done to change political systems themselves, to make them more accessible and ‘young people friendly’, and also responsive to their expressed substantive concerns around issues such as austerity, discrimination, human rights, and climate change. There is a need therefore for wider political and economic agenda of reform to respond to both the demands and needs of young people, for the ultimate benefit of all, in line with the structural analysis advanced throughout this chapter. A strategy for youth cannot simply be ‘bolted on’ to the existing policy framework; rather it requires a more radical rethink of political institutions and dominant strategies. The dangers of not conducting such a rethink, in light of the rise of both right wing and radical left populism, are all too clear, but existing responses seem sluggish and inadequate, in terms of the need to strengthen ‘social’ and ‘democratic’ Europe at both national and EU levels (see for example Nida-Rümelin *et al.* 2013). With regard to MYPLACE’s contribution to this debate, it provides a foundation on which to establish a requirement for a dual strategy. On the one hand, the general challenges facing society can only be over-

come by specifically addressing the concerns and desires of young people. On the other hand, these can only be tackled effectively within a broader reinvention of political democracy, a shift away from failed policies of austerity, and concerted action to handle challenges such as climate change and the refugee crisis. We therefore advocate social and economic justice for young people as part of a strategy of justice for all, in accordance with the intersectional approach outlined earlier in this chapter. We are less in sympathy with what we feel are the often divisive and misplaced calls for intergenerational justice in isolation (Howker and Malik 2013), as these ignore the intersectional divisions that impact across the life cycle, within and between European societies, and which can obscure the need to resolve wider systemic policy challenges in the interests of all.

### Coda: Young people's own hopes for the future

The final and most important message to policy makers and practitioners, proceeding from the MYPLACE research, is 'listen to what young people themselves are saying'. Therefore, consistent with this, we will conclude this chapter, not in our words, but with a short selection of quotations from the young people themselves, expressing their hopes for the future. We would not claim that this is a representative selection. Rather, it is illustrative of the fact that if humanity has a future, it must come from liberating, rather than seeking to constrain and channel, the energies and passions of young people, in which citizenship education has a vital role to play: 'A society where people can earn a living, and not what we have at the moment.' 'The total elimination of unemployment so that everybody could find a job and have less working hours.' 'A more communicative society, politicians who really communicate with people and not with each other, pretending they are communicating with people.' 'The state should not take away young people's dreams. They should be pushed in order to do more, and accomplish at least half of them.' 'If everyone was a bit more considerate and everybody cared for each other a bit more, and was more tolerant, that would be important.' 'A better society? It would be a society where people do not need to judge each other and a society less biased, less racist, because there is still a lot of racism.' 'Where people trust each other and there's honesty in [...] in business, in personal relations, in things like that ...' 'For me, there would be no fighting – there – it's really unrealistic but there'd be no fighting.' 'Life should be based not on some material goods, but on human values [...] All this is very hard to do. But yes, if we were to be less dependent on economics and the market, things would be better.'

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## Integral citizenship: Concepts and tools

The argument put forward in this chapter aims to challenge existing classical approaches to citizenship education as offered to ‘young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods’. These approaches are too often confined to learning rules about how to live in society, to the interiorising of rights and duties, and to learning about how institutions are organised. As such, they have largely failed to keep pace with the challenges raised by today’s youth (Bertho 2016), whose most vulnerable elements are encountering not only economic and political difficulties, but also cultural and ethical ones. For instance, comprehensive although it is, even the model suggested by Claudine Leleux and Chloé Rocourt (2015) is not appropriate to answer the questions raised in the arena of contemporary debate, which include:

1. How can one fill the ever-widening gap between ‘banlieue’<sup>1</sup> youths and institutions?
2. How can one talk about ‘living-together’<sup>2</sup> to youths who feel they belong to a stigmatised minority?
3. How can one build a new inclusive ‘we’ when so many community-driven and populist ‘we’s’ have emerged? (Tosel 2015).

To address these questions, it is necessary to dismiss the two rival approaches to the notion of citizenship outlined by policy makers:

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1 ‘The word Banlieue appears interchangeable with other words having the same function of designation and classification. Enter in this lexical field “ghettos”, “cities”, “neighbourhoods” or areas called “sensitive”, “difficult”, “problematic”, “outside the law”. This protean vocabulary refers to the same reality: the spatial visibility of social otherness and, even more, ethnic otherness, or which deviates from the standard majority. When the media and political field speak about the banlieues’ problems, it expresses how irritating and anxiety this visible difference is for those who do not live in those portions of the city’ (Kirszbaum 2015: 13).

2 The French phrase ‘vivre ensemble’ has been routinely invoked in public debate, especially since the Charlie Hebdo attacks in January 2015 (translator’s note).

1. The individual-centred approach, according to which citizenship education is primarily about the shaping of individuals, considered as the only legitimate actors on the social and political scene; and
2. The approach that sees individual actions and objectives as generated by society and by institutions, being regarded as the only veritable and efficient social forces.

When pursuing such partial and exclusive approaches (Wieviorka 2015), we must focus on the crossroads between psychological, political, societal and sociological dynamics (Kardiner *et al.* 1963). Failing to do so would be to succumb to scientific sloppiness and pedagogical and political powerlessness. We have long witnessed parochial bickering among experts: indeed, psychoanalysts, philosophers, sociologists, political scientists, anthropologists, urbanists, and criminologists have striven hard to have the last word and make headlines when explaining the evils that affect our neighbourhoods (Boucher 2007, 2010, 2015).

