Participatory Citizenship in Europe: at a crossroads?
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The consortium partners:
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France: European Institute for Education and Social Policy (EIESP)
Germany: University of Giessen
Italy: Roma Tre University
Slovenia: University of Ljubljana
Netherlands: University of Humanistics Studies
UK: Institute of Education, National Foundation of Education Research, University of Southampton.
Overview

1. Introduction
2. Definitions and Concepts
3. Barriers
4. Effective strategies for facilitating Participatory Citizenship
5. European Union strategy
1. Introduction
Aims and objectives

- Map the concepts, policies, practices and level of Participatory Citizenship across Europe
- Identify barriers and facilitators to encourage more citizen engagement in Europe
- Inform the development of European policy and funding programmes in particular the:
  - the 2013 European Year of Citizens
  - 2014-2020 Europe for Citizens Programme
  - 2014 European Parliament elections
Methods

- Review of literature
- 27 EU country fiches compiled by experts
- Interviews with pan-European networks
- Analysis of existing international surveys, including IEA International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) and European Social Survey (ESS)
Reports

- **Contextual** – Concepts and definition
- **Analytic** – maps current state of play on policy and engagement in Europe
- **Good Practice** – identifies key features of effective practice
- **Study Summary and Policy Recommendation** - identifies an EC policy strategy on Participatory Citizenship

Reports located on Europe for Citizens website:

2. Definitions and Concepts
Limitations of an only legal understanding of Citizenship

- Doing citizenship requires not only rights but the capability to exercise rights:
  - knowledge, resources, connections, interest and power
- Citizens need to engage: it ensures the accountability of the state, and the legitimation of democratic process
- The word ‘Participatory’ to emphasise the process involved in activating citizenship
Definition of Participatory Citizenship

‘Participation in civil society, community and/or political life, characterized by mutual respect and non-violence and in accordance with human rights and democracy’.

- Definition broadly blends the practices of different models of citizenship across Europe
- All actions must be underpinned by the values of human rights and democracy
3. Barriers towards Participatory Citizenship
Policy context: ‘state of play’

A gap between older and newer democracies for adult participation has not decreased in last 10 years.

EVS 2008: ‘If there were to be a general election tomorrow would you vote?'

EVS 2008: Have you taken a political action by signing a petition?
Barriers: Effects of Economic Recession

- Countries looking inwards at internal concerns
- Policy focus entirely on economic competitiveness
- Reduction in funding
  - All levels national, local and private
  - All dimensions of citizenship

‘there are difficulties for national and local NGOs to become engaged at the European level when they are focused on finding funding merely to keep their organisations afloat’
# Economic Recession: loss of faith in politicians and political institutions

*Table 4.1: Changes in trust towards the EU institutions between 2008 and 2010*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EU country</th>
<th>Change in % between Eurobarometer May 2008 and Dec 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Slovakia</td>
<td>&gt; 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium, Czech, Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, UK, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Netherlands, Sweden</td>
<td>&gt; 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France, Malta, Romania, Slovenia</td>
<td>&gt; 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus, Greece, Ireland, Spain</td>
<td>&gt; 20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evidence suggests:

- Continued **belief in democracy**
- **Loss of faith** in current **political leaders**
- Risk of long term **reduction in political engagement**
- **Alert for European Parliament elections 2014**
Economic competitiveness

Participatory Citizenship relates to economic competitiveness and social cohesion indicators.

‘Countries that are highly competitive tend also to be highly participatory with high levels of social cohesion i.e. Nordic countries’

- Focusing only on the short term economic imperative may miss the broader and long term perspective
  - Participatory activities can provide a useful balance particularly in periods of high unemployment
4. Effective strategies for facilitating Participatory Citizenship
Effective strategies

- Participatory Citizenship is primarily a **learnt activity**

- **Learning in all its diverse forms** (from discussing politics with friends to formal education) relates to Participatory Citizenship

- Learning **improves quality** of Participatory Citizenship (enhancing civic competences: knowledge, skills, attitudes & values)
Overcoming barriers to engagement

- Different levels of learning and wealth increase inequalities in engagement

Strategies towards targeting disadvantaged youth:

