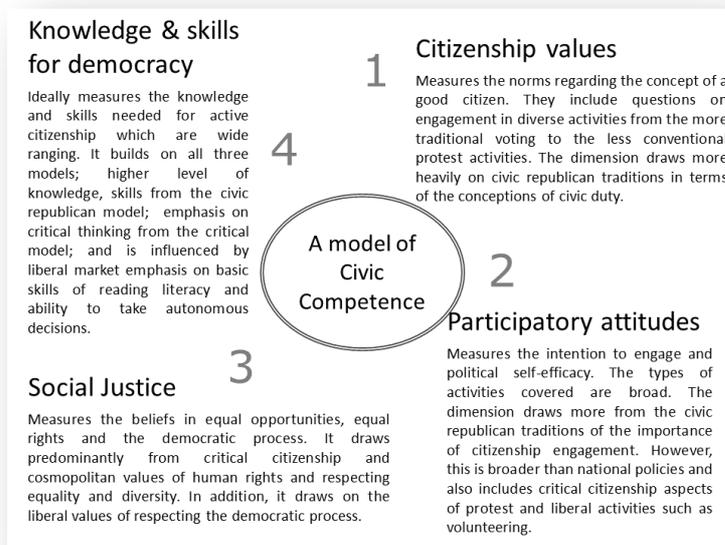


# Measuring Youth Civic Competence across Europe in 1999 & 2009



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## Summary

Civic competence can be defined as the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed for active participation in civil society, political and community life. Civic competence is not only a tool for empowering the individual to take control over their own lives but it can also help by underpinning democracy and social and economic development. For these reasons, the European Commission has listed civic competence as one of the key competences to be developed under the EU Lifelong Learning strategy. Following the Commission's Recommendation, many Member states have started to incorporate civic competence development in their schools' curricula.

The present report aims to contribute to:

- the debates on how to develop tools for monitoring youth citizenship and civic engagement through the development of multi-dimensional measures;
- the theories that explain country differences drawing on comparative political theory, economic and modernist theory and theories of Citizenship Education.

The measurement model developed herein builds on four dimensions of civic competence using the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) to monitor the levels of youth citizenship (young people aged about 14) across Europe. The model combines the traditions in Europe of liberal, civic republican and critical/cosmopolitan concepts of citizenship. The results suggest that Social justice values and Citizenship knowledge and skills of students are facilitated within the Nordic system that combines a stable democracy and economic prosperity with democratically-based education systems in which teachers prioritise the promotion of autonomous critical thinking in citizenship education. In contrast, medium term democracies with civic republican tradition, such as Italy and Greece gain more positive results on Citizenship Values and Participatory attitudes. This is also the case for some recent former communist countries that retain ethnic notions of citizenship. In the concluding remarks, we argue that the Nordic teachers' priority on developing critical and autonomous citizens perhaps facilitates youth qualities of cognition on citizenship and the values of equality but may not be the most fruitful approach to enhance participatory attitudes or concepts of a good citizen which may be better supported by the Italian teachers' priority on civic responsibility.

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## 1. Introduction

Cross country comparisons of young people's qualities for civic engagement have become an established field of research inquiry (Hahn 1998, Torney-Purta, et al 1999 and 2001, Amna and Zetterberg 2010). Within the context of the European Union member states, where there has been an economic crisis (2008-2012) and a reduction of global power, it can no longer be taken for granted that the region will remain stable and democratic. Therefore, there is an increasing need to monitor the learning of democracy through comparative research. With appropriate indicators, country differences and changes across time can be observed for young people's knowledge, attitudes and values, and intended behaviour. In this context this report will develop four measures of civic competence using the International Civic and Citizenship education Study (ICCS) (Schulz et al 2010) data to facilitate the monitoring of the levels of civic competence across Europe for young people aged about 14. The report will contribute to the debates on how to develop tools for monitoring citizenship and civic engagement and will use the innovative approach of developing composite indicators. In addition, the report will contribute to theories that explain country differences drawing on comparative political theory (Almond and Verba 1963, van Deth, Montro and Westholm 2007 and Kohn 2008), economic and modernist theory (Inglehart and Welzel 2005) and theories of Citizenship Education (Carol Hahn 1998 and Torney-Purta 2002).

The new civic competence measure, CCCI-2, is based upon the original ideas developed from the first civic competence indicator that we developed from data collected over ten years ago - using the 1999 Civic Education Study (CivEd) of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) (Hoskins et al 2008 and Hoskins et al 2012a). However, considerable changes were made to the new ICCS study instruments, which makes it difficult to create direct comparisons (Barber and Torney-Purta 2012). Nevertheless, we have been able to maintain the structure and the basic constructs of the composite indicator measuring the four dimensions of Citizenship values, Participatory attitudes, Social justice and a cognitive dimension which we have renamed Knowledge and skills for democracy. In this regard, some cautious comparison of the results from the two indicators, based on data which spans a 10-year interval, will be made focusing on the individual indicators for which there are equivalents in both surveys. The composite indicator will be developed for the 16 European Union and EEA countries that participated in both the 1999 and 2009 data collection.

The report will begin with a reflection of the concepts of citizenship that are comprised within the European concept of civic competence. It will then explore theories that help to explain cross national variation including the influence of the concepts of citizenship, experience of a stability of

democracy, economic factors and citizenship education. We describe our methodology for creating the composite indicator and its four dimensions, present our results, and discuss the implications of our findings in this context.

## **2. Concepts of citizenship in Europe**

Measuring civic competence in Europe, as approached in this report, has been based upon certain concepts of citizenship which are prevalent within European countries: the Liberal concept, the civic republican concept and the critical/cosmopolitan citizenship concept (Hoskins 2012b). In order to understand the qualities that are needed for civic competence in Europe it is therefore necessary to examine these concepts in more detail.

### ***2.1 The Liberal Concept of Citizenship***

During the period 2006-2009 the vast majority of elections in the European Union resulted in predominantly center right parties being elected, which influenced the rise in the dominance of the liberal concept of citizenship across Europe (Hoskins et al 2012b). In Anglo-Saxon countries in Europe there had already been a long history of a liberal citizenship concept. In its original meaning, liberal democracy is typically considered ‘thin’ democracy. This means that citizens’ involvement in public life is minimal, and is primarily enacted through the vote (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). In such an environment, citizens are encouraged, but not obliged to vote. Education for active citizenship is focused on creating autonomous citizens who can act towards supporting their own self-interest, and on enhancing individuals’ basic level of political knowledge and skills to be able to be able to achieve this end (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). Active citizenship within the liberal concept emphasizes the right of individuals to participate (or not) politically. The implications of the liberal approach on civic competences have been to focus on knowledge, skills and dispositions towards engagement.

### ***2.2 The Civic Republican Concept of Citizenship***

Many European countries also have civic republican roots in particular countries that have been strongly influenced by France and by the narrative of the French revolution (which includes much of southern Europe) and countries which had a historic legacy in the construction of civic concepts of nationalism such as Greece and Italy (Kohn 2008). The Civic republican approach places higher demands on the citizen in terms of the maintenance of the democratic processes and institutions that in turn assure greater freedoms (Lovett 2010). From this perspective, citizens become the actors of positive laws for social change, and the instruments to prevent corruption (Lovett 2010). Civic

republicanism has emphasized the need for citizens to act politically within the public sphere, in particular at the national level and to be actively engaged within a political community as equal and free citizens. Thus, the notion of civic responsibility developed from this view.

Compared to the liberal tradition, this approach places more of an obligation and value in political engagement and involvement in political decision making. Thus, in terms of civic competence the qualities of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to enable political engagement are of the highest importance, for example, the qualities needed to evaluate the performance of government, the skills needed to recognise and prevent corruption and the dispositions and skills to participate in public discourse (Galston 2001). The civic republican approach also highlights the need for citizens to learn civic virtues and emphasises the values of public spiritedness, solidarity, and the responsibility to act for the common good (Honohan 2002 p.147). Honohan (2002) asserts that, without civic virtues, too much self-interest, that is associated with the liberal concept, can lead to corruption.