We cannot build a concept of citizenship that is capable of meeting these challenges unless we take into consideration the following points:

1. Each young person is a unique individual (the individual is at the centre of this debate), seeking to emancipate us from devising negatively characterised categories to which each youth is inextricably bound. The labels ‘inner-city dweller’, ‘youths with too few opportunities’, ‘youths of migrant backgrounds, from run-down areas or working-class areas’, all strip young people of their individuality, power and agency, and as a result their sense of responsibility.
2. Regardless of the above point, global studies (Cottesta 2006, Campbell *et al.* 2010) invite us to apprehend individual experiences through a more general lens with the aim of understanding the dynamics and objectives of these experiences.

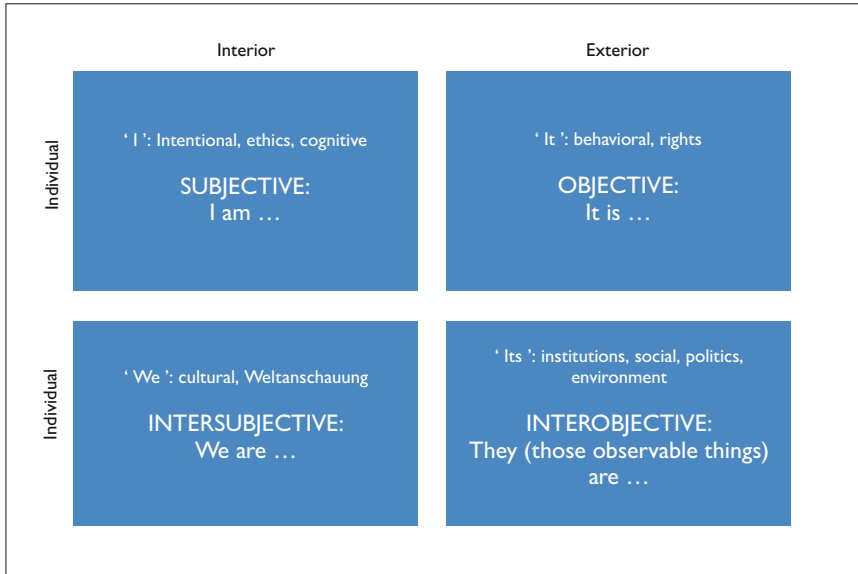
In order to avoid the pitfalls inherent to simplistically metonymic classical approaches, we can start with the theoretical matrix devised by Ken Wilber (1997, 2008, 2014). The matrix has limits (which will not be discussed here), but is especially useful, as it guides a systemic approach allowing for a multi-layered appraisal of this issue (Guespin-Michel 2015).

Ken Wilber devised the model using two intersecting axes: the internal/external axis and the individual/collective axis. Each study object is correlated to four facets as displayed in Figure 1:

To ensure clarity and to guarantee the utility of this study for professionals, I will not dwell on the dialectic connection between each component and the other three in this study. My focus will be on explaining how we can advance work in the area of citizenship education by considering each one of these four parts. Apprehending them concomitantly is

very powerful for political practice, with the potential to further political thinking on this topic.

Figure 1: Wilber’s matrix, Wilber 1997, 2008



### # I/Interior/Individual: Interiority Dimension

This is a crucial dimension shaping the type of citizenship we are seeking; Philippe Breton refers to interiority as an actual ‘democratic competence’ (Breton, 2006). Unfortunately, the space devoted to interiority is increasingly being destroyed by ever-greater interactivity fuelled by new technologies (Godard 2016, Crawford 2015, Tisseron 2012, Breton 2004, Boutinet 1998). It is therefore appropriate to redefine the contours of interiority, as it constitutes the basis upon which to build a stable and democratic personality (Nussbaum 2010).

We must first ask, how can one promote this dimension? Certainly, among young people it is noteworthy that interiority is wrought by tensions, conflicts, cleavages that need to be addressed and resolved if the goal is to ‘promote new forms of subjectivity’ (Foucault 1994). Once healing measures have been taken, it will be possible to introduce a proposal aimed at major interventions to teach the younger generation, especially from the families of recent migrants.

## Emancipating oneself from tragic choices

The interiority of youths living in so-called ‘run-down’ areas is too often wrought by tough choices, which result in distorted links between the self and others. When proposing a ‘care’ logic and a ‘care’ politics, we must address those internal scars that fuel and are fuelled by social wounds (Haber 2010, Poché 2008, 2014).

To heal the wounds originating from social divisions it is important to emancipate oneself from tragic alternatives. In this context, so-called ‘lifeboat ethics’ (Lucas and Ogletree 1976) keeps youths in thrall, as they believe the only option is to be either a shipwreck victim or a survivor (Levi 1989): ‘tragic choices’, states Frédérique Leichter-Flack, ‘are those choices made when it is no longer possible to be moral’ (2015: 51). Designed to face extreme situations, lifeboat ethics are routinely disseminated throughout daily experiences and society as a whole. Consequently, because we recognise that the ‘lifeboat’ cannot accommodate everyone, the concerns posed are numerous:

[W]ho may live when not everyone will live? Who will be saved when not everyone can? Unless they are raised by the perverse ill-will of psychopaths who ‘take delight in dilemmas’ (as the hero in the thriller *Saw*), these questions arise in unexpected ways, in exceptional situations where needs are greater than available resources and where powerlessness compels one to choose, i. e. humanitarian disaster, large-scale collective emergencies, etc. But one may find these situations in other contexts having nothing to do with emergencies or catastrophes.  
(Leichter-Flack, 2015: 12)

The generalisation of lived reality as members of society by lifeboat ethics weakens our capacity to think in moral terms. A reflection of this is the cinema directed toward youths, wherein the survival of some depends upon the death of others: e. g. *Hunger Games*, *Battle Royale*, *Snowpiercer*, and *Saw*.

