



CHAPTER 14:

The Role of IEA's Civic and Citizenship Education Studies in the Development of Civic and Citizenship Education in Slovenia

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Abstract The changes in civic and citizenship education in the period from the 1980s to 2019 in Slovenia exemplify the process of socialism's social and moral education evolution. It was characterized by transitions in ethics and society, as well as in citizenship education, and a renewed focus on patriotism. At the same time this is the period when the IEA's CIVED (Civic Education Study) and ICCS (International Civic and Citizenship Education Study) were conceptualized and conducted globally. Therefore, we have tried to identify the "impacts" of CIVED/ICCS on Slovenian policymaking in education. This is seen especially in the development of the compulsory subject in the Slovenian grade 7 and 8. Those "impacts" are direct in some respects, but it is also important that indirect impacts can be identified. We conclude with recent discussions about civic and citizenship education in Slovenia, and the role of ICCS in them.

Introduction

Slovenia gained its independence from The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in June 1991. As stated in the White Paper on Education in the Republic of Slovenia from 1995:

"Far-reaching changes in Slovenia—especially the formation of the independent state, the implementation of a multi-party system and the adoption of the new constitution—mean that the education system should also be changed, in particular regarding the introduction of a European dimension. This process should be based on the common European heritage of political, cultural and moral values reflected in human rights, the rule of law, pluralistic democracy, tolerance, and solidarity" (Krek 1996, front page).

In 2011 the new White Paper on Education in the Republic of Slovenia (Krek and Metljak 2011) was published, containing an explicit reference to the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) CIVED 1999 (Civic Education Study) and ICCS 2009 (International Civic and Citizenship Education Study) results. All the international large-scale student assessments (ILSAs) that Slovenia participated in (including all IEA¹ comparative studies and their cycles, and OECD PISA¹) were mentioned in this document.

In this chapter we first focus on how the educational system (and consequently citizenship education) changed from the 1980s onwards. Within federal Yugoslavia, the six republics had autonomous educational systems on every educational level, therefore the breakup of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s had only a minor impact on the functioning of schools (and universities, which had an even more autonomous status). However, there were obvious shifts in social science curricula and "Yugoslavian topics" fell almost completely out of focus. National perspectives

1 OECD = Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; PISA = Programme for International Student Assessment.

2 The historical overview of the development of civic and citizenship education in Slovenia is a part of monograph in Japanese language, which was prepared after a historian from Japan came to Slovenia to be informed about the development of history education and in this regard with the addition of civic and citizenship education. After the meeting held at Educational Research Institute, we were asked to prepare a text that in 2013 was published. In this chapter this refers to the publication Justin et al. (2013).

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about subjects such as history had primacy over the federal aspect (Justin et al. 2013).² Due to autonomy of the republics there were no limitations on putting national history including ethnic Slovenia in a prominent place in Slovenian curriculum or syllabi. Specific facts from history that led in the formation of Slovenian statehood were included (D. Štrajn, personal communication, August 8, 2019). There was a request to abolish the subject social and moral education. However, a group of researchers from Educational Research Institute (later responsible for CIVED/ICCS national coordination) and from National Education Institute Slovenia (responsible for syllabi for compulsory education) made efforts to ensure that the social science curriculum included civic and citizenship education (CCE) (D. Štrajn, personal communication, August 8, 2019). We can say that the changes brought about by political independence were relatively gradual in moving toward citizenship education suitable for an independent Slovenia. In fact, Slovenia participated in all cycles of the CIVED/ICCS study. Moreover, those coordinating CIVED or/and ICCS or using those datasets, have been actively involved in curricular reforms, in writing/editing syllabi and textbooks for compulsory subjects on CCE, in university lecturing, and in designing workshops for teachers. One researcher was even involved in the preparation of two coalition agreements between political parties that formed a government. This justifies our belief that CIVED/ICCS has had an impact on the development of CCE in Slovenia; the challenge is to define the nature of both the direct and indirect "impact." First, however, we examine the historical development of CCE in Slovenia focusing on the primary education level (compulsory nine years of schooling, referred to as the elementary education level) with a special focus on grade 7 and 8 students (grade 8 students being the CIVED/ICCS target population).