### *2.3 The Critical/Cosmopolitan concept of Citizenship*

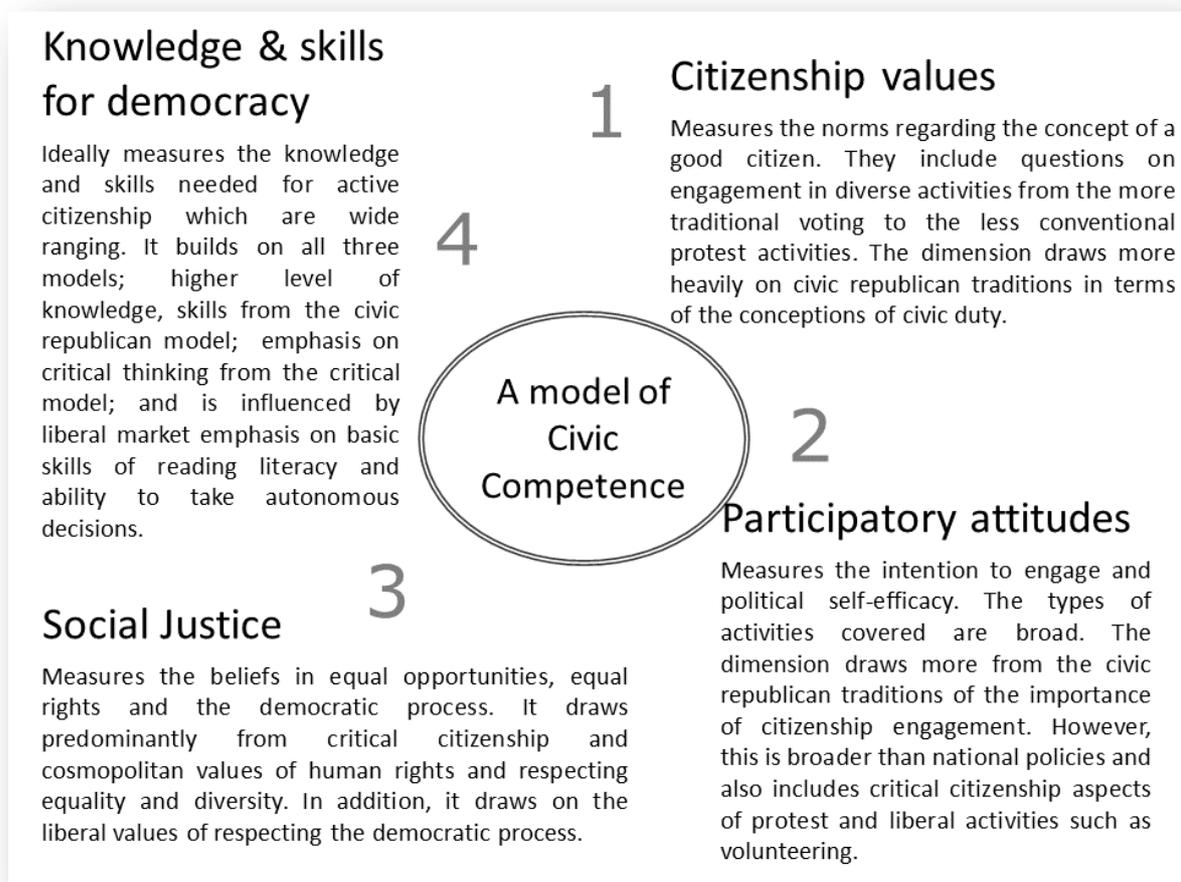
In recent years, the critical/cosmopolitan citizenship concept has not been given the highest policy emphasis for any European Union Country (Hoskins 2012b); nevertheless, the values of equality and human rights, which are featured in this concept, have had a considerable history, both inside and outside the education system in Nordic countries who traditionally support social rights and economic redistribution (Telhaug 2006). The critical citizenship concept has been a ‘catch all’ title for various new theories that try to frame active citizenship in different terms (Abowitz and Harnish 2006), for example, by focusing on critiquing and improving equality in society through social and political action (Johnson and Morris 2010). The aspects of civic competence that are described as being needed for critical citizenship are the ability to critically analyse ‘social issues and injustices’, for example, learning to ask why people are homeless not only collecting money to feed them (Westheimer and Kahne 2004 p.4) and other social values such as empathy and care (Veugelers, 2011). The concept of cosmopolitanism, one form of the critical citizenship concept, aims towards moving beyond national citizenship to a global concept of humanity with internationally recognised human rights and the valorisation of diversity (Held 2010).

### *2.4 Civic Competence model*

The original model for civic competence was developed together with experts from across Europe as part of the European study, ‘Active Citizenship for democracy’ (Hoskins et al., 2008). It draws its elements from the citizenship models described above (see Figure 1). The Citizenship values dimension incorporates the norms of a good citizen and draws sustainably on the civic republican

discourse of civic duty. The Participatory attitudes dimension measures the disposition to engage again drawing from civic republican ideals of participation. The Social justice dimension measures the cosmopolitan values of human rights and respecting diversity. It also encapsulates the liberal attitudes of respecting the democratic process. The Knowledge and skills for democracy dimension transcends the three models measuring the wide range of skills needed to be an active citizen (Figure 1).

**FIGURE 1**  
**A MODEL OF CIVIC COMPETENCE USED TO DEVELOP CCCI-2 AND CCCI**



### *2.5 What is not measured*

There are aspects of the citizenship concepts and civic competence that are not yet covered by the civic competence model in Figure 1, as these concepts have not been covered in either of the IEA studies. These include the civic republican qualities of solidarity and the critical citizenship qualities

of empathy and care. Accordingly, these dimensions have not been added due lack of data pertaining to the aspects in question.

### **3. Cross national variation on civic competence-theoretical expectations**

Across the 16 European countries (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, England, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Sweden) that we will compare on civic competence we would expect a wide degree of variation due to the diverse political and cultural histories, level of economic development and education policy on citizenship. The political history and political culture of a country plays an important role in the development of civic competence, and the factors that are important include the influence of the citizenship concepts described above and the length of time and stability of democracy (Almond and Verba 1963).

#### ***3.1 Citizenship concepts***

The citizenship concepts reviewed in the literature are intertwined within the four dimensions of civic competence in our model— Citizenship values, Participatory attitudes, Social justice, and Knowledge & Skills. Nevertheless, for those countries that have strong civic republican traditions, for example Greece and Italy, we would expect that their youngsters would score higher on Citizenship values and Participatory attitudes. In addition, civic duty has also formed part of the discourse of ethnic national conceptions of citizenship even though this latter form is only inherent and not intentionally captured in the Citizenship values dimension. In Europe ethnic as well as civic conceptions of nationalism also have a significant history and tradition in particular within many of the former communist countries and Germany (Kohn 2008). In the former communist countries this concept has been said to have resurfaced after the fall of communism as part of the process of nation-building with certain sectors of the population glorifying the pre-communist period (Daun and Sapatoru 2008). In this way, more recently formed states from the former communist countries tend to have a stronger ethnic concept of citizenship and higher levels of ethnic nationalism, suggesting that countries such as Latvia, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic and Slovenia are expected to have higher levels of ‘civic’ duty. In contrast, those countries (e.g., England) which have been influenced by the traditional liberal values of freedom to engage or not may have a weaker concept of a ‘good citizen’, resulting in lower scores. The Nordic countries that have been influenced both by liberal and civic republican traditions (Telhaug 2006) would be expected to take intermediate positions.

The Social justice dimension draws mostly from the values promoted within the critical citizenship/cosmopolitan concept of citizenship that emphasises equality, tolerance and human rights. It is therefore more likely that countries with human rights and equality traditions (e.g., Nordic countries) may perform more strongly on this dimension (Telhaug 2006). In contrast, countries that have ethnic concepts of national citizenship maybe less open to minorities and migrants, reflected in weaker performance in this dimension. Former communist countries may fall into this category. Countries such as Italy and Greece, with civic constructions of nationalism, would then be expected to score somewhere in between these two groups.

For the cognitive dimension it could be argued that the civic republican tradition is expected to produce better performances as it places greater demand on citizens' cognitive performances in engaging with the political processes. However, the performances could largely be influenced by young people's general performances on educational assessments, which are associated with the neo-liberal norms now widely adopted across Europe.

### *3.2 Stable democracy*

Another way to examine democratic traditions is through the length of democracy. In contrast to research on the adult population (van Deth, Montro and Westholm 2007), the longer periods of democracy had a negative association with youth Participatory attitudes and Citizenship values for the first composite indicator (Hoskins et al 2008; Hoskins et al 2012a). Thus, young people from countries that had experienced recent transitions to democracy and therefore less political stability valued democratic participation more highly. It was therefore argued that the greater intention to participate was due to the fragility of the democratic institutions. In this case it would be the instability of political external factors and recent memories of a lack of democracy that generate the values associated with civic competences within the youth age group (see Torney-Purta et al. 2008). If stability of democracy would again have a negative impact on Citizenship values and Participatory attitudes then the country groupings we would expect to see are as follows:

- (1) Former communist countries would be the first group of countries. These countries have experienced communist regimes and have had a very recent transition to liberal democracy (e.g, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovak Republic, Slovenia).
- (2) The second group would consist of countries (e.g., Greece and Cyprus) that experienced breaks in democracy and have undergone fascism, dictatorship, and/or occupation and then only recently (within the past 65 years) have undergone transition back to democracy, as well

as countries (e.g. Italy) that have experienced fascism and rather unstable transitions to democracy after the Second World War;

- (3) The third country grouping would consist of countries that have had a stable and continuous experience of democracy over the past 65 years or more (e.g., Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland and England). Although it should be noted that some of these countries like Norway and Denmark were occupied by Nazi Germany during the Second World War and Finland had to fight during this period with Russia to maintain its independence.

This hypothesis was found to be pertinent in describing the results from the first composite indicator for the dimensions of Participatory attitudes and Citizenship values. Our expectation is that we would find similar results ten years on.