To overcome this and construct anew the capacity to think in ethical terms, which is essential for the development of a democratic personality, one must switch off the machine making *Sophie’s choice*. The options—that can be pursued include first to stop giving youths social and sometimes existential alternatives, which generate problems rather than solve them. Many of these dilemmas are constructed by the media and political establishment, and in many cases are arbitrary and baseless as well as torturous (Gérard 2011, Lessing 2001). The presence of such dilemmas has been proven to uproot some young citizens’ capacity to think in ethical



terms. Whether as parents, teachers, elected representatives, journalists, educationalists, or intermediaries in the job market, adults share a major responsibility to avoid playing sorcerers' apprentices, imitating the hero in *Saw* who 'takes delight in dilemmas'. They must direct their efforts so they are not focused toward 'making the other crazy'<sup>3</sup> (Searles 1959, 1977). A thorough inventory of false dilemmas must therefore be made, in order to identify the double binds that adults impose on young people. Think, for instance, of the false dilemma: are you French or Muslim? (Venel 2004) (Norton 2013); are you a patriot or a world citizen? (Cichelli 2016); are you for multiculturalism or national identity? (Choquet 2015, Guérard de Latour 2009, 2013). In addition, it would be beneficial to work with youths in small groups (ten at most) to examine the dilemmas they are facing, and the paradoxes (Wittezaelae 2008) that corner them in social, political and existential dead-ends.

### Tool n°1: Learning to deactivate double binds

This section presents the steps that can be taken to erase double binds.

**First step** (collective step): the group leader explains to the group the concepts of dilemmas and double binds (giving illustrations). From the outset he/she makes it clear that the goal of the exercise is to emancipate oneself from familial, identity, social and political dead-ends, to become a decision-maker again and to broaden one's possibilities and creativity.

**Second step** (individual work): hand out post-it notes and ask the following question: 'What are your dilemmas and double binds?' This stage is based on the need for prior individual written reflection, which requires that before embarking on an oral discussion and exchanging views, it is very important that each participant records his/her thoughts. This technique aims to counter the influence of the group, which was demonstrated by Asch (Nugier and Chekroun 2011).

**Third step** (collective step): each person is invited to read his/her list of dilemmas and double binds. The group leader invites all the participants to come and stick their post-it notes on a poster affixed to the wall.

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3 'In general one can say, I think, that the initiating of any kind of interpersonal interaction which tends to foster emotional conflict in the other person—which tends to activate various areas of his personality in opposition to one another—tends to drive him crazy (i. e. schizophrenic)' (Searles 1959: 2).

**Fourth step** (collective step): once each participant has expressed himself/herself, the group leader invites everyone to arrange the post-it notes into specific categories, following a debate stage. Each participant is then asked to pick the one category that really generates problems, and the one that requires concentrated effort.

**Fifth step** (with sub-groups): first sub-groups are assigned. The workshop group leader informs the groups of the following, thus: ‘you are facing a certain number of dilemmas in the form of either of two options, i. e. option A or option B.

- First, I will ask you to define option A, then option B;
- Thereafter, I will ask you to deconstruct this dilemma by proposing other options;
- We will then have option C, which is A *and* B, and option D (neither A nor B), as well as option E (not only this and more than this);
- From the outset, the choice between option A and option B is understood to be flawed. The introduction of the third dimension will enable you to emancipate yourselves from the dilemma (two options) by devising a tetralemma (comprised of four options).’

**Sixth step** (collective step): all the work done by each of the sub-groups is shared with all the others and discussed. Three questions are key:

1. How do I feel about this now that the exercise is over?
2. What new things have I learnt?
3. How might I mobilise this in my daily life?

To deconstruct these seemingly real dilemmas is an urgent educational task, especially when identity-related components contribute gravely to the belittling of individuals.

I reference the hypothesis (which is no longer a hypothesis, since it has been confirmed and validated by reality (see Stora (2016)), that the ‘psychic experience’ of some young people from immigrant roots is the same as that experienced by Black Americans. For example, we see in France the same large gap between formal declarations of equality and the reality of discrimination (De Rudder *et al.* 2000, Ndobu, 2010, Norton, 2013), just as Myrdal (1944) witnessed in reference to Blacks in the US. We encounter many young people with immigrant roots in France who experience what Du Bois described as a ‘double consciousness’; that is, how is it ‘possible for a man to be both a Black and an American, without being cursed by his fellows, without they spit on him, without the doors of opportunity are closing hard on him?’ (Du Bois 2007: 11–12). In addition, Ta-Nehisi

Coates's (2016) description of the situation of the Blacks in the US can also be read as a description of the situation of young people in *banlieues* everywhere, whether in France, the US, or in any other country where domination creates 'psychological marks' (Kardiner and Ovesey 2014) that become concrete dilemmas. According to Fanon (1952) even when in 'Peau noire, masques blancs' he wrote: 'The Black should no longer faces the dilemma "whitewash or disappear", but he must be aware of a possibility to exist' (Fanon 1952: 80–81).

The dilemmas faced by some youths concern the construction of their identity (Sayad 1999, 2006). I wish to highlight here that imposing such identity dilemmas on young people can lead to violence and to the construction of murderous identities, as explained by Maalouf (1998) and Sen (2006). Indeed, Amartya Sen (2006) legitimately claimed that 'the hope of harmony in the contemporary world lies to a great extent in a clearer understanding of the pluralities of human identity, and in the appreciation that they cut across each other and work against a sharp separation along one single hardened line of impenetrable division' (17).