A Short Description of the Changes in Citizenship Education in Slovenia

"Citizenship Education" in Socialistic Slovenia

Citizenship education within a socialist state is a contradiction, as the one crucial socialist or communist idea is the abolition of the state itself (Justin et al. 2013). Class awareness is the crucial concept not citizenship, and the goal is not to build a socialist state but to build a communist society (Justin et al. 2013). It is no surprise that in socialist Slovenia, the subject that stood in place of citizenship education was social and moral education (Justin et al. 2013). It focused on society not the state. This is confirmed by reading the Slovenian primary school curriculum from 1983 (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport 1983). Words such as society, social community, country, land, or homeland, sometimes nationality were mentioned, but never the state; even foreign states were named lands or nations. The subject was covered in the final two grades (7 and 8) of elementary school in Slovenia, time allocated to the subject was one hour per week. Social and moral education included elements of political education in line with socialist ideology. However, it included broader topics such as psychological, religious, and economic aspects along with human values in a self-governing socialist society. It was more like a general social science and humanities subject than it was like political or citizenship education; only 25 periods out of 68 were dedicated to the domain of citizenship education (Justin et al. 2013).

The pupils received no numerical grades in social and moral education, which could indicate that the subject did not have the importance that one would expect from the contents of its curriculum. That includes especially the teaching of a socialist self-governing system and socialist morality as the ideological base of society. Assigning no grades could indicate that the transmission of values was more important than the transition of measurable knowledge. This diminished focus on political education in the curriculum itself was even more de-emphasized in educational practice (Justin et al. 2013). One reason certain topics in teaching social and moral education were avoided was political. At the end of 1980s socialism was in decline and democratization was in full swing therefore teachers simply stopped teaching the topics "that went out of currency and that were actually never a reality" (Zupančič 1990, p. 55).

Citizenship Education in Independent Slovenia

The gaining of the independence of Slovenia (1991) and the change from a socialist to a liberal democratic political system (through the first multi-party elections in 1990) brought reforms to the educational system. Elementary education was prolonged for one year (from 8 to 9 grades), teachers' autonomy gained importance, and curricular planning changed. A transition to a new education curriculum, more open (not only with strictly prescribed content) and goal oriented, was completed by 1999 (Justin et al. 2013). More importantly "education for and participation in democratic processes" was one of the eight basic principles of educational reform stated in the White paper (Krek 1996, pp. 47–48). An essential premise for participation in democracies is the development of a critical spirit, personal decision-making, and autonomous judgment (Krek 1996). These are processes where schools play an important role by developing capacities that allow individuals to participate in democratic processes (Krek 1996).

Before describing the new compulsory subject of CCE, it is important to mention that the reform introduced optional subjects in grades 7, 8, and 9. One was citizenship culture, taught in grade 9 (32 hours per a year), which deepened and expanded knowledge and skills found in the compulsory subjects. However, citizenship culture has not often been chosen by students. Other optional subjects are religion and ethics, philosophy for kids, media education, etc. All these subjects are now numerically graded.

In the first half of the 1990s, social and moral education was replaced with ethics and society—the new name implying both change and continuity (Justin et al. 2013). Changes in course content were made too. Marxism that was underlying previous social and moral education was replaced with pluralist psychological and sociological theories (Justin et al. 2013). There were also content changes. Instead of the socialist political system, basic principles and institutions of liberal democracy are taught; the notion of state becomes central with citizenship becoming a crucial political identity; human rights become one of the central topics (Justin et al. 2013). However, the principles of curriculum formation remain the same. Ethics and society retains the status of a general social sciences subject one hour per week. In August 1991, an experimental manual for pupils for the ethics and society subject was published (for grade 7 and 8) (Bezenšek et al. 1991). The chapters for example were: humans and their status in the biggest religions of the world; humanism; change of work and free time; cooperation and solidarity, humans and their conscience; principle of tolerance; new quality of life, etc. This illustrates thematic breadth that goes beyond political or citizenship education. In 1990s the question of who could teach the CCE subject was on the agenda too, the decision was that teachers who had the social sciences foundation. In practice this means teachers of the previous subject, social and moral education (D. Štrajn, personal communication, August 8, 2019).