### *3.3 Economic factors*

Another factor that has been found to influence citizenship values and behaviour is economic development. The most prominent theory regarding economic development is modernisation theory (Inglehart and Welzel 2005). Inglehart and Welzel (2005) argue that people who have had a secure and affluent childhood will tend to develop self-expression values (i.e., values emphasising self-fulfilment, freedom, autonomy, gender equality and tolerance). By contrast, people who have grown up under conditions of scarcity and insecurity will tend to develop survival values (i.e., values stressing economic and physical security), which underpin citizen identities particularly in authoritarian states (Inglehart and Welzel 2005). Thus the effects on Participatory attitudes have been argued by Amna and Zetterberg (2010) to be that economic prosperity may have the dual effect of enhancing qualities that include individualistic and ad hoc protest activities whilst at the same time increasing critical thinking regarding authorities that may well lower traditional forms of political engagement, membership of organisations and values such as solidarity.

One measure of wealth of a nation is GDP. If we divide countries according to their GDP per capita from 2009 then the country grouping would be similar to years of continuous democracy. Nordic and Anglo-Saxon countries have higher rates of GDP per capita from the countries we have selected to study. Low GDP can be found within most Eastern European countries suggesting a similar pattern to years of democracy. In 2009 the Southern European countries of Italy, Greece and Cyprus along with one Eastern European country, Slovenia, have mid-range GDP per capita. Slovenia is the only country which is a former communist country with a recent transition to democracy and is in the second group of countries. Thus we would expect Slovenia to do slightly better than other countries that have a recent transition to democracy if wealth had a positive

influence on aspects of civic competence. It may also be relevant that countries like Greece and Cyprus had already started to feel the economic crisis by 2009, influencing results accordingly.

### *3.4 Citizenship Education*

Citizenship education is part of the compulsory curriculum for all the countries that we have investigated and according to Eurydice (2012), all students would have experienced some citizenship education prior to participating in the ICCS study. Eurydice (2012) has completed the most comprehensive and recent comparison of citizenship education across European countries and they note that the main differences arise in the methods of implementation of citizenship education. The three main styles of delivery are discrete lesson, integration into other disciplines or the cross-curricular approach (Eurydice 2012). The difficulty in making comparisons arises from the fact that multiple styles can be applied simultaneously within the same school year and/or different approaches are adopted for different grades. In addition, there has been a significant amount of curriculum reforms on citizenship education during the last five years (Czech Republic 2007, Latvia 2006, Lithuania 2009, Finland 2004, Norway 2006, Italy 2008) which adds elements of uncertainty regarding the exact nature of the implementation of the surveyed students' citizenship education. Thus, a clear link between citizenship education and our results is difficult to achieve. Nevertheless, when countries perform differently to those countries with similar socio-political histories, an examination of their citizenship education is useful. It is also the case that it in Europe it is implementation rather than the policies and curriculum which has been cited as the major reason for lower citizenship outcomes (Bírzéa et. al. 2003). Taking this on board, we also consider the perspectives of teachers on the objectives of citizenship education since this can be an indicator of the actual experience of students.

One of the most in-depth and up-to-date evaluation of citizenship education is from the Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study (CELS) (2001-2010) in England. According to the latest report from the citizenship education longitudinal study (Keating et al 2010), discrete lessons that were over 45 min long, performed by citizenship teachers and which culminated in national qualifications in citizenship were the most effective strategy to facilitate a variety of civic competences. However, not all research concurs with this finding: research based on the IEA CivEd data for Finland, Germany, Poland, Italy and England did not find a positive association between the hours taken of social science subjects including citizenship education and the levels of citizenship knowledge and skills or Participatory attitudes (Hoskins 2011). In comparison to the curricular subject, methods of teaching and school ethos have consistently shown to positively influence civic competence. The CELS study results highlighted the importance of a democratic ethos of schools for enhancing an individual's

self-efficacy and willingness to participate (Benton et al 2008). They further found active teaching methods in the classroom to be appreciated by students and to have positive learning effects. An open classroom climate has consistently been shown to be positively associated with higher levels of civic competence (Carol Hahn 1998, Hoskins et al 2011 and Torney-Purta 2002), and school councils have also been shown to have positive effects.

## 4. Measuring Civic Competence Using the IEA ICCS study

### 4.1 Data Sources and Scales

ICCS is the most recent IEA study on civic and citizenship education among school pupils and was conducted in Europe in 2009. Data was collected from over 140,000 Grade 8 students, 62,000 teachers, and 5,300 school principals, from 38 countries. The ICCS student population comprised students in Grade 8 (pupils approximately 14 years of age, although some are above and below this age). One classroom in the target grade per school was selected in most countries, and IEA recommended a sample of around 150 schools per country although there were some exceptions.

Both the affective and the cognitive aspects of the study covered four themes:

- civic society and systems;
- civic principles;
- civic participation; and
- civic identities.

Several data collection instruments were administered in each participating country, two of which were used in the construction of CCCI-2:

- An international cognitive student test consisting of 80 items measuring civic and citizenship knowledge, analysis, and reasoning. The assessment items were assigned to seven booklets according to a balanced, rotated design. Each student completed one of the 45-minute booklets.
- A student questionnaire consisting of items measuring student background variables and students' attitudes and behaviours.

The cognitive items were typically presented as units in which some brief contextual stimulus (an image or some text) were followed by relevant questions. Seventy-three items were multiple choice and six items were constructed-response (Schulz et al 2010 p. 59). As for the affective-behavioural aspects they included questions on *value beliefs*, *attitudes*, *behavioural intentions* and *behaviour* and these were measured using the student questionnaire (Schulz et al 2010, p.26). In most cases the response

categories were a set of Likert-type items with four categories (e.g., ‘strongly agree,’ ‘agree,’ ‘disagree,’ and ‘strongly disagree’). The items were then recoded accordingly so that the higher scale scores corresponded to more positive attitudes.

In this report we have selected to analyse the results for European Union and European Economic Area countries that participated in both the ICCS and the 1999 CivEd study which enables us to make a comparison across time. Thus in total we will examine 16 European Countries: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, England, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Sweden.

### *Scales*

The scales that we have used for CCCI-2 were developed by the IEA. The responses to the individual items on the questionnaire were combined to create scales that provided a more comprehensive view of the intended construct than the single individual variables could (Brese et al 2011). Scales were normally calculated as ‘IRT WLE scores with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10 for equally weighted countries’ (Brese et al 2011 p.20). The scales are based on the responses from the full dataset including 140,650 students in 38 countries (2009 IEA ICCS survey).

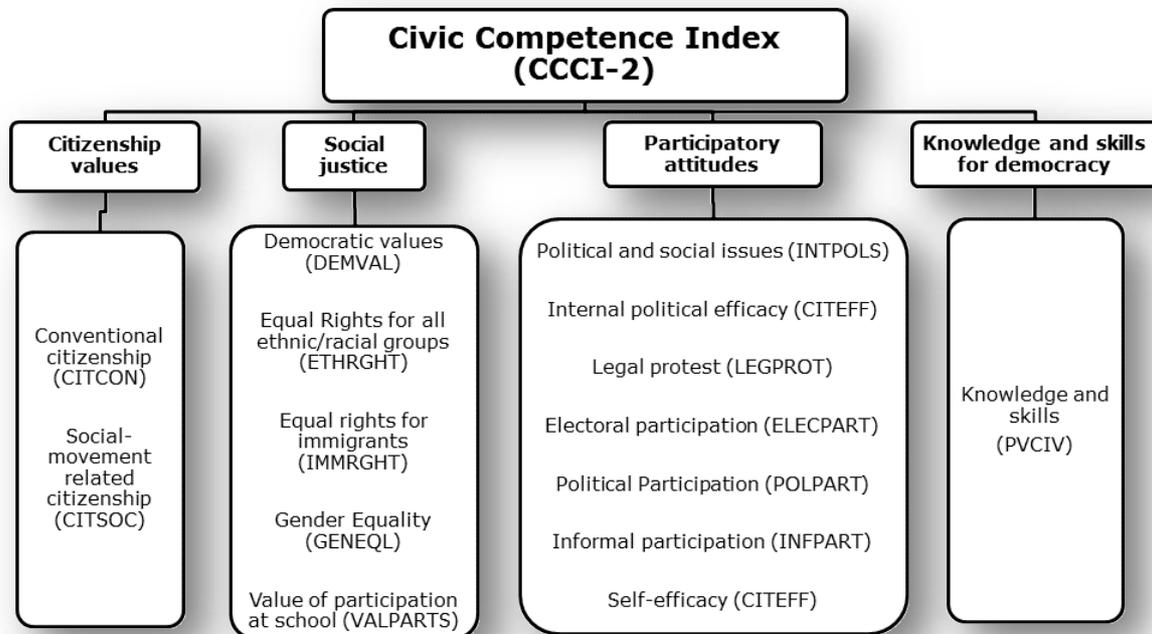
## ***4.2 Operationalising Civic Competence – A Framework***

The overall strategy for creating CCCI-2 was to operationalise the same theoretical foundations and concepts from the original indicator, and then to select the same or similar scales used previously, but also to adapt to the new measures where needed. This way the knowledge and experience gained during construction of the first indicator could be used to build CCCI-2.

