Youth Partnership

Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth

Different Understandings and Definitions of European Education for Democratic Citizenship

By Professor Bryony Hoskins, Roehampton University, London.

December 2020

The purpose of this paper is to provide the community of people who work on European Education for Democratic Citizenship a common language to discuss their profession. The community of practice on EEDC includes young people, youth workers, youth leaders, teachers, policy makers and researchers. The youth field has a variety of labels that are used for their educational practice including but not limited to Global Citizenship Education, Human Rights Education, Education for Sustainable Development, Education for European Citizenship, Citizenship Education, Education for Democratic Citizenship and European Education for Democratic Citizenship. There has been an ongoing discussion in the field as to the extent that these terms actually refer to similar concepts and function instead as organization branding or if the wording used indicates substantive differences. This paper intends to provide clarity to the differences between the terms used by explaining the concepts behind the words selected. The focus of this paper is to give precision to the concept of EEDC, nevertheless, some of these other terms will be described and defined in the process of identifying what is distinct about this concept.

The paper is organized as follows, it will begin with the basics and return to the legal definition of citizenship and the critiques of this concept. It will then provide existing definitions of Education for Democratic Citizenship and then reflect on the importance and meaning behind adding a regional dimension to this concept including identifying differences between national, European and global citizenship education. The European youth field's position on European citizenship is explained here. We finally end with the concept of EEDC a European Hub for Global Citizenship Education.

Legal definition of Citizenship

Any discussion regarding defining education on citizenship in all its diverse forms begins with a discussion on the definition of citizenship. In legal terms, citizenship refers to the legal rights and obligations given to an individual by the state in which they are citizens, denoted by their nationality. As Marshall (1973), a key thinker on definitions on Citizenship writes, 'Citizenship is a status bestowed on all those who are full members of a community. All who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed'. The legal definition highlights the important relationship between the citizen and the state and the rights given by the state to the individual. Marshal's seminal text in 1950 defined the rights of citizens in three domains: civil rights (equal, legal rights offering an individual justice and freedom), political rights (the right to influence decision-making, such as through voting and

standing for public office), and social rights (access to opportunities that support the first two rights, such as health care and education).

A number of in-depth critiques have been made regarding the use of the legal definition of citizenship when understanding the functioning of democracy and the role that individuals play in its maintenance. First, citizenship as a legal concept does not account for individuals who are not citizens but have rights and responsibilities and live in our communities. Second, it is also the case that having legal rights is insufficient to enable equal possibilities for all citizens to exercise their rights and gaining and maintaining rights requires constant action and vigilance from citizens, and a legal definition does not encompass these processes (Hoskins and Kerr 2010). Finally, the relationship between the citizen and the state ignores the relationship between citizens and the associations they form, as well as the importance of associative life in the balance of democracy (Hoskins and Kerr 2010). In this regard, citizens need to participate in civic and political life in order to ensure the accountability of the state and the legitimation of democracy. As a result of these limitations the term Citizenship or Active Citizenship has more recently been defined and used to denote not only the rights and responsibilities of individuals but also the need for political action and associative life based on the values of human rights and democracy (Hoskins and Mascherini 2009).

Education for Democratic Citizenship

Education has been at the heart of policies and practices to create active citizens in particular by international institutions such as Council of Europe and European Commission (Hoskins and Mascherini 2009). In this regard the Council of Europe, led by the formal education sector, defined Education for Democratic Citizenship when developing their international Charter on this topic.

EDC is defined in the Charter as;

> Education, training, awareness raising, information, practices and activities which aim, by equipping learners with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviour, to empower them to exercise and defend their democratic rights and responsibilities in society, to value diversity and to play an active part in democratic life, with a view to the promotion and protection of democracy and the rule of law. (Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship & Human Rights Education 2010)

Geographical specifications on citizenship

Recent initiatives by the partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission on youth have added the word ‘Europe’ to the concept of Education for Democratic Citizenship. The puzzle then is to decide the purpose and meaning of adding the word *Europe* to this practice. By adding a geographical description, it can indicate, at least to some extent, the legal jurisdiction of the authority funding the education so either national, European or Global. Below some of the differences between national, European and Global Citizenship education will be investigated.