The reformed curriculum of 1999 also introduced a subject named citizenship education and ethics with almost the same number of periods/hours (70 in two years) as the subject it replaced (ethics and society) (Justin et al. 2013). This subject was compulsory in grade 7 and 8, education was once again *vzgoja* in Slovenian (which could be translated as "upbringing"). Several elements of the subject social and moral education remained. Psychological topics on family, problems of puberty and adolescence, and career planning all remained, along with sociology of small groups and generational conflicts. Globalization remained a part of the subject as well as teaching about religion. More weight was put on the topic of public debate, and the role of public (mass) media gained importance (Justin et al. 2013). However, only one of the five compulsory topics in grade 7 was specifically civics—one that focused on basic understanding of community, nation, and state with an emphasis on the Slovenian nation getting independence and provided information on the unification of Europe. The latter was not intended to cover the main parts of the political system (Justin et al. 2013). That remained for grade 8 in the form of a compulsory topic, management

of common issues: the question of democracy. Subtopics included basic rules of democracy in contexts from the local to the national, the division of power within the state and human rights. Less than 20% of the subject was dedicated to core political knowledge (Justin et al. 2013).

In 2006 the Ministry of Education and Sport began revising the elementary school syllabi. In the case of CCE another ideological issue surfaced, namely the inclusion of patriotic education (in the sense of the acquisition of values or *vzgoja* called in Slovene language) (Justin et al. 2013). This happened when the right-wing Slovenian Democratic Party took power in 2004 from a coalition led by the left-wing Liberal Democratic Party (that held power from 1992). They proposed an amendment to the law changing citizenship education and ethics into citizenship and patriotic education and ethics (Justin et al. 2013). Therefore in 2008 a syllabus for this compulsory subject in the area of CCE was prepared, but was not approved by the minister, and not put into place officially. Some experts had warned that it included some errors (Šimenc et al. 2012, p. 104). In 2009, the minister responsible for education demanded redesign of several subjects. The citizenship and patriotic education and ethics syllabus was among those with controversial formulations. A preliminary analysis of the 2008 syllabus, carried out by the Educational Research Institute, indicated significant deficiencies. The syllabus in question was not only updated—adapted to new facts, such as Slovenia's accession to the European Union (EU)—but constituted a new syllabus with new conceptual bases evidenced, among other factors, by the modified subject name, as well as narrowing the content to that which should be taught in citizenship education and reducing the importance of personal development (Šimenc et al. 2012, p. 5, 105). Already a review of the titles of the topics in the 2008 syllabus reveals a number of conceptual “confusions” (pp. 105–106):

- The title of the chapter Human Rights and Responsibilities implies some reciprocity between human rights and human “responsibilities,” which political theory does not acknowledge. Human rights are assumed to be universal; responsibilities are not.
- The title of Values, Beliefs and Ethics implies a concept that is at least tangible and can include ethical principles and personal preferences, which are put in the first place. Beliefs (having several aspects such as community, institutions, doctrine, etc.) are in second, and ethics are in third place. Such a classification can lead to conceptual confusion.
- The title of Patriotic and Citizenship Culture, implies implicit hierarchy. That means that patriotism or the homeland is most important.

In 2011, the syllabus for citizenship and patriotic education and ethics was redrafted. The syllabus content focused on key topics in citizenship education and political literacy (Šimenc et al. 2012, p. 112). The comparison of the 1999 and 2011 curricula reveals shifts of certain topics between grade 7 and 8 (p. 117). Especially important is the shift of understanding the basic concepts of political literacy to grade 7, while in grade 8 these terms are discussed in the context of specific state institutions of Slovenia and of the EU. Religious topics are in the new syllabus in grade 7 and issues of public debate and media in grade 8. The sections on communication and the media were shrunk and placed a grade later in the chapter on the functioning of the democratic system (Šimenc et al. 2012). In the school year 2013/2014, the name of the subject changed again, to patriotic and civic culture and ethics. The syllabus remained the same. The concept of patria and patriotism are explained, rather than suggesting attempts to instil those values into pupils (Justin et al. 2013). The subject remains a social science subject in many respects, and the majority of the syllabus focuses on citizenship education (Justin et al. 2013). As will be seen when we mention reactions to ICCS 2016 data, public discussions on patriotism show this area is still a vital concern.