It is relatively easy to locate the connection between identity and violence when reducing identity to one of its components only and giving it a warlike function; thus, identity-related dilemmas, which are political, social and existential, become veritably 'murderous identities' (Maalouf 1998).<sup>4</sup>

### The building of universal opinions and the conditions for a cosmoeconomics to emerge<sup>5</sup>

Admittedly, while emancipating youths from double binds, whether political or existential, is necessary, it is not sufficient. What is needed at present is to deliver a robust boost to youths' capacity to build ethical opinions to prevent them from plunging into chaos.

If we look at the issue closely enough, all the national and international catastrophes over the past two decades have been facilitated by a growing incapacity to build universal ethical principles. It is this democratic fail-

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4 In 1998 Maalouf had already warned: 'If our contemporaries are not encouraged to assume their belonging to multiple entities, if they are not entitled to combine their need for an identity with some frank and uninhibited openness to other cultures, if they feel they have to make a choice between self-negation or negation of the Other, then what we will do is to form blood-thirsty, demented legions of bewildered people' (Maalouf 1998: 44)

5 See Chiccelli (2016)

ure, which is growing in western societies and beyond, that is at the root of the process of binary categorisation, pitting humans against sub-humans. Jacques-Philippe Leyens (2015a) convincingly illuminated the process defining the certainty of some that they are more human than others. He has shown how and in what way this super-humanisation of oneself is inextricably bound to the infra-humanisation of the Other.

Leyens's famous law, that of 'close death' (or 'closeness law'), whereby 'one's attention is more likely to be drawn by a death occurring one hundred kilometres from one's home than by ten deaths occurring 10 000 kms away' (Kervyn and al. 2015: 132), must be made unworkable and prevented from gaining traction. We can understand the objective of the universalisation of moral judgment as clearly to expand the field of public emotions. As stated by Alain Badiou:

[I]t is a fundamental task of justice to always expand as much as it can be, the space of public affects, to fight against their identity restriction, to remember and to know that unhappiness space is a space that we have to consider, ultimately, across the whole of humanity, and we must never lock in statements that restrict it to identity. Otherwise, is evidenced through the misfortune itself that what matters are the identities. Or the idea that what matters in misfortune is only the identity of the victims is a dangerous perception of the tragic event itself, because inevitably this idea transforms justice in vengeance.

*(Badiou 2016: 9)*

The same call for moral reform had already been made some years earlier by Judith Butler:

[T]he unreasoned division of our emotional and moral sensitivity prohibited us to feel the same horror in front of the violence committed against all kinds of people. Thus taking our moral horror as a sign of our humanity, we do not see that this humanity is implicitly divided between those for whom we feel an unreasoned pressing concern and those whose lives and deaths simply touch us not ...

*(Butler 2010: 53)*<sup>6</sup>

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6 See also Butler (2005) chapter 2.

## What ought to be done? Tool n°2: learning to develop universal moral judgement

In order to teach children how to make universal moral judgements, we will draw on Lawrence Kohlberg's work.<sup>7</sup> His model is particularly useful for apprehending in structural terms the connection that individuals of various ages have with society and with others in general. Kohlberg distinguishes between three steps in moral development:

1. The pre-conventional stage (children under 9 years of age): where community rules, norms and laws are foreign to the child. These are not yet interiorised. Children lay greater emphasis upon themselves than upon legal and normative community exigencies. To teach them means, among other things, to help them develop themselves by integrating a larger whole, a more general and more inclusive whole than their own selves.
2. The conventional stage (most adults): characterised by respect for norms and rules. People having reached this stage wish above all to conform to society's expectations and norms.
3. The post-conventional stage (a limited number of adults): having reached this stage, some adults shape their moral judgments no longer based on society's rules and norms, but according to universal principles that they have chosen freely.

This model is useful for enabling us to help young citizens develop a cosmo-ethical axis of citizenship (Cicchelli 2016) as a basis for concern for others, compassion and empathy.

The group leader may mobilise certain resources (Bernard 2014); but first, to determine the level of universality contained in the moral judgments of young citizens (i. e. level 1, 2 or 3), Heinz's dilemma can be posed. This is as follows:

Heinz's wife is very sick. She may die any minute unless she takes a certain medicine X. This is far too expensive and Heinz cannot afford it. He goes to the pharmacist and is ready to buy it, even if this means with a loan. The pharmacist refuses. What should Heinz do? Let his wife die or choose to steal the medicine?  
(Kohlberg 1981, Rainville 1978)

One child might say for example that Heinz should let his wife die to avoid going to jail, and another child might say he should not steal because oth-

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7 For a thorough overview of Kohlberg's work and the critiques his model has brought about, see Begue et al. (2013).

erwise God would punish him by letting his wife die. One adult might say he should let his wife die because stealing is prohibited by law, and another that he must steal from the pharmacist, because the duty to save lives is prescribed by law.

What will interest Kohlberg is not so much the response of the interviewee, but rather how the reasoning is articulated. Thus, we can choose one solution to the dilemma but for different reasons, thereby, revealing the foundations of our moral judgment.

## # II/Individual/Exterior: The social citizenship dimension

For too long, at least in France, citizenship has been customarily limited to merely its political dimension. This effectively raises issues in relation to that political dimension, but is only the small and visible facet of citizenship, which is in reality largely comprised of social citizenship.