The conceptual framework is based on the four dimensions of Citizenship values, Participatory attitudes, Social justice values and Knowledge and skills for democracy (Figure 2). The first dimension, ‘Citizenship values’, has two scales on norms of conventional citizenship and norms of social movement related citizenship (CITCON, CITSOC). The Participatory attitudes dimension includes measures of political self-efficacy (CITEFF), expected participation in political activities (POLPART), expected adult electoral participation (ELECTPART), expected adult informal political participation (INFPART), expected legal protest (LEGPROT) and interest in political and social issues (INTPOLS). The Social justice dimension includes measures of democratic rights (DEMVAL), equal rights for ethnic groups (ETHRIGHT), equal rights for immigrants (IMMRGHT), gender equality (GENEQUL) and valuing democratic processes at school

(VALPART). The dimension on Knowledge and skills for democracy contained the cognitive score from the ICCS test.

**FIGURE 2**  
**THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF CIVIC COMPETENCE**



The CCCI-2 model is built from 15 scales; eight scales are similar and we argue are equivalent enough to be compared to the original CCCI scales, and six scales are either entirely new or have been moved to a new dimension (Figure 3). Finally, the Knowledge and skills dimension is measured by a new cognitive scale with only a small number of common items (PVCIV). In addition, there are some differences between the last two IEA citizenship studies including changes in the response items and IRT scaling (Hoskins et al 2012c; Barber and Torney-Purta 2012). Therefore CCCI-2 is not the same measure as the original composite indicator; nevertheless, there are some similarities.

**FIGURE 3**  
**A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE CIVIC COMPETENCE SCALES USED IN CCCI AND CCCI-2**

CCCI	CCCI-2	
<b>Citizenship Values</b>		
CTCON	CITCON	Importance of conventional citizenship
CTSOC	CITSOC	Importance of social-related citizenship
<b>Participatory Attitudes</b>		
EFFIC*	INPOLEF	Internal political efficacy/Sense of internal political efficacy
POLAT	POLPART	Expected political activities/Expected adult participation in political activities
VOTE*	ELECPART	Expectations associated with voting/Expected adult electoral participation
COMM*		Expectations of community participation
SCON*		Self-confident participation at school
	LEGPROT	Expected legal protest
	INFPART	Expected informal political participation
	INTPOLS	Interest in political and social issues
	CITEFF	Students' citizenship self-efficacy
<b>Social Justice</b>		
WOMRT	GENEQL	Attitudes toward women's political and economic rights/Attitudes towards gender equality
MINOR*	ETHRGHT	Attitudes toward opportunities for minorities/ Attitudes toward equal rights for all ethnic or racial groups
CONF*	VALPARTS	Confidence in participation at school/Perception of the value of participation at school
	IMMRGHT	Equal rights for immigrants
	DEMVVAL	Student orientations to democratic value beliefs
<b>Knowledge for skills and democracy</b>		
	DEM*	Democratic rights
	KNOWL	Civic Content knowledge
	SKILS	Skills in interpreting political communication
	PVCIV	Knowledge and skills

NOTE- \* = non-IEA developed scales in the CCCI. All CCCI-2 scales were developed by the IEA. The CCCI scales are based on survey data from the CivEd (1999). The CCCI-2 scales are based on survey data from the ICCS (2009).

To create the measurement model on civic competence, we followed the methodological guidelines of the Handbook on Constructing Composite Indicators (OECD/EC JRC, 2008), which we describe next.

### *4.3 Creating the Civic Competence Indicator*

Having created the conceptual framework, the next step is to identify the extent to which it receives statistical support. The assessment of the statistical coherence of the framework is undertaken by first applying principal component analysis (PCA) to the dataset in order to identify the main “statistical” dimensions of civic competence and then by applying factor analysis (FA) to analyse the “statistical” grouping of the scales. These analyses were applied to the full dataset of all 38 countries that participated in the 2009 IEA ICCS survey (more than 140,000 students). The PCA identified four “statistical” dimensions (with eigenvalues greater than 1.0), which altogether explain more than 60% of the total variance in the fifteen scales. FA was applied to extract four principal factors, after an orthogonal rotation with Kaiser Normalisation (Kaiser, 1960).

Table 1 presents the factor loadings on each dimension. The numbers in bold reflect the highest factor loading of a scale, and the numbers in italic were considered high enough to be taken into consideration when interpreting the results.

The FA results confirm the conceptual framework for measuring civic competence. The first factor captures ‘Participatory attitudes’ (all 7 scales), as conceptualised. The second factor summarises ‘Social justice’ (all 5 scales) and the third factor comprises the two scales on ‘Citizenship values’. Finally, the fourth factor describes mostly ‘Knowledge and skills for democracy’. The Gender equality scale co-varies between the ‘Knowledge and skills’ dimension and the ‘Social justice’ dimension. For theoretical reasons, we believe that it is more meaningful to place gender equality within the Social justice dimension rather than within the cognitive dimension as it forms a belief scale on issues of equality rather than a cognitive quality. The reliabilities (internal consistencies among the scales measured by the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient) of the four dimensions of civic competence are also adequate, varying from 0.67 (Citizenship values) to 0.84 (Participatory attitudes).

**TABLE 1**  
**STATISTICAL GROUPING OF INDICATORS INTO DIMENSIONS OF CIVIC COMPETENCE**

Civic Competence dimension	Civic competence indicator	Factor			
		1	2	3	4
Citizenship values	Conventional citizenship	.303	.124	<b>.760</b>	-.137
	Social-movement related citizenship	.120	.372	<b>.700</b>	-.009
Social justice	Democratic values	.007	<b>.489</b>	.271	.388
	Equal Rights for all ethnic/racial groups	.136	<b>.759</b>	.158	.179
	Equal rights for immigrants	.102	<b>.816</b>	.060	.020
	Gender Equality	-.043	<b>.440</b>	-.096	<b>.642</b>
	Value of participation at school	.169	<b>.444</b>	.402	.185
Participatory attitudes	Political and social issues	<b>.568</b>	-.088	.500	.077
	Internal political efficacy	<b>.653</b>	-.104	.385	.166
	Legal protest	<b>.714</b>	.277	-.018	.017
	Electoral participation	<b>.553</b>	.105	.283	.355
Knowledge and skills for democracy	Political Participation	<b>.751</b>	.017	.073	-.240
	Informal participation	<b>.806</b>	.100	.135	-.119
	Self-efficacy	<b>.678</b>	.152	.187	.065
Knowledge and skills for democracy	Knowledge and skills	-.022	.069	-.026	<b>.885</b>

NOTE- Maximum likelihood Factor loadings obtained after orthogonal rotation with Kaiser normalization.

Besides the confirmation on the conceptual grouping of scales into four dimensions, FA results offer a further suggestion that stems from a consideration of the factor coefficients and factor loadings. The coefficients and the loadings of the scales within ‘Citizenship values’ and ‘Participatory attitudes’ are of the same magnitude, which suggests that building the respective dimension as a simple average of the underlying scales is statistically supported by the data. On the contrary, the ‘Social justice’ dimension is mostly determined by *equal rights for all ethnic/racial groups* and *equal rights for immigrants* (notice the almost double loading of those two scales compared to the loadings of the other three scales). To this end, in order to arrive at a balanced dimension on ‘Social justice’ where all five scales have similar contributions, the two scales on equal rights are further combined into a single scale by taking their average. This is because the scales on ethnic/racial groups and immigrants are measuring similar constructs and hence it makes sense to combine the two.

The fifteen scales populating the CCCI-2 civic competence framework were not set to the same international mean and standard deviation and furthermore some of the scales had different units of measurement. To render the 15 scales comparable, different normalisation techniques can be used (see OECD/EC JRC, 2008). The most common approach is the Min-Max, which was used in the previous version of the CCCI and will also be used here. The normalised score for an individual in a given scale is given by

$$I_{icj} = \frac{x_{icj} - \min_{cj}(x_{icj})}{\max_{cj}(x_{icj}) - \min_{cj}(x_{icj})} \quad (1)$$

where the subscript  $i$  refers to an individual (student),  $c$  refers to the country and  $j$  to the scale. After this normalisation step, all 15 scales range between 0 (lowest score) and 1 (highest score).

The CCCI-2 civic competence composite indicator is built using a simple arithmetic average across the scales within each of the four dimensions, and then a simple arithmetic average across the four dimensions. Thus, the civic competence composite indicator CCCI-2 score for an individual is given by the simple average of the scores obtained in each of the four dimensions, that is

$$Y_{cj} = \frac{1}{4} \sum_{i=1}^4 D_{icj} \quad (2)$$

The dimension score for an individual is the weighted average of the normalised scales underlying a given dimension, namely

$$D_{cj} = \sum_{i=1}^k w_i \times I_{icj} \quad (3)$$

where  $\sum_{i=1}^k w_i = 1$ . All normalised scales receive equal weights within a given dimension (example: conventional citizenship and social-movement related citizenship receive 1/2 weight in the dimension ‘Citizenship values’). The only exception is the *Equal rights for all ethnic/racial groups* and *Equal rights for immigrants* which receive 1/8 weight each, when the other indicators in the ‘Social justice’ dimension receive 1/4.