Slovenia implemented CCE into the curriculum both via a compulsory subject and simultaneously with an approach which is “all-inclusive.” As shown in Eurydice reports (2005, 2012, 2017) and in ICCS 2009 and 2016 reports (Schulz et al. 2010; Schulz et al. 2018) in Slovenia three approaches

are used in elementary (compulsory) education for the area of citizenship education and also in the ICCS target grade. It can be a separate subject. It can also be integrated into broader compulsory subjects or learning areas such as history, geography, and Slovene language. Or it may be a cross-curricular objective to be delivered by all teachers (Eurydice 2017, p. 11). Such approaches to CCE can be seen also at the upper secondary level.

Slovenian Participation in CIVED/ICCS and Some Results

CCE after the collapse of communism put considerable emphasis on democratic values and new rules of social behavior as well as changes in the public's sense of identity (Štrajn 1999, p. 546). It is also important to remember that the content covered within the curriculum starting as early as 1983 and even more in 1990s began to show those shifts in focuses. Therefore, it is no surprise that Slovenia was interested to join both phases of CIVED 1999. Due to later structural changes at the national, regional, and international levels, Slovenia continued its interest in being part of ICCS.

Before Slovenia joined the CIVED 1999 study, the implementation of the curriculum from 1983 (the syllabus for social and moral education) was monitored by studies performed at the Educational Research Institute (which also served later as the national research centre of CIVED/ICCS). In the early 1990s, Slovenia started participation in IEA studies. In CIVED 1999 (with two populations; a main target population, which were grade 8, as well as with grade 12—upper secondary level). Slovenia also participated in ICCS 2009, this time with the target population (grade 8), and also added an additional population of grade 9 students (to assess our reform). We participated as well in ICCS 2016 and are preparing for participation in ICCS 2022.

Results in CIVED 1999 revealed that pupils in Slovenia were slightly above the international average in civic knowledge; below average results were found in attitudes toward immigrants, trust in institutions related to authority, and in the open school climate for discussion (Šimenc 2011, p. 139; Torney-Purta et al. 2001). In particular, attitudes towards the rights of immigrants were less positive compared to other countries participating in the study with the exception only of Germany (Šimenc 2011, p. 139). This was true both for the grade 8 students in Slovenia and also for students four year older at the upper secondary level (Šimenc 2011).

From ICCS 2009, the most interesting results in the CCE area were those showing changes in the critical areas compared to CIVED 1999 (Šimenc 2011, p. 140). The results in areas of concern that emerged in the 1999 CIVED study were all improved—the proportion of pupils in Slovenia with positive attitudes towards rights of immigrants was more similar to the proportion of pupils in other countries; the confidence of Slovenian pupils in institutions related to authorities was slightly lower than the international average but significantly higher than in 1999; pupils' perceptions of the openness of discussions in the classroom were similar to the international average (Šimenc 2011). It must be remembered, of course, that the set of countries being compared differed between the two test administrations. However, when comparing trends among countries participating in two consecutive data collection, Slovenia was the only country in ICCS 2009 where statistically significant progress was made in civic knowledge in comparison to the prior data collection (Schulz et al. 2010, p. 83).³ In the cognitive (knowledge) part of the European regional module, which was included in ICCS 2009, Slovenia ranked in some items above and in others below the European average (Kerr et al. 2010, pp. 52–56).

Proficiency levels in civic knowledge also shows interesting trends. In the 2009 cycle approximately 9% of pupils in Slovenia were below level 1 (the lowest proficiency level), which means achieved less than 395 score points, and majority of pupils achieved scores that placed

³ Although pupils from Finland and Estonia made progress in civic knowledge, the difference was not statistically significant.

them within proficiency level 2. To be more precise, approximately 36% of pupils were at this level and approximately 30% at the highest level, level 3 (Schulz et al. 2010, p. 79). In 2016 approximately 4% of pupils achieved level D (which was previously named level 1) or below level D, and the proportion of students at levels A (the highest level) and B was approximately the same (37% and 38%) (Schulz et al. 2018, p. 60). This difference between 4% and 9% of students at the lowest proficiency level is statistically significant, which means that in 2016 Slovenia had less low achievers in civic knowledge than in 2009.