French sociologist Robert Castel identified this long-neglected and rarely discussed dimension of citizenship thus: ‘what is social citizenship? [...] It is the corollary to political citizenship. The great bulk of individuals-cum-citizens may freely exert their political roles since they are able mobilise a certain form of social independence’ (Castel 2008: 133–141). Social citizenship is a pre-condition for the emergence of political citizenship. It explains that a citizen’s identity rests upon these two foundations:

[P]olitical citizenship must guarantee citizens’ equality in front of the law and the participation of all in the rules of governmentality within a democratic regime. Social citizenship is the basis of a social regime wherein each is guaranteed some social rights protecting him/her against the hazards of life (i. e. a social security in the fullest sense of the phrase).

*(Castel 2009: 388)*

This citizenship is imperilled today by two systemic developments: unemployment and the growing flexibility of the labour market. The latter fact increases the number of working poor, for whom work itself is no guarantee of economic and social independence. If youths today no longer feel that politics is also about them, this is the primary cause. If social independence is a precondition to exert one’s political citizenship, then social dependence, and hence financial dependence, for entire categories of young people act as a powerful catalyst for political alienation amongst youths.

This situation is even more worrying among youths from immigrant backgrounds. According to a survey by *France Stratégie* (Pisani-Ferry 2014), 14.2 per cent of youths with such backgrounds were unemployed in 2012, whereas 8.6 per cent of youths without immigrant backgrounds were. Unemployment rates for such people have risen steeply. According to the same survey, joblessness hit 29 per cent of immigrant children, regardless of their parents' geographical origins, and 42 per cent of children whose parents were from Africa, and at least 50 per cent of youths whose parents were from French overseas territories (Antilles, etc.) (Fize 2016).<sup>8</sup> Youths, especially those from 'run-down' areas, therefore lag far behind, be it in terms of social citizenship (unemployment) or in terms of political citizenship (negative discrimination, cultural stigmatisation).

These deficits deprive individuals of certain foundations, which, in a normal situation, would have enabled them to become individuals-cum-citizens. As Castel himself puts it, 'individuals are unequally supported to become individuals' (Castel 2009: 404). When searching to uncover what these foundations are we can consult Castel's (2009) analysis of contemporary history, which identifies three:

1. Prehistory: God as a first foundation for the individual
2. First modernity: private property.
3. Second modernity: social property, which represents a middle ground between the private property of robust economic liberalism and collective property as promoted by communists. It includes social protection, social housing, and public services, in other words all those schemes preventing individuals from plunging into misery and dependence. Social property is actually the collective, which 'protects the individual who is not protected by property' (Castel 2009: 417).

The heavy blows against social property have led to the emergence of two new types of individuals, whose profiles are completely at odds:

**The individual by excess:** describing the comfort of moneyed people 'who have enough resources to believe they do not need anything outside themselves in order to exist' (Castel 2001: 141).

**The individual by default:** describing the individual who is foundationless, including youths from *banlieues* who are referred to as youths who struggle:

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8 See the scathing picture of global youth in Michael Fize's last book, *Jeunes à l'abandon. La construction universelle d'une exclusion sociale*, Editions Mimésis, 2016. The figures he gives are frightening.

[T]o be desperate, not to know what tomorrow will be like, to live in dependency or be afraid of some blackmail by some higher member of staff [...] All of this is to be deprived of vital elements in a society wherein individuals are the one reference value and which defines them as autonomous beings who are capable to assume their responsibilities. When each day is a struggle for survival, relations of interdependency are impossible, reciprocal exchanges shaping a society of equals are impossible. This also means that it becomes much harder, in those circumstances, to become a full-fledged individual.

(Castel 2009: 441)

The remodelling of citizenship, to which the contributors to this volume are all modestly striving to contribute, must therefore take this realisation as a starting point; i. e. recognition that our societies are witnessing a generalisation of the individual by default, one less and less supported by social property and unprotected by private property.

### What ought to be done? How can one rebuild social citizenship?

In the initial stages of addressing the issues highlighted above, academics and citizenship educators need to commit, because neutrality cannot be an option, since the social world itself is not neutral. There cannot be individuals without foundations, without a State, since the State itself is ‘the foundation of foundations’ (according to Castel’s fitting phrase). However, Castel warns, it would be illusory to aim to return to *the status quo* ante by demanding a return to former collective regulations.

To be committed is to refuse the possibility of withdrawal from the social State, although such withdrawal is a phenomenon that has accelerated over the last thirty years (Ramaux, 2012). However, if we accept this withdrawal, then we are accepting the removal of the original foundation of the individual-cum-citizenship (Marshall 1965).

We must instead show a creative political spirit contemplating at least two serious potentialities (envisaged among others, by Castel himself):

1. The first concerns making professional careers safer and less precarious, ‘reconciling mobility and protections by granting the mobile worker a new status’ (Castel 2003: 84); and
2. The second is about setting out of ‘collective forces of integration’ (Castel 2003: 76) to bring together social actors from various walks of life, people from public institutions and the jobless people themselves.



## # III/Interior – Collective: The intersubjectivity dimension

Here we will show that citizenship rests on intersubjective conditions. We have seen above how social citizenship can condition political citizenship. We now need to explore this point further, whilst remaining cautious about simplistic analyses of domination (Lahire, 2015). Indeed, domination is too often reduced, especially in Marxist rhetoric, to a solely economic dimension. Presumably for Marxists the concern relates only to money, about material inequalities, and hence about redistribution.