The CCCI-2 score at national level,  $Y_c$ , for a given country  $c$  is the average CCCI-2 score across the country’s individuals,

$$\bar{Y}_c = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{j=1}^N Y_{cj} \quad (4)$$

and the corresponding standard deviation is

$$SD_c = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{j=1}^N (\bar{Y}_c - Y_{cj})^2}{N - 1}} \quad (5)$$

A robustness analysis was also conducted to examine how the results, at country level, are affected by changing the assumptions with respect to two sources of uncertainty (the normalisation process and the structure of the composite indicator – using the framework based on the FA results for each single country). The results of the robustness analysis showed no major differences compared to the results that we present here (see Hoskins et al. 2012c).

#### ***4.4 Relationship between the four dimensions of civic competence***

Table 2 presents the Pearson correlation coefficients between the four dimensions of civic competence at the individual level. The strongest association was observed between ‘Citizenship values’ and ‘Participatory attitudes’ with a correlation of 0.49. The scores for ‘Social justice’ show a clear link with both the ‘Participatory attitudes’ and the cognitive dimension (‘Knowledge and skills for democracy’). However, there is no pattern between cognition on one hand and either ‘Citizenship values’ or ‘Participatory attitudes’ on the other. Overall, these low correlations suggest that the four dimensions capture distinct aspects of civic competence with practically little or no overlap of information between them.

**TABLE 2**  
**STATISTICAL ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN THE FOUR DIMENSIONS OF CIVIC COMPETENCE**

	Citizenship values	Social justice	Participatory attitudes	Knowledge and skills for democracy
Citizenship values	1.00	0.37	0.49	-0.01
Social justice	0.37	1.00	0.26	0.39
Participatory attitudes	0.49	0.26	1.00	0.02
Knowledge and skills for democracy	-0.01	0.39	0.02	1.00

## 5. Results

The descriptions of the country groupings are based on the 16 selected European countries. Due to the distinct nature of the four dimensions both theoretically and statistically we have opted to focus only on the results for the four dimensions of civic competence and not on the overall composite indicator, which may be appealing for media attention but does not provide enough information to explain country differences. Country differences across the four dimensions of civic competence have been compared using a multiple comparison test (based on information from a balanced one-way analysis of variance) which compares country means simultaneously and not just in pairs (Searle et al., 1980; Hochberg and Tamhane, 1987; Goldstein and Healy, 1995). These results are presented in Figures 4, 9, 15 and 18; for each country a confidence interval around its average score is calculated. By checking the overlap of the confidence intervals, one can evaluate statistical significance (here done at the 95% level). If the intervals overlap, the difference is not significant, but if there is no overlap between the intervals, the average country scores do differ significantly. In addition, for the eight equivalent scales between the 1999 IEA CivEd study and the 2009 ICCS survey we have found it helpful to examine the mean of these indicators for the 16 countries studied and to note country differences from this point and any comparative changes across time.

## *5.1 Citizenship values*

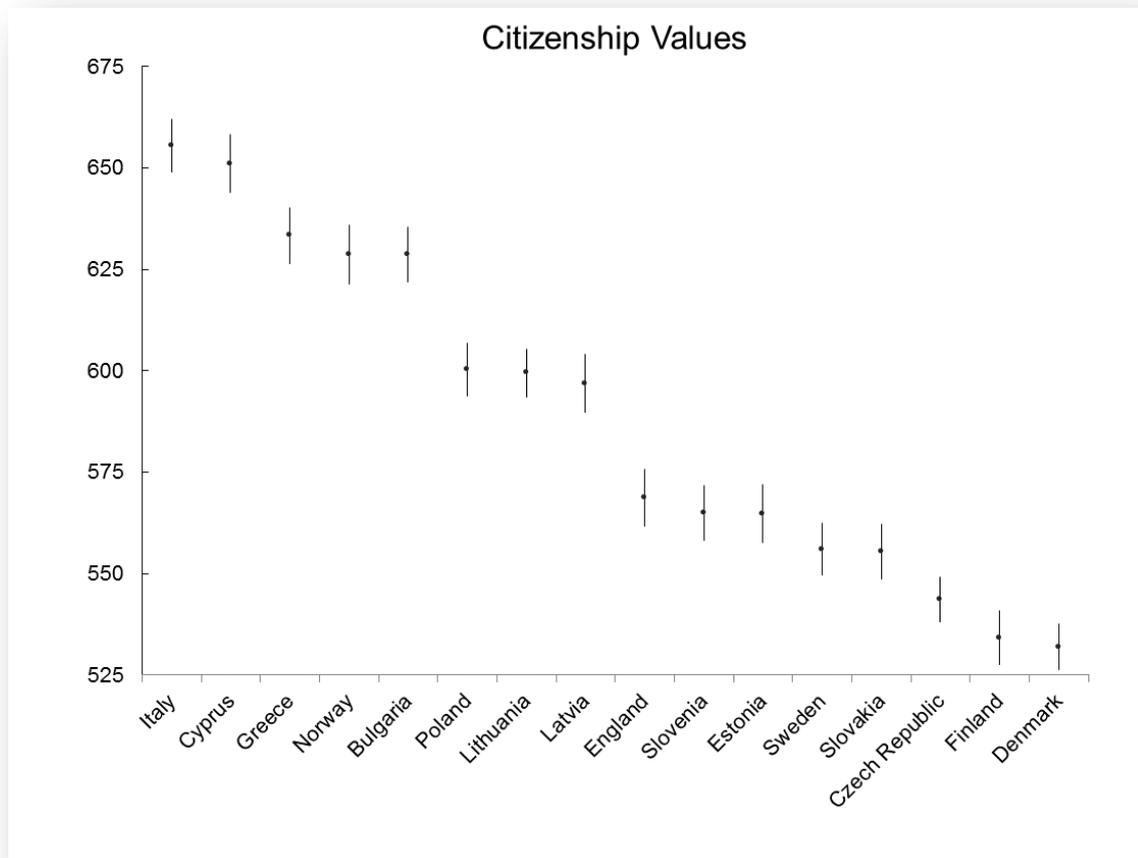
For 'Citizenship values' the highest scores are obtained by Italy and Cyprus (Figure 4). The next group of countries is Greece, Norway and Bulgaria. This is followed by Poland, Bulgaria, Lithuania and Latvia and then by England, Luxembourg, Slovenia. There are three groups of countries with lower levels of norms of Citizenship values. The first of are a group of countries including Estonia, Sweden, Slovakia, the next is the Czech Republic and finally a group formed by Finland and Denmark.

The hypothesis that provides the most likely explanation is that in countries that have had reasonably recent transitions to democracy and have experienced less stability, younger people place greater emphasis on Citizenship values, with high performances from Italy, Greece, Bulgaria, Russia, Poland, Lithuania and Latvia and low performances from the more stable democracies of Finland and Denmark. In addition, there could be the influence of the civic republican sense of civic duty (Italy and Greece) or even ethnic nationalist discourse which could be contributing to the scores of the former communist countries. However, Norway is clearly an exception to this theory as it scored in the group of highest-performing countries in Europe yet has had a much longer history of stable democracy even if it was invaded and occupied during the Second World War, and has a civic rather than ethnic concept of citizenship (Hjerm 1998).

To provide some plausible explanations for the higher than expected Norwegian results compared with countries with similar socio-political histories it is helpful to examine the citizenship education provision using the data gathered from the latest Eurydice study on citizenship education (Eurydice 2012). Norway, as with all the Nordic countries, has had a long tradition of citizenship education and according to Eurydice (2012) has been continued to be adapted based on internal school evaluation and external evaluation of the citizenship education teaching and learning experience and school climate (Eurydice 2012). Norway has combined cross-curricular citizenship education aimed towards social and cultural competences along with individual taught lessons in upper secondary education. Class representatives and student councils were made statutory in 1998 education act and these representatives were given a consultative role on the majority of decisions taken by school governing bodies (Eurydice 2012). The curriculum also states the need for students to be given the opportunity to experience participation both inside their schools and in their local communities. The results of the ICCS study show that 95% of students at age 14 had participated in school elections in Norway and 90% of students had participated in multicultural and intercultural activities in the community, which according to Eurydice (2012), is significantly higher than any other country. One could posit that the combination of opportunities for participation and decision making combined

with taught courses on citizenship could well be factors that facilitate the qualities of valuing citizenship engagement.