We looked at the content match between two syllabi (one from 1999 and another from 2011) with tasks/items included in the ICCS 2009 (Klemenčič and Štremfel 2011, pp. 114–115). The purpose was to gain insight into how our syllabus for the compulsory CCE course matches topics of ICCS (p. 115). In particular, when comparing percentages of correct and incorrect item responses in ICCS 2009 Slovenian students showed good performance on knowledge regarding human rights and responsibilities of authorities and the government. Content analysis also showed that there is good coverage of topics (in both syllabi corresponding to the ICCS 2009 cognitive test). However, the syllabus from 2011 had better coverage than the syllabus from 1999 (Klemenčič and Štremfel 2011). The results of ICCS 2016 for Slovenia shows not only trends between two cycles, but also the “success/efficiency” of the new syllabus that was introduced after ICCS 2009. Trends are positive in terms of civic knowledge (Schulz et al. 2018, p. 62). Perception of open discussion in the classroom is still below the international average, and there was no statistically significant change from the 2009 cycle (p. 88).

The European regional module in 2009 tested European specific civic knowledge, attitudes, and engagements in European countries. In 2016 the module slightly changed—knowledge was not tested. Slovenia introduced EU/European related topics and made other changes in the syllabus for 2011. We cannot say that the only reason for adding EU topics to our syllabus was ICCS 2009. However, we can say that those topics appeared in the syllabus after ICCS was conducted and that the leader of the group revising the CCE syllabus and some other researchers included in this group were well aware of the topics being tested in ICCS. The results from the 2016 cycle show that the Slovenian national average for pupils’ sense of European identity and pupils’ endorsement of equal rights for immigrants are above the average of participating European educational systems. In 2016, however, the change was not statistically significant according to Losito et al. (2018, p. 11, 28).

In 2019 there were elections for the European parliament. The national percentages of pupils who reported that they would certainly or probably vote in elections changed significantly in Slovenia (between the two cycles). More pupils in 2016 expressed a high probability that they would participate in local and European elections (when they will have voting rights) (Losito et al. 2018, p. 45). However, the percentage of pupils expecting to vote in the European elections were the lowest in Estonia and Slovenia in comparison to other European countries (p. 44). This means that although percentages for pupils in Slovenia expressing expectation to vote in the European elections increased, they are still low.

The results of Slovenia’s teacher’s questionnaire are relevant. More than half of teachers reported that they did not have the opportunity to learn about voting and elections, neither during their in-service teacher training, nor in their continuous-professional development. About 40% reported that they did not have the opportunity to learn about the EU (Klemenčič et al. 2019, p. 54). Confidence in teaching about voting and elections and the EU was consequently low (p. 55). So, are our teachers satisfied with the existing syllabus after these many changes? The results of ICCS 2016 show that a relatively small percentage, a little over 10%, said that a new syllabus for the compulsory subject of patriotic and citizenship culture and ethics is needed, and that this was not the most needed improvement in the CCE (p. 114).

It's too early to talk about the "impact" of the 2016 cycle, but the study certainly has a great deal of data that can be used for understanding and designing both policies and practices. First, the "impacts" of ILSAs and CIVED/ICCS in particular should be discussed in terms of policy.

"Impact" of CIVED/ICCS on Educational Policymaking in Slovenia

It is challenging to distinguish direct from indirect impacts of ILSAs. Wagemaker (2013) provided a useful warning that different international organizations and different ILSAs, although they "share a common focus of measuring achievement outcomes, differ in their objectives and design ... (with) significant implications for how they might potentially influence educational policy ... and research community" (p. 13). The following measures of impact have been suggested: growth in ILSA participation and ILSA-related discourse as a measures of impact, changes in educational policy, curriculum, teaching, capacity building, and research endeavours, and global and donor responses as a measures of impact (pp. 16–32). In Slovenia we have traced those impacts, but the challenge is how to interpret the evidence. We do not have evidence to distinguish between the direct and indirect "impacts" of CIVED/ICCS on the development of CCE in Slovenia. However, we can show that preparing textbooks, training for teachers, and revised curriculum/syllabus design undertaken in the light of the results have been influential.