Nancy Fraser (2005) convincingly furthered and complicated this Manichean approach; without necessarily questioning the necessity for an economic and material redistribution, she posits that domination is also felt in other ways, i. e. in the way the individual–citizen is affected by a ‘denial of recognition’. Hence, domination is two-headed, and may be construed in terms of class, but also in terms of status (the latter is primarily about race and gender). Fraser (2000) therefore tries to appraise redistribution and recognition simultaneously, and analyses the way in which these two reinforce one another (Fraser 2000). That is those that are the butt of cultural scorn are economically exploited, and because they are economically exploited they are culturally scorned. Hence, it is important to distinguish between two forms of injustice: class injustice and status injustice.

Admittedly, there are some situations that are ‘pure’ or unmixed, i. e. where the two forms of injustice are not placed in a mutual form of ‘dialectic reinforcement’ (Fraser 2005). Such is the case with the white worker who is affected by economic exploitation without being affected by a cultural domination (based upon status). Conversely, this is also the case of a rich black woman, who is not affected by economic exploitation, but by status domination (as she is a woman and a black one at that). However, there are some people, entire categories cumulatively affected by both forms of domination; some of these are youths from inner-city areas with immigrant backgrounds.

Among these youths, and beyond the objective circumstances that make them individuals by default (as we just described), the experience of domination and of injustice are crystallised in intersubjective relationships defining their statutory subordination:

If and when such patterns constitute actors as peers, capable of participating on a par with one another in social life, then we can speak of reciprocal recognition and status equality. When institutionalized models of cultural values, writes Fraser, constitute some actors as inferior beings, excluded, wholly other, or simply invisible—in other words, as less than

full partners in social interaction--then we can speak of misrecognition and status subordination. From this perspective, misrecognition is neither a psychic deformation nor a free-standing cultural harm but an institutionalized relation of social subordination.

*(Fraser 2005: 79)*

At the core of intersubjective interactions and relations is another barrier to citizenship engagement among youths, so-called 'status subordination', which fuels discrimination and stigmatisation, since it is an absolute denial of equality of participation and a negation of the equal moral value of individuals. For example, we can consider the unequal treatment that the educational system applies to students. François Durpaire and Béatrice Mabilon-Bonfils (2016) shed light on the way teaching staff apprehended the schooling difficulties experienced by Naima on the one hand and Marion on the other. For the former, whose father is a lorry driver, the teachers think her under-achievement at school is due to 'her North African background, the way her family is not so interested in her schooling, lastly her lack of dedication to her work'. In the case of Marion, whose father is a general practitioner, 'her under-achievement is due to puberty, to the fact her father is too often away (owing to his demanding job), to the absence of support when she does her homework. She is going through a tough but expected spell, adolescence' (Durpaire and Mabilon-Beaufils 2016: 60).

To combat these biases, one should not be content to resort to merely physical or psychological schemes to change the mindsets of agents dealing with youths. One needs to specifically examine the 'institutionalized models linked to government policies, to administrative codes, to professional practices, to cultural representations, to outdated collective schemes or to deeply-entrenched social practices' (Caillé and Lazerri 2009: 201).

## What ought to be done? Tool n°3: the cultural shock method

It is impossible, in the space of this short chapter, to offer a comprehensive inventory of possible tools and solutions to measure and benefit citizenship. Therefore, we choose to focus on the professional practices of those who work with struggling youths on the ground. Some of these practices, derived from specialist education, from integration counselling, from social assistance, and from schooling, may well generate, or at least contribute to, a reinforcing of subordinate status.

The massive influx of migrants/refugees into Europe, particularly in Germany, makes it an urgent requirement to deal with the issues raised by

the cultural shocks experienced among professionals being faced with an unprecedented situation. In a fascinating study, Claire Schiff (2015) revealed that professionals, among whom teachers are included, may well unconsciously generate a divide between ethnic minorities (youths with a migrant background, sometimes dating from the 1960s) and newly-arrived migrants. The latter, she claims, 'are relatively docile when it comes to adapting their own differences to the exigencies of French institutions, because they think this attitude may help them towards upward mobility' (Schiff 2015: 250).

Schiff's analysis concerns the conflicts that youths from *banlieues* have with young immigrants from India and Sri Lanka. However, her analysis can be generalised: there are always some tensions between old minorities (often stigmatised) and newcomers. This has been particularly well analysed by Norbert Elisan and John Scotson (1994), when they reviewed the tensions between the 'established' and the 'outsiders'. Consideration of this lesson from the social sciences is essential, insofar as it will allow us to take preventive measures. For instance, there are stark contrasts between young French people with immigrant roots:

[S]ome second or third generation youths make certain cultural claims and are reluctant to display the signs of "sound" integration that are expected of them, because they have been repeatedly disappointed in the past, and because they feel that the previous generation sacrifices were not rewarded with upward mobility and the recognition they had expected.

(Schiff 2015: 250)

Hence, it is the young French person with a migrant background (but it could well also be a young English, German or Polish person with a migrant background) who plays the role of the ethnic-minority person, whose specificity is to question 'the system from within since he/she embodies its very contradictions. It is precisely the discrepancy between the proclaimed values of equality and the reality of discrimination, the discrepancy between ideology and reality, which gives shape to the ethnic-minority person' (Schiff 2015: 252). In the French case, states Schiff, 'this person's condition sheds light on the tension between an optimistic, republican and universalist conception of national identity and, on the other hand, the dark side of this very same identity constantly menaced by the return of the ethnic and racially repressed' (Schiff 2015: 252).