**FIGURE 4**  
**CITIZENSHIP VALUES: AVERAGE COUNTRY SCORES (WITH CONFIDENCE INTERVALS)**



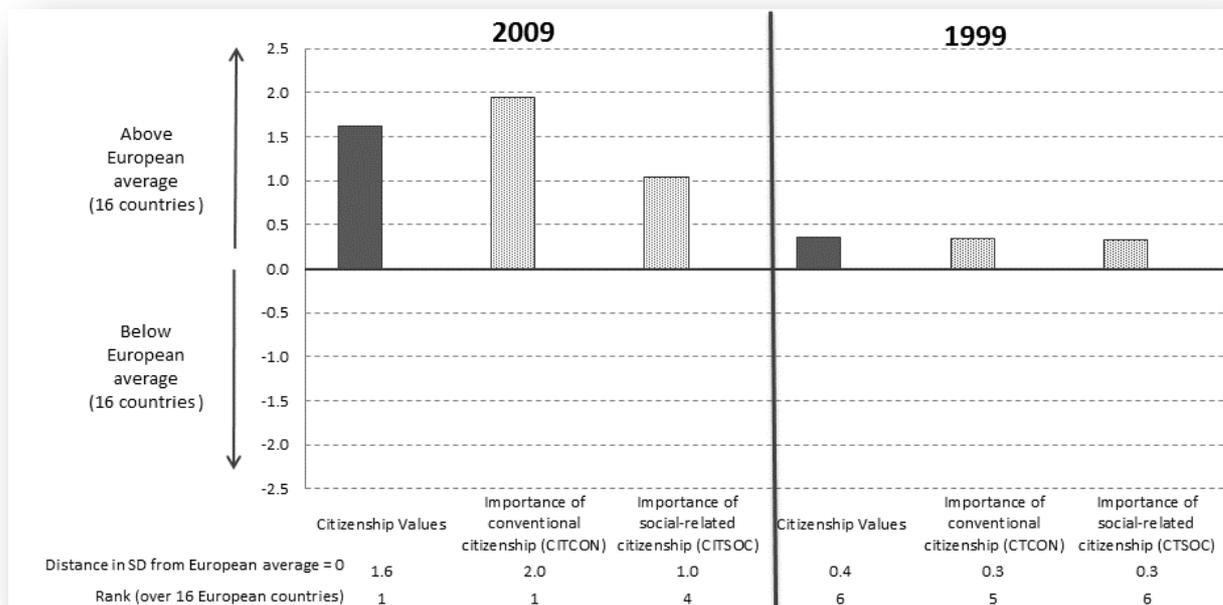
*NOTE- Confidence intervals are calculated at 95% level based on a multi-comparison test.*

#### *Citizenship values between 1999 and 2009*

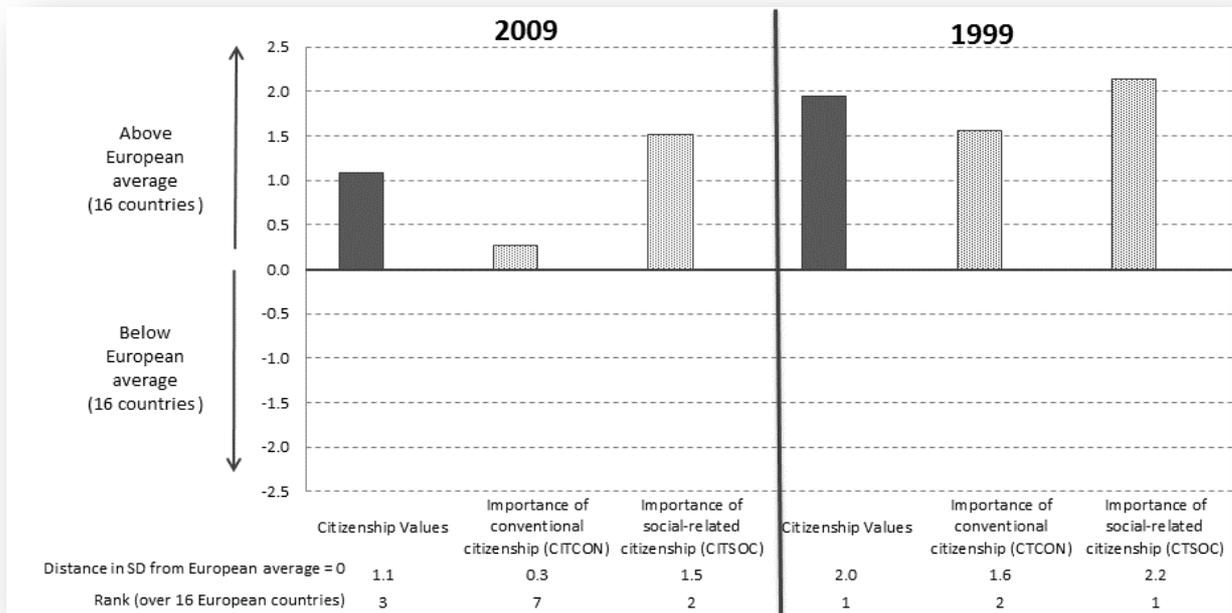
There is a reasonably good correlation (0.7) between the newly developed ‘Citizenship values’ dimension of the composite indicator with the original Citizenship values dimension. This suggests some consistency within the civic culture of young people in these European countries. ‘Citizenship values’ was comprised of two scales that have equivalents from the 1999 CivEd study and it is useful to explore the results for these individual scales in comparison to the overall mean for the 16 European countries selected. Italy, in 2009, gave the highest score for conventional citizenship and this was a comparative improvement for both indicators (Figure 5). Greece gained comparatively high scores on social movement related citizenship but had a lower score for conventional

citizenship norms compared to other 16 countries (Figure 6). Compared to the scores for these indicators in 1999 Greece has experienced a decrease for conventional citizenship (but still above the 16 country mean). We could posit that the economic recession in Greece and reduction of adult trust in political institutions between 2008-2010 (Hoskins et al 2012b) may well have contributed to the reduction in conventional citizenship norms of young people across the 10-year period but, nevertheless, we should acknowledge that it is still one of the groups of countries with the highest scores for this dimension. In contrast, Norway gained more positive scores for both of the scales in this dimension of the CCCI-2 and has increased on conventional citizenship norms over the 10 year period in comparison to other countries (Figure 7). Finland, however, performed lower than the 16 country mean on both indicators in 2009 which is a similar result to the Finnish results for 1999. For Denmark it is the low-scoring attitudes on social movement-related citizenship that reduces its overall score, which decreased compared to other countries since 1999 (Figure 8).

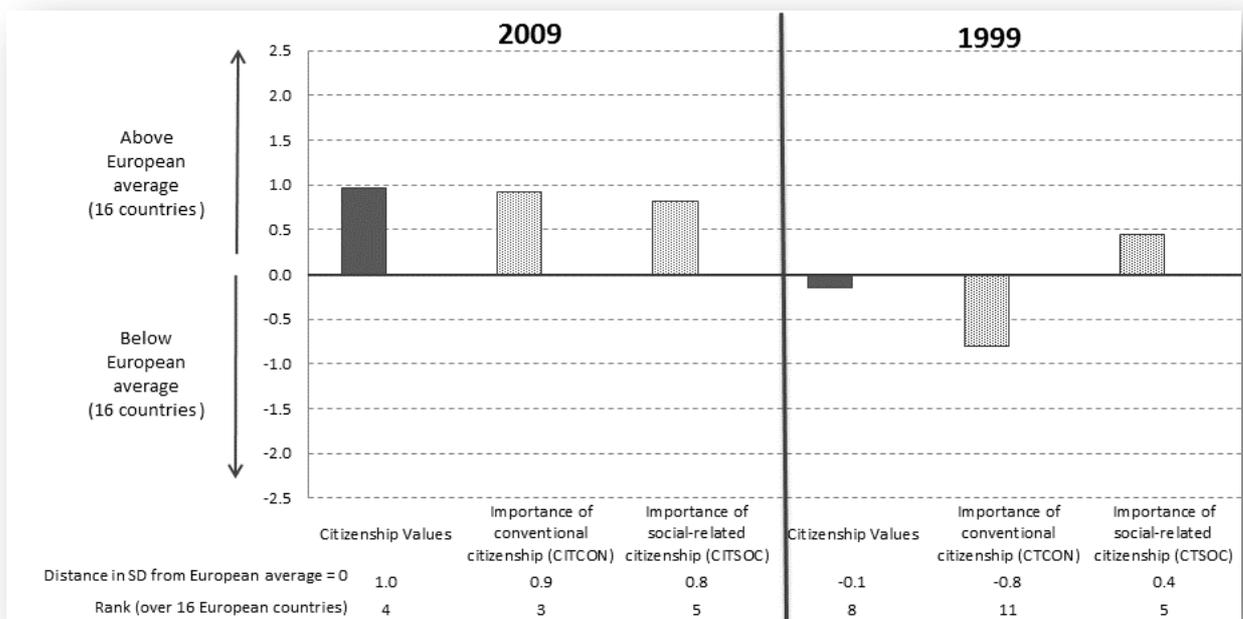
**FIGURE 5**  
**ITALY. CITIZENSHIP VALUES: COMPARING INDIVIDUAL INDICATORS IN 1999 AND 2009**