In 2010, the author of this chapter conducted a two stage qualitative study to investigate the "impacts" of ILSAs on national policymaking in education, including CIVED/ICCS. In the first phase, structured interviews with questions sent via emails were used, and in the second stage semi-structured face-to-face interviews. Respondents were national research coordinators, expert and advisory board members, and policymakers (including one former minister who had been responsible for education). The results showed that the impacts depend on the study's topic; they are different on different levels; they are especially visible after recent curricular reform; they are more systematic than at the beginning of Slovenian' participation in ILSAs (Klemenčič 2010, p. 254). The most clear-cut answers were for the question about why Slovenia is participating in those studies—the reason was the need for evidence-based policy and additional data especially for secondary analysis. Respondents were also quite similar in beliefs about which studies have the most media and expert interest in their results, "TIMSS and PISA seem to be of interest in the media, however ICCS is probably more important for experts dealing with (the subject matter of) citizenship education" (pp. 254–255). This is consistent with a conclusion of Pizmony-Levy and Torney-Purta (2018), who envision the impact of ICCS studies taking place through the establishment of a community of practice among researchers and educators. Slovenia appears to be developing such a community.

The periods in which CIVED 1999 and ICCS 2009 were conducted in Slovenia, when the results were published and when some national secondary analysis were done, and the revisions of syllabus for CCE, were the same. We will try to examine the "impact" of the two mentioned cycles of the IEA study on CCE taking into consideration some challenges. As we mentioned in the introduction, in 2011 the new White Paper on Education in the Republic of Slovenia was published, this time with an explicit citation and reference to the CIVED 1999 and ICCS 2009 results—specifically rankings on civic knowledge (Krek and Metljak 2011, p. 111).

At first glance it seems that CIVED in Slovenia had a relatively small "impact" on national policymaking. However, results expressed a very high inclination toward everything that is connected with national identity and patria. Slovenia changed the name of the compulsory subject in 2008 (adding patriotic) (Klemenčič 2010; Šimenc 2011). However, it appears that ICCS 2009 seems to have had a slightly bigger "impact." Even if the name of the subject remained the same, expert arguments (from both CIVED 1999 and ICCS 2009) have had the opportunity to influence the development of a new syllabus (Šimenc 2011, p. 140).

It appears that patriotism remains a contested terrain including the question as to whether it should be more fully covered in the curriculum. In the beginning of 2019, a parliamentary member

asked the Government of the Republic of Slovenia “a parliamentary question” about patriotic education of pupils and about how the integration of citizenship and patriotic education topics within different subjects should be accomplished (as well as how much patriotism is already included in the textbooks). IEA results were included in the Government’s official (written) response (Government of the Republic of Slovenia 2019). Citing the results of the recent ICCS 2016 study about 90% of pupils agreed or strongly agreed with the statements that the Slovenian flag is important, that they feel great respect towards Slovenia, and that in Slovenia we should be proud of what we have achieved, around 80% of them agreed or strongly agreed that they are proud to live in Slovenia, and slightly less than 70% indicated that it is better to live in Slovenia than in most other countries (p. 3). This is of interest also because it shows that sometimes the results need to be stated in terms of relatively simple percentages and not item response theory scales (which are interpretable relative to other countries’ responses but fail to communicate the actual opinions to policymakers or the general public).

In another indication of impact, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport adopted a National framework for identifying and assuring quality in education (2017), in which the monitoring of compulsory systemic indicators is envisaged and listed all existing IEA studies including ICCS.

For the purpose of this chapter, the titles of professional publications (monographs, articles, and national research reports) in the Slovene language that made an explicit reference to ICCS in the title (also for master’s/bachelor’s thesis in the key words) were identified from the national database Cobiss. We can assume that those publications could also have “impacts” on national policymaking or practices in teaching, due to the open source and publication in the national language (however, daily newspaper articles or conference presentations are not included in our analysis). From CIVED 1999, the scientific monograph which was published in 2003 in the Slovene language was not open sourced. This means we could expect less “impact” because other reports, scientific monographs and papers from ICCS 2009 were open sourced and free. Starting with ICCS 2016 reports/monographs are printed in addition to being open sourced. Reports/monographs are sent to all schools who participated in the ICCS 2016. Therefore, we can expect an even bigger “impact” on educational practices. In the database published for the period 2011–2018 (based on ICCS 2009 and 2016 results, with criteria mentioned above) several results were found: 3 scientific monographs, 1 special issue of a scientific journal, 4 research reports, 8 articles, 1 bachelor’s thesis, and 1 master’s thesis (Cobiss 2018), all of them in Slovene language.