Today, but also tomorrow, the issue, our issue, is to understand clearly how one might learn to handle cultural difference-related conflicts, without generating status subordination. Certainly, the risks are indeed very real:

1. From the migrant perspective, to mishandle this diversity is to take the risk of generating frustration and, therefore, to lead them to join the group of ethnic-minority people; and
2. From the perspective of young French people (but also Germans, English and Poles) with an immigration background, the risk is that they may nurture a minority identity, and they may fuel their own humiliation and resentment, potentially leading them to disaffiliation, which makes them malleable, religiously or politically.

As Gérald Bronner puts it, 'it is this discrepancy between what we believe is desirable and possible on the one hand, and on the other hand what future life actually has in store which itself delineates the space of collective frustration. If this space is too large, then obviously we are facing an explosive situation' (Bronner 2016: 245).

The tool devised by Margalit Cohen-Emrique and Ariella Rothberg (2015a), which they rightly call 'the cultural shock method', may help professionals gain the necessary critical distance from realities on the ground, to take stock of their own practices, and to question their own representations and prejudices (Cohen-Emrique and Rothberg 2015b). It is technically impossible to summarise in detail the entire protocol devised by the two social psychologists. However, the main aspects of this method are set out, alongside the logistical and ethical precautions, including an initial phase comprising seven questions:

**1st phase:** constitution and selection of a 'critical incident': the professional is invited to prepare an outline of a cultural shock situation experienced during the social monitoring of an individual or a family. This situation will be used in workshops and questioning sessions based on the seven following questions: 'Who are the actors involved in this intercultural situation, what about their identity (age, sex, origin, profession, etc.), types of report and those linking their membership groups?' (Cohen-Emrique and Rothberg 2015a: 30); 'What is the situation in which the scene takes place (physical, social, psychological, etc.)?' (Cohen-Emrique and Rothberg 2015a: 39); 'What was the reaction of shock, feelings experienced by the narrator and possibly behaviours it engendered?' (Cohen-Emrique and Rothberg 2015a: 42); 'What perceptions, values, norms, ideas, prejudices, the frame of reference of the person who has experienced the shock?' (Cohen-Emrique and Rothberg 2015a: 44); 'What picture emerges from the analysis item 4 on the other group (neutral, slightly negative, slightly ridiculous, negative, very negative, "stigmatized" positive, very positive, real, unreal ...)?' (Cohen-Emrique and Rothberg 2015a: 47); 'What are the representations, values, norms, prejudices, ideas, the frame of reference of the person or group that is causing the shock, which caused shock

in the narrator?’ (Cohen-Emrique and Rothberg 2015a: 48); and ‘Does the critical incident he raises a fundamental problem for either professional practice, either generally respecting differences in intercultural situations?’ (Cohen-Emrique and Rothberg 2015a: 51).

The work is conducted in subgroups and then returned in plenary.

## # IV/Collective – Exterior: The community organising dimension<sup>9</sup>

To tackle this dimension requires integration within our citizen matrix of an element that has too often been neglected by classical approaches to citizenship, that being the issue of power. In particular, how might one strengthen the political power of the most dispossessed groups? This question might sound odd, since some will argue that any citizen already wields enormous power. The evidence is that with their votes, citizens can contribute to the election of a head of a state, possibly an individual who might have been entirely unknown to the public a few months before the elections.

Therein lies the paradox: ‘Citizens have a real weight, but their will might not be really taken into account’ (Magni-Berton 2012: 17). Thus, we must narrow the question here to ask: How may citizens give actual weight to their political will? Community organisation is informed by a bottom-up logic, unlike the top-down logic that traditional approaches to citizenship are routinely limited to. In order for our citizen practises to be efficiently renewed, this bottom-up logic appears more fruitful, since it is primarily about change and lack of consensus, without ever giving in to a conservative and lame consensus, or on the other hand to confrontation and destructive violence. In the present case, bottom-up logic does not consist of being systematically opposed to the powers-that-be, but rather in calling out to them; since, more often than not, ‘citizens are more rarely uninterested in politics than politicians themselves are uninterested in citizens’ (Balazard 2015: 16).

It is from this realisation that Marie-Hélène Bacqué and Mohammed Mechmache (2014) aimed to emphasise ‘reforming urban politics in a radical way, because this simply cannot be carried out without us’. They even suggested the creation ‘of a citizen right to call out to institutions as a legitimate dimension of the democratic process of the Republic’. Beyond the right to call out politicians, what needs to be ascertained is:

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9 See Talpin (2016).

1. How may one organise everyone's participation? In other words, and as Saul Alinsky once fittingly put it, how can one remedy the 'poverty of power'? (1965: 41); and
  2. How might one prevent this political accountability from civil society leading to the State giving up some of its prerogatives, especially social and political ones? H el ene Balazard has revealed how David Cameron, in Britain, tried to instrumentalise the London Citizens emancipation project<sup>10</sup> by including it within his Big Society agenda, all with the aim of jettisoning his government's social and economic policies (Balazard 2015a).
- Community organising, as embodied in Britain by the London Citizens project, or in Germany by the *Soziale Stadt* (social city) programme (Blanc 2015), 'strives in other words to address a double delusion, first the French one, which is a politics of the top-down city, and the second one, i. e. the idea that communities are self-regulated by the market, which is what the Big Society is all about' (Balazard 2015a).

### What ought to be done?

What gives substance to empowerment on the lines of community organisation is chiefly:

1. A capacity to 'reach out and to generalise' (*monter en g en eralit e*, Boltanski, 2012: 301); in other words, problems as lived by citizens are transformed into public issues (Zittoun 2013) and can no longer be reduced to single individuals.
2. A capacity to generate conflict (Mouffe 2014), in order to 'take some power without taking power' (Balazard 2015, b).
3. A determination to define by oneself what the issues are, whilst not striving to find solutions to specific problems raised by professional politicians. Citizens are not content with living lives 'determined by others' (Alinsky 1965).