Citizenship Education (national)

Citizenship education was historically created to form part of a nation education system and national curricular. It has been used in the past, and is sometimes still used today, as a vehicle for nation building and the site for the development of the desired national norms of citizens by national governments that can include patriotic and/or nationalistic values (Green 1997). Citizenship within a national curriculum is much more rarely associated with the development of deep critical thought and developing actions about how to create social change although examples of critical citizenship in national education systems can exist.

European Citizenship Education

European Citizenship like national citizenship has a legal definition for persons who are national citizens of an EU country. Historically European cooperation was built from the desire to transcend nationalism after the second world war and for EU nationals their countries membership of the European Union has afforded them the supranational rights to

- Live, Work and Travel in any EU country without discrimination
- Participate in the political life of the EU from any EU country (vote and stand as a candidate in local and European elections)
- Petition the European Parliament about an issue that affects you
- Make complaints about an EU institution
- Receive consular protection from any other EU country embassy

(European Commission 2020)

Understanding the above rights and knowledge about how the European Union functions forms some practitioners understanding of European Union Citizenship Education. It can be legitimately argued that knowledge about rights is one important element for young people who have or even do not have an EU passport. Nevertheless, some of the critiques of European Union Citizenship are important to consider in this education process. First, the fact that many people who live in Europe and are not EU citizens are excluded from these rights. Second, that not all EU citizens benefit from these rights and that disadvantaged young people often have less access to them. Studies show that those who benefit most from EU rights are typically the highly educated, those who have worked and/or studied in several European countries, speak several languages and those who have participated in a number of European programmes or activities (Kuhn 2012 and Recchi 2015). In addition, that understanding of the values encompassed within European Union citizenship are sometimes perceived in new member states in East Europe as being imposed by Western European countries and cultures (Hoskins and Lavchyan 2019).

The European youth field over the last 20 years has moved away from the legal definition of European Citizenship and conceptualizes Europe as a concept which goes beyond the institutions in order to be more inclusive to people who live in the geographical region of Europe and who are not EU nationals and to make the concept more accessible and meaningful to young people's everyday lives. The partnership between the European Commission and Council of Europe T-kit on European Citizenship education described the concept of European citizenship as, going

> beyond the legal concept of being a citizen of one of the EU countries and into the realms of seeing Europe beyond institutional settings, as a space for citizens to act while keeping in mind a European dimension and looking for common solutions. EC in a broader perspective implies a higher degree of acceptance of uncertainty... The generative power of building Europe together lies in the encounter of differences (Georgescu et al 2017 p.24-25)

This understanding of European Citizenship and the practices provided in the T-kit focus on European Citizenship in the context of youth work in Europe. The authors advocate getting the reader to define European Citizenship themselves in their own particular context and in collaboration with the young people they work with. Value is placed by the authors on the importance of starting from young people's own experience of Europe.

Global Citizenship Education (GCED)

The concept of Global Citizenship as opposed to national or European citizenship more clearly situates the concept of citizenship within a broader geographical location and to becoming a citizen of the world (Davies 2006). Thus, the legal notion of the citizen with rights and responsibilities within a particular nation state or within a Union of countries is replaced by the less formal and more cosmopolitan sense of belonging and identifying with a global community, a common humanity and sense of solidarity across the planet (UNESCO 2015). Held's 2010 seminal vision of cosmopolitanism describes a world where 'each individual in the world is a moral agent entitled to equal dignity and consideration' (Held 2010 p.10) and where the priority of the nation state is diminished.

One of the main features of Global Citizenship is an understanding of the interdependency and interconnectedness of political, economic, social and cultural norms and decisions between the local, the national and the global levels (UNESCO 2015). Increasingly nation states and individuals' interests and trajectories are intertwined in each other existence (Held 2010). The consequence of this, according to Davies (2006) is that the global citizen should not only be able to understand and influence local decisions and understand how these will impact on the world but also able to understand and influence decisions taken on a global level. In this regard global citizens are expected to identify social injustices around the world and have the motivation and skills to undertake peaceful action to redress these situations (Richardson 1997). The teaching of GCE is therefore then expected to teach these skills.

UNESCO defines the outcomes of global citizenship education in the following way:

'GCED Aims to empower learners of all ages to assume active roles, both locally and globally, in building more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive and secure societies.

based on the three domains of learning;

Cognitive: knowledge and thinking skills necessary to better understand the world and its complexities.