However, there are several other possible “impacts” of the CIVED/ICCS study in Slovenia on national policymaking and practices. Just to name a few—members coordinating ICCS in Slovenia and other researchers from the Educational Research Institute who conduct ILSAs in Slovenia were invited as members of a Consultative Body of the Ministers for Civic and Social Competences (in 2017) and other consultancy bodies for the ministry responsible for education and science (for a longer period). It is also sometimes the case that the same researchers are part of ad hoc groups. Those associated with ICCS have also been authors/editors of compulsory subject textbooks for CCE, undertaken university teaching activities, provided professional teacher trainings and other workshops/seminars, been writers/editors of didactical materials and syllabi in the CCE field, and served as mass media writers about curricular reforms or other education relevant topics. In those activities, the “impacts” of ICCS cannot be separated from other “impacts”. We can say, however, that all of those activities have contributed to the “impact” of CIVED/ICCS on national policymaking and practices (and to the educational discourse more generally).

At the beginning of 2019 one of the associations of parents submitted a petition signed by more than 20,000 calling for changes in the educational system in Slovenia. The petition warned that pupils and parents are overwhelmed with schoolwork and homework; they demanded an end to national testing, a shortening of syllabi, school/instruction with no numerical grades—this

time for all subjects. The Educational Research Institute responded by showing comparative data from different ILSAs, including the last ICCS cycle. The data used for this response from ICCS 2016 were pupils' perceptions of Europe's future, their perceptions of the EU, and their life in the future. It seems that the discussion of those demands was one of the turning points that led to plans for the preparation of a new White Paper on Education in the Republic of Slovenia. Enumeration of the benefits of IEA assessments, including ICCS, is likely to be included.

Possible Future Contributions of ICCS to Educational Discourse

Patriotic and citizenship culture and ethics (a compulsory subject in our grade 7 and 8) retains a defining feature of its predecessor, namely being a generalist social science and humanities subject, with a focus on political literacy, critical thinking, and pupils' active participation in social and civic life. The role of optional (elective) social science subjects in civic knowledge and developing attitudes is rather marginal, due to the rarity with which pupils choose those optional subjects. However, CCE topics are included in Slovene education across the curriculum or are integrated into the entirety of schoolwork. In the last decade, changes to the compulsory syllabus in the area of CCE have been relatively minor compared to the transitional years from the early 1990s onwards. A fear is still present that some teachers will struggle with the adaptations made to CCE and also that pupils will have trouble understanding complex political topics that are far from their everyday experience.

Regardless of this, the results of two ILSAs on citizenship education, CIVED 1999 and ICCS 2009, showed that Slovene pupils have improved their civic knowledge; this is important because the general trend in several other participating countries was one of declining civic knowledge (Schulz et al. 2010). Additionally, some attitudes have improved (especially comparing them to those from the cycle in 1999). However, the 2016 cycle showed that our pupils also have a positive trend in civic knowledge in comparison to the 2009 cycle. We speculate that most of the improvements in Slovenian students' civic knowledge over the years are due to changes of the syllabi and to the greater resources put into the education of teachers of this subject. These are projects mainly funded by European Social Funds and other European funds—e.g., Lifelong Learning Programme (2007–2013) or Erasmus+ (2014–2020). A great emphasis was put on teacher training and we expect it would be the same in the future. This is perhaps also the case because the EU emphasizes this topic as important. The biggest area of improvement in the future may be in pupils' engagement in social and political life. But these are contested topics that were discussed after Slovenian independence in relation to the (public) education system and to the status of religious education (a debate peaking in the late 1990s) and of patriotism (a more recent debate). The ICCS results have helped to address some of those tensions.

In 2018, based on the syllabus, a new textbook for the compulsory subject patriotic and citizenship culture and ethics (Klemenčič 2018) was prepared and officially approved as one of the textbooks that schools can choose. For grade 8, the syllabus prescribes the thematic section "Slovenia, EU, world" and further more detailed learning on Slovenia as a member in different international organizations (namely UN, OECD, and NATO). In the textbook, IEA is also mentioned (in the Slovenian language). IEA is described as a non-profit, non-governmental organization, with more than 60 member countries, collecting data on knowledge, attitudes, and other data on education in different countries. All areas/fields are mentioned (mathematics, science, reading literacy, computer and information literacy, civic and citizenship education) (Klemenčič 2018, p. 53). We hope that this will stimulate further discussion about IEA and ICCS in the classrooms.