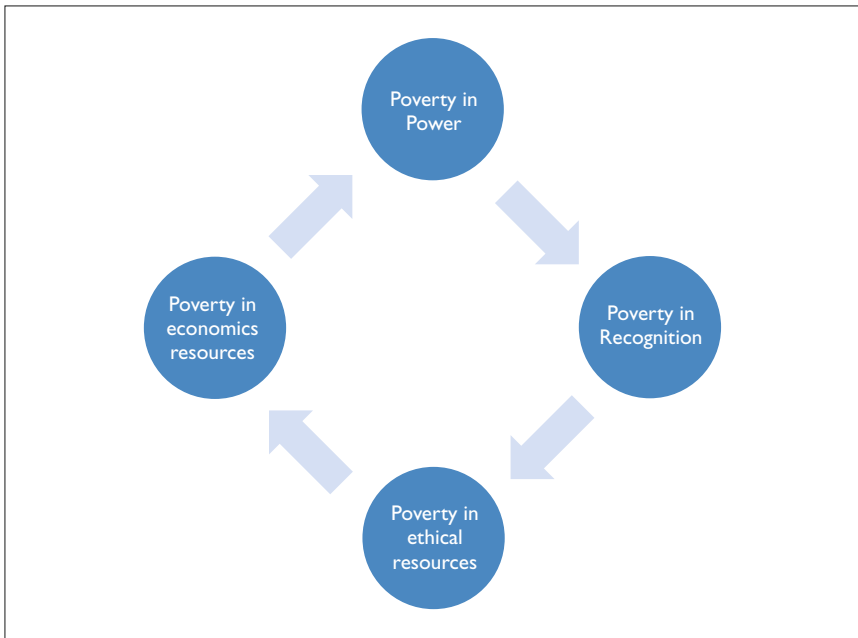
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<sup>10</sup> London Citizens wanting total independence from government have about 150 institutions representing 'civil society' (religious congregations, universities, schools, associations, unions ...). Through a participatory mechanism, 20 employees, the organisers, seek to identify key issues (salary, housing, living conditions, employment, security, location irregular) facing the members of these institutions and to implement campaigns. Through collective action challenging economic and political elites, the organization wants to make Londoners active citizens, taking part in the affairs of their city, who realize the importance of creating links between different communities' (Balazard 2009: 1).

## Conclusion: Restoring the citizen circle

I opened this chapter with the aim of commenting on classic approaches to citizenship education. I hope I have successfully conveyed some of their shortcomings, explaining the challenges that make it impossible for youths to meet the challenges jeopardising the very notion of citizenship. In order to reinvent citizenship, and to renew educational and pedagogic practices, we have sought to inventory those whom Saul Alinsky (1965) would call the constellation of ‘have-nots’; i. e. those who are poor in terms of power, economic resources, recognition, moral and ethical resources. In order to rekindle citizen’s engagement in run-down areas, we have aimed to address these four poverties, which dialectically reinforce one another, and which are depicted in Figures 2:

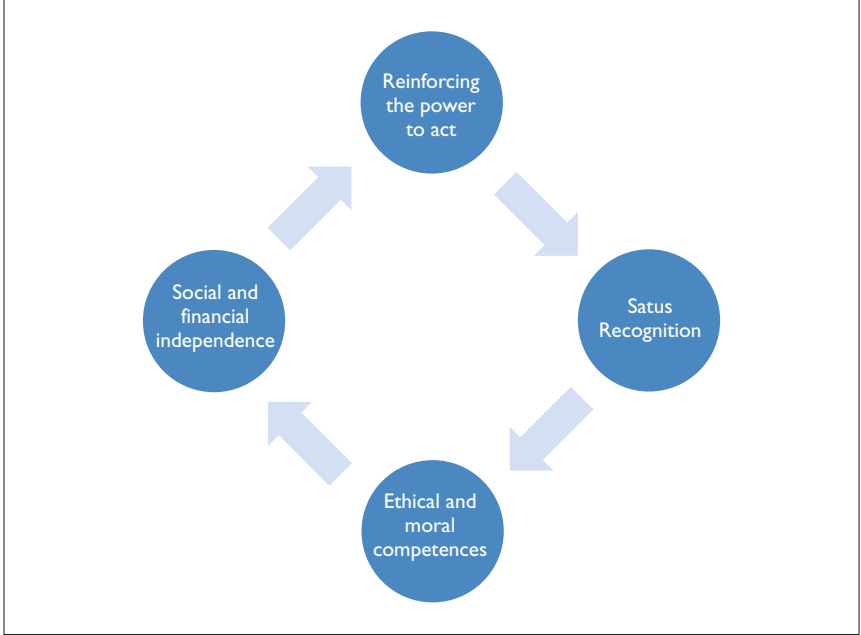
Figure 2: *The vicious circle of citizenship, Kamel Remache*



Through *ad hoc* educational and pedagogical measures, which demand constant reinvention, we could restore the virtual citizen circle, so that those suffering from victimisation and passivity might rekindle their wish to transform their living conditions democratically (Hamidi 2010, Leyens

2015b). This is depicted in Figure 3, where we see at the top: reinforcing the power to act; on the middle-left: social and financial independence; on the middle-right: status recognition; and at the bottom: ethical and moral competences.

Figure 3: The virtuous circle of citizenship, Kamel Remache



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