- Schools
- Vocational Education & Training
- Youth work targeted at hard to reach groups

In economic crises unemployed youth benefit from being engaged in decision making in their local communities
Overcoming gender barriers

- **Girls** participate more in community and protest activities
- **Boys** participate more in conventional political activities – standing as a candidate & joining political parties
- **Useful strategy:** Targeting programmes at getting more girls interested and active in conventional politics
Situated learning: successful learning approach

Learning in a real life civic context:

e.g. influencing decisions that have real consequences and influence on the lives of young people: how their school is run, school budgets and decisions regarding their local community

This approach helps to develop self-efficacy (the belief that you can make a difference)
Other key success factors for projects

- Collaboration between **different types of partners** can pool resources and experiences and spark innovation.

- **Strategic and sustainable funding** enables NGOs to focus on Participatory Citizenship and not on their own survival.

- Use of **new technology** can engage more (ensuring that citizens have the competence, confidence and access to use them).
5. European Union strategy on Participatory Citizenship
European Union strategy

- **balanced** in promoting both political participation as well as voluntary and community action in civil society
- **targeted** in recognising and responding to the impact of the economic crisis at national and local level in member states
- **sufficiently flexible and long-term** to encourage and promote collaborative working between EU institutions, member states and EU citizens
European Union strategy

- a long-term strategic approach to Participatory Citizenship and social cohesion through to 2020
- With a vision that promotes the links between these areas and economic competitiveness
- stronger political leadership at EU level
- increased co-ordination and facilitation
- continued strategic funding
European Elections 2014

Explain to citizens why it is important that they vote:

- not only to defend their individual legal rights
- ensure the continued legitimacy of the EU and its institutions
- to show their support for the common values of democracy, human rights, social cohesion and tolerance that underpin European citizenship
Europe for Citizens Programme

2014-2020

- Build **flexibility** into the Programme so as to respond to changing contexts

**In today's economic crisis:**

- Place **more emphasis on the actions of civic participation** over remembrance and identity

- **focus on sustainability & longer term funding** for those involved in Programme actions and projects
EU 2020
Smart Sustainable & Inclusive Growth

- **Balance in policy emphasis between Participatory Citizenship, social cohesion & economic competitiveness** so that values & practices of democracy flourish

- **Long term challenges** of competitiveness & climate change should be **grounded in active involvement of and participation of citizens** in order to safeguard future of democracy in Europe
Why Active Citizenship now?
‘..the new challenge of how to prepare young people for democracy in contexts that are quite different from those that have been known in the past.’

Kerry Kennedy
Democracy in Europe
What kind of active citizenship? Four (5) competing models

Liberal model
Civic republican model
Communitarian model
Critical model of citizenship
(Mixture of models)
Big Society
Big Society?
Citizenship in the National Curriculum
Family Values

"I've never voted Tory before, but I like their plans to help families.

Find out why Julie from Llandudno is voting Tory at conservatives.com/families"
Student movement in Chile
Active Citizenship Where and How?

Formal education
Non-formal education
Informal education
Other
What to address in the DCHRE ‘Contexts’

Curriculum
Core knowledge
Key skills
‘Big, controversial issues’

Wider communities
Participation
Decision-making
Big issues
Engage with adults

School community
Participation
Decision-making
Voice, leadership
Teamwork
Policy Aims of 2002 NC Citizenship

- Social + moral responsibility
- Political literacy
- Community involvement
- New strand - Identity + diversity
Citizenship remains in National Curriculum

‘Citizenship will remain a programme of study at key stages three and four and I look forward to... ensure that this valuable subject is even better taught in more of our schools’

Michael Gove
Secretary of State for Education
Policy Aims of New 2014 NC Citizenship

- Knowledge and understanding of UK democratic system
- Knowledge and understanding of role of law and justice system
- Commitment to volunteering and responsible action
- Equipped with financial skills to manage money
Active Citizenship for whom?

For all
For particular groups
For minorities
For no one
Inactive Citizenship?

"Voter apathy is on the increase again."

"Who cares?"
Benefits for All!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=oUvytXqcz0I
At a crossroads?
What kind of education system do we need?

What kind of society do we want?

Chilean writer