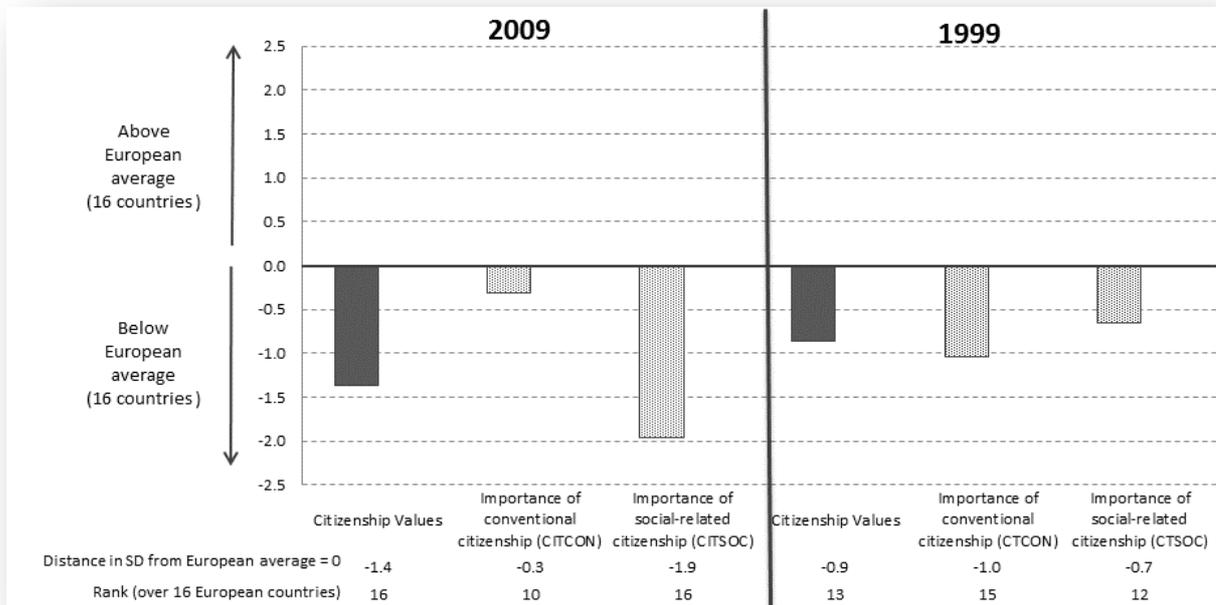
**FIGURE 6**  
**GREECE. CITIZENSHIP VALUES: COMPARING INDIVIDUAL INDICATORS IN 1999 AND 2009**



**FIGURE 7**  
**NORWAY. CITIZENSHIP VALUES: COMPARING INDIVIDUAL INDICATORS IN 1999 AND 2009**



**FIGURE 8**  
**DENMARK. CITIZENSHIP VALUES: COMPARING INDIVIDUAL INDICATORS IN 1999 AND 2009**

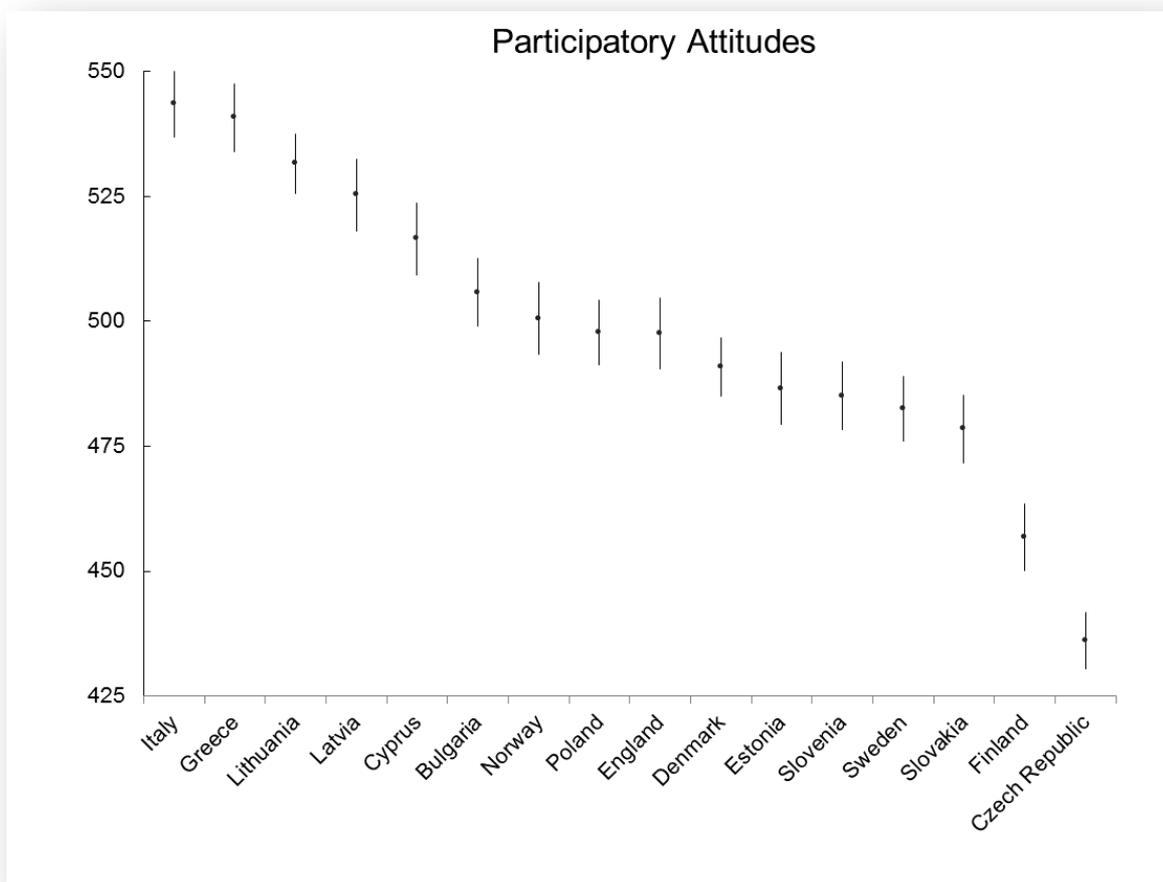


## *5.2 Participatory attitudes*

For 'Participatory attitudes' (Figure 9), the results are similar to those of 'Citizenship values'. The highest levels of Participatory attitudes were in a group of countries that include Italy, Greece, Lithuania, Latvia, and Cyprus, all with similar performances. Next follows a large number of countries from Bulgaria to Slovakia, which includes three of the Nordic countries, England, Luxembourg and some former communist countries. The lower end is occupied by two countries Finland and the Czech Republic with the latter having significantly lower levels of Participatory attitudes than Finland.

The theory that helps to explain the patterns in performance is that less stable countries with more recent transitions to democracy enhance the civic culture of positive attitudes towards participation. This is suggested by the higher performances from Italy, Greece, Lithuania, Latvia and Cyprus, and the lower country grouping consisting of the long-standing democracies such as Finland. In addition, it is interesting to note that in Finland hardly any teachers (less than 10%) thought that 'preparation for future political engagement' or 'participation in the local community' were the main aims of citizenship education (Eurydice 2012). Interesting and in response to the same question, 78.3% of Italian teachers surveyed chose 'promoting knowledge of citizens' rights and responsibilities' as one of the most important aims of citizenship education, which was higher than all the other EU countries that participated in the ICCS study (Eurydice 2012). Possibly offering this more civic republican style to the citizenship education that emphasises responsibilities as well as rights could well be an additional factor that enhances concepts of the good citizen.

**FIGURE 9**  
**PARTICIPATORY ATTITUDES: AVERAGE COUNTRY SCORES (WITH CONFIDENCE INTERVALS)**



*NOTE- Confidence intervals are calculated at 95% level based on a multi-comparison test.*