Where do we already see other possible future "impacts" of the ICCS study? Slovenia has been a member of the EU since 2004. Therefore, it is included in the open method of coordination at the EU level, as well as committed to monitor indicators in the field of education. The EU prepares new goals for EU countries every decade. Recently an EU expert group prepared "issue

papers” on topics, structured with key challenges, opportunities, and priority areas of action, as a base for the new Education and Training 2030 Programme (ET2030). One of the papers entitled “Inclusion and citizenship” (European Commission 2019) includes a reference and description of the main goal of the ICCS study. Therefore, we can expect that Slovenian policymakers will devote attention to this area. The minister responsible for education has made a preliminary announcement of the establishment of a new CCE subject in upper secondary school. It will be necessary to develop the syllabi based on what we know from ICCS and the performance, attitudes, and engagements of our pupils in grade 8. This has, in fact, already happened. In 2019 and at the beginning of 2020 when syllabi for upper secondary schools (namely active citizenship; for different educational programs) were in preparation, the argumentation about why this is needed used results from ICCS 2016.⁴ Also, of course, ICCS collects questionnaires from teachers and heads of school, the results of which can be of great use. This knowledge was provided to inform the development and modernizations announced by minister for strengthening CCE in the upper secondary school level.

In this chapter we have primarily focused on the historical development of CCE in Slovenia in elementary school. However, due to the importance that ICCS is putting into investigating different perceptions on inequalities, it is worth saying something in this respect. The school system in Slovenia provides equal access to CCE, especially from the position of a compulsory subject in elementary school where all pupils need to attend lectures and need to be graded in the subject. (Other approaches used in our schools are not possible to investigate, because they are the responsibility of teachers and schools within their scope of autonomy). Indeed, based on the number of classes that schools have, they receive additional resources for extended programs. From this, each school decides how it will distribute so-called individual and group support (among gifted pupils and pupils with learning disabilities) as well as remedial and supplementary classes/instructions (for pupils in need of learning assistance and for pupils who exceed the prescribed knowledge standards). Another formal group are pupils with special needs included in regular school programs and with the National Institute of Education responsible for decision-making. Statistics do not exist (due to the over-complicated system, the possibilities for collecting statistics are limited) to check how often this support is devoted for CCE, but we can assume that it is not often. The system formally ensures equal opportunities to pupils in acquiring civic and citizenship knowledge and attitudes within compulsory and extended programs (as we just described). However, teachers from schools often comment informally that those schools that are geographically closer to the capital city where political institutions in Slovenia are based, have more opportunities to visit them in comparison to other schools distanced from the capital city, for which this presents a financial challenge. This is true in spite of the fact that the syllabus for the compulsory subject of CCE (for all schools in Slovenia) prescribes teaching about those institutions. Perhaps here the state could do more to really assure equal opportunities to gain this perspective. Another challenge is the same as in several other educational systems, as shown in international reports of ICCS. This is, how to raise civic knowledge among lower socioeconomic background pupils. ICCS for Slovenia (and many other participating systems) shows correlations between civic knowledge and home socioeconomic status/immigrant background/language spoken at home. These differences favour higher civic knowledge for those from higher socioeconomic status families, pupils with no immigrant background, and those speaking the language of the test at home. Therefore, those are certainly challenges for the future, not only for CCE but for all areas of schooling.

4 Later in 2020 the decision was made that active citizenship will not be a separate subject but have a descriptor «other form of educational work» (e.g., in gymnasiums this is upgrading some parts of so-called mandatory elective topics, so that it is mandatory for schools to offer them, but organization of when and how they are offered is up to the schools).

As we have shown in this chapter, CCE is important for our educational system in the process of change. There are also some indications of direct/indirect "impact" of CIVED/ICCS. We are sure that results of ICCS will remain important for different stakeholders (educators, scholars/researchers, and policymakers) in developing this area further.

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