Socio-emotional: values, attitudes and social skills that enable learners to develop affectively, psychosocially, and physically and to enable them to live together with others respectfully and peacefully.

Behavioral: conduct, performance, practical application and engagement.' (UNESCO 2020)

UNESCO (2020) understand GCE as supporting the sustainable development goal 4.7.1

European Education for Democratic Citizenship as hub for GCED

An alternative definition that has been argued more recently is that EEDC can be understood as global citizenship education in a European context (Hoskins and Lavchyan 2019). These authors argue that Europe has its own complex history, innovation and varied practices in relation to the world and EEDC can be a place to critically reflect on these and to propose actions for change. A balanced picture for this concept of EEDC is needed that includes critical reflections on European's role in colonialism and the treatment of migrants and more positive experiences of European cooperation, democracy and successes on Human rights such as through the European Convention on Human Rights. The crucial step in EEDC from this perspective is that people in Europe learn not only how their decisions, actions or lack of action effects the diversity of others who live in Europe but also consider the impact of their decisions on different groups of people who live in the rest of the world (Hoskins and Lavchyan 2019). The learning and actions that young people take from their EEDC experience could then be shared with other regions around the world.

Conclusion

This paper does not advocate for having a single definition of EEDC but instead has explained several different definitions that exist and how other concepts close to EEDC can be understood. The purpose has been to enable the youth field to communicate with each other and that individuals within this community after reading this paper have the tools to describe how they define and use the term EEDC in their own professional practice. The choice of definition may depend on the readers profession i.e. if you are a youth worker, a teacher or work in a national agency or international institution. It may also differ according to the readers geographical location in Europe and legal status in relationship to EU citizenship. Whether these differences should influence an individual's selection of their definition EEDC is an open question for the youth field to discuss.

References

Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship & Human Rights Education, adopted in the framework of Recommendation (CM/Rec 2010)7 of the Committee of Ministers, available at https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=09000016805cf01f (Accessed 11 December 2020)

Davies L. (2006), *Global citizenship: abstraction or framework for action*?. Educational review, 58(1), 5-25.

European Commission (2020) EU citizenship: Your rights- and how to use them. Available at https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/eu-citizenship_en (Accessed 11 December 2020)

Georgescu M. and Bortini P. and López M. Á. G. (2017), *T-Kit 7-European Citizenship in youth work:(Revised Edition) (Vol. 7*). Council of Europe.Green, A. (1997) *Education, Globalization and the Nation State* (New York: St. Martins' Press).

Held D. (2010), *Cosmopolitanism: Ideals and realities*. New York: Polity Press.

Hoskins B. and Mascherini M. (2009), *Measuring Active Citizenship through the Development of a Composite Indicator.* SOCIAL INDICATORS RESEARCH, *90*(3), 459-488. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-008-9271-2

Hoskins, B. and Kerr, D. (2010) Analytic Report: Participatory Citizenship in the European Union. London: Institute of Education. Available at report2_analytic_report.pdf (europa.eu) (accessed 10.12.2020).

Hoskins B. (2018), *What type of citizens do we have in Europe? And what type of citizens do we want?* Online reflection paper published by the Youth Partnership between Council of Europe and European Commission. Available at 43d83402-9637-2836-b1c4-bb63d5f4d84a (coe.int) (accessed 10.12.2020)

Hoskins B. and Lavchyan Z. (2019), *European youth work: a hub for global critical citizens*. Coyote magazine. Youth Partnership between Council of Europe and European Commission. Available at European youth work: a hub for global critical citizens (coe.int) (accessed 10.12.2020)

Kuhn T. (2012), *Why educational exchange programmes miss their mark: cross-border mobility, education and European identity*, JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies Vol. 50, No. 6, pp. 994-1010.

Marshall T. (1973), Class citizenship and social development, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Marshall T.H. (1950), *Citizenship and social class (Vol. 11)*, Cambridge: CUP pp. 28-29.

Recchi E. (2015), *Mobile Europe: the theory and practice of free movement in the EU*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.

Richardson R. (1997). *Learning for change in world society: Reflections, activities, and resources*, London: World Studies Project.

UNESCO (2020) *What is global citizenship education? Available at* https://en.unesco.org/themes/gced/definition (accessed 10.12.2020)

UNESCO (2015) Global Citizenship Education: Topics and Learning Objectives. Paris: UNESCO.