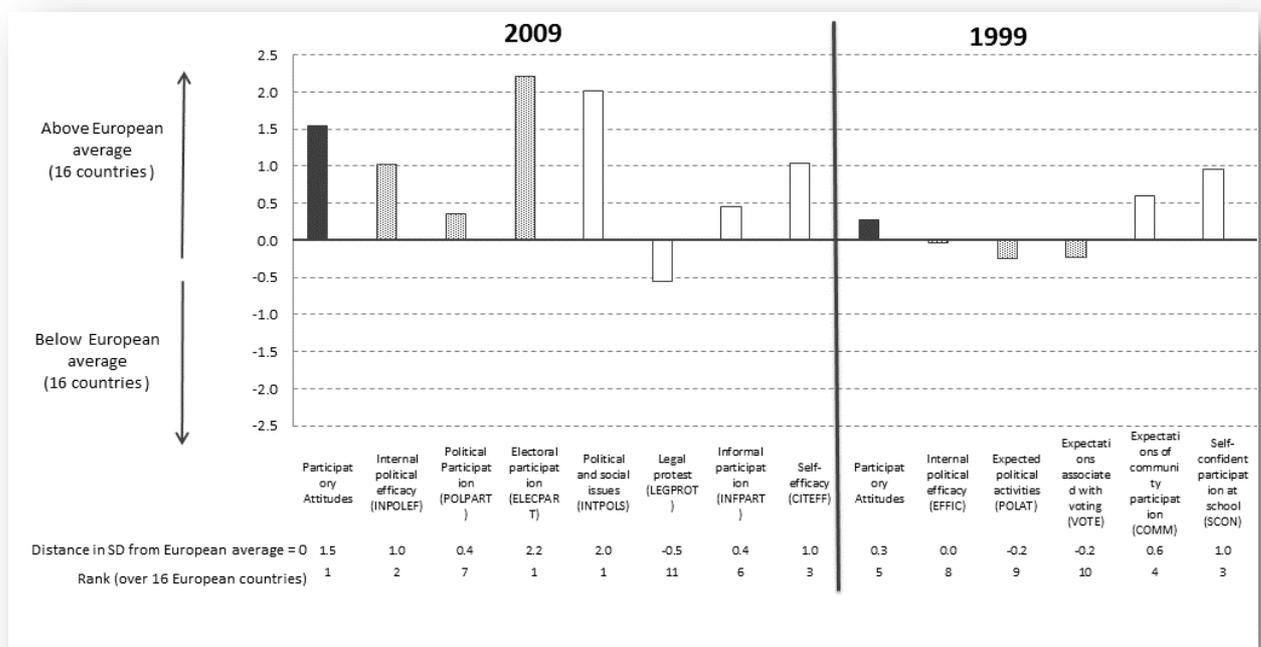
*Participatory attitudes between 1999 and 2009*

In this dimension there are three scales which have equivalents from 1999; internal political efficacy, expected voting, expected political participation. In comparison to the overall mean for the 16 countries, Italy gave the highest scores for voting intentions and sense of internal political efficacy in 2009 and this is an improvement since 1999 where Italy had scored below the mean for both of these indicators (Figure 10). Greece, in 2009, scored above the 16 country mean for each indicator in this dimension with the weakest result on electoral participation which is similar to their performance in 1999. In contrast, Lithuania and Latvia (Figure 11) have both increased their voting intentions and sense of internal political efficacy during the 10-year period. According to Eurydice (2012), Latvia during the period in question had organised a national programme on improving

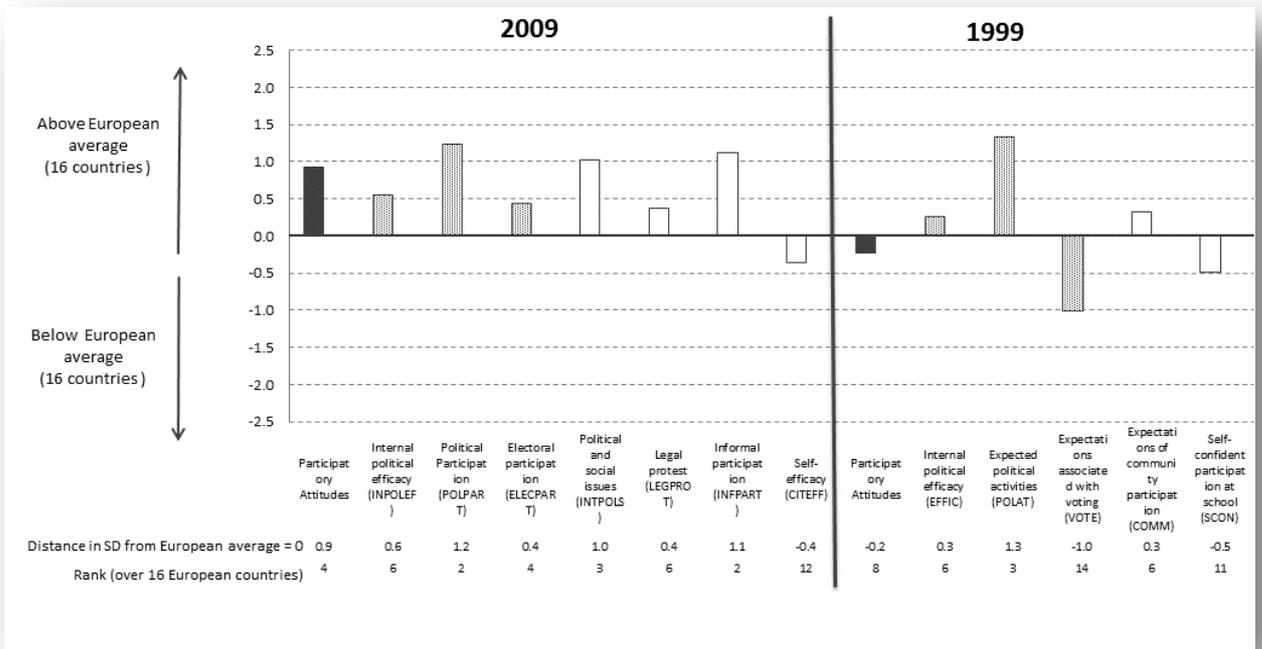
student voice in school governance including training teachers and head teachers in the value of student participation and how to effectively organise this process. This could be a factor in the increase of their youth's Participatory attitudes.

Finland is below the 16-country average for 5 of the 7 indicators in this dimension. The lowest score for Finland was for internal political self-efficacy which was more than 2 SD below the mean and was similar to their 1999 results (Figure 12). The Czech Republic is below the 16 country mean for 6 of the 7 indicators in this dimension. It is interesting that the 3 equivalent indicators from 1999 in which the Czech Republic scores the lowest, and for each of these indicators there has been a comparative decrease of more than 1 SD over the 10 year period (Figure 13). Interestingly, youngsters in Cyprus also provided less positive scores than in the previous study, and this is mostly due to the low scores on internal political efficacy and voting intentions, that went from above to below the mean in the ten-year period (Figure 14). The reduction in the Cyprus results on voting intentions and efficacy could also relate to the early impact of the economic crises as Cypriot adults declined in trust in political institutions by more than 20% between 2008-2010 (Hoskins et al 2012b).

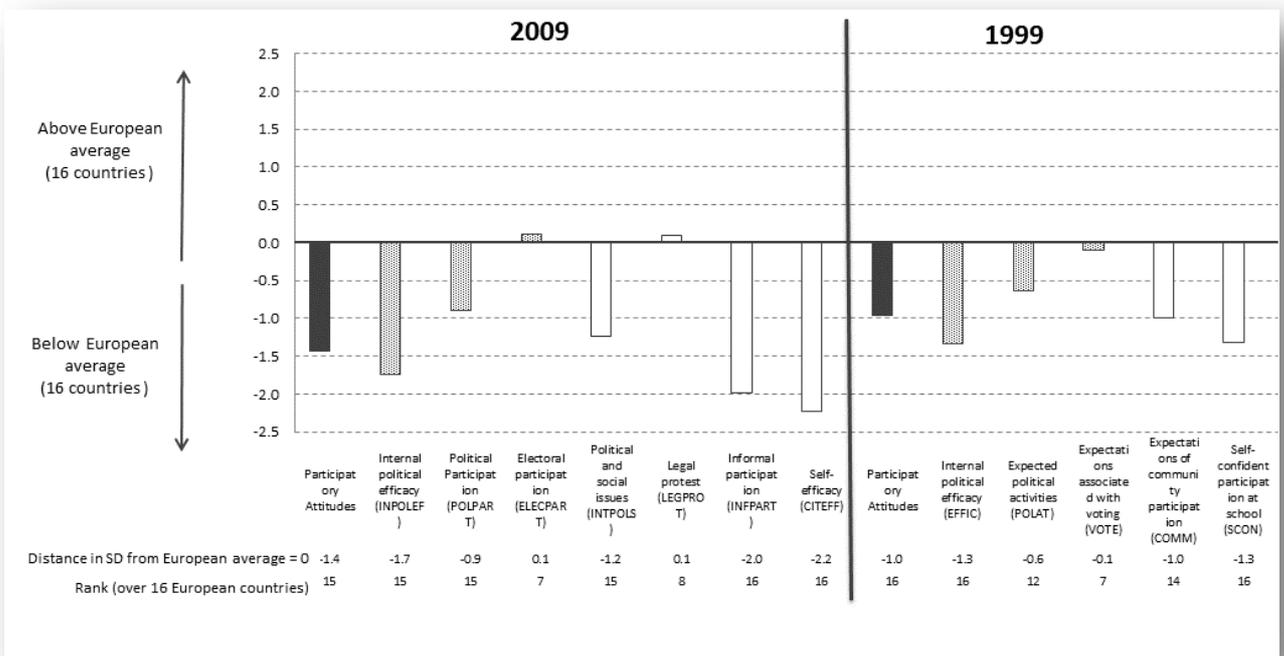
**FIGURE 10**  
**ITALY. PARTICIPATORY ATTITUDES: COMPARING INDIVIDUAL INDICATORS IN 1999 AND 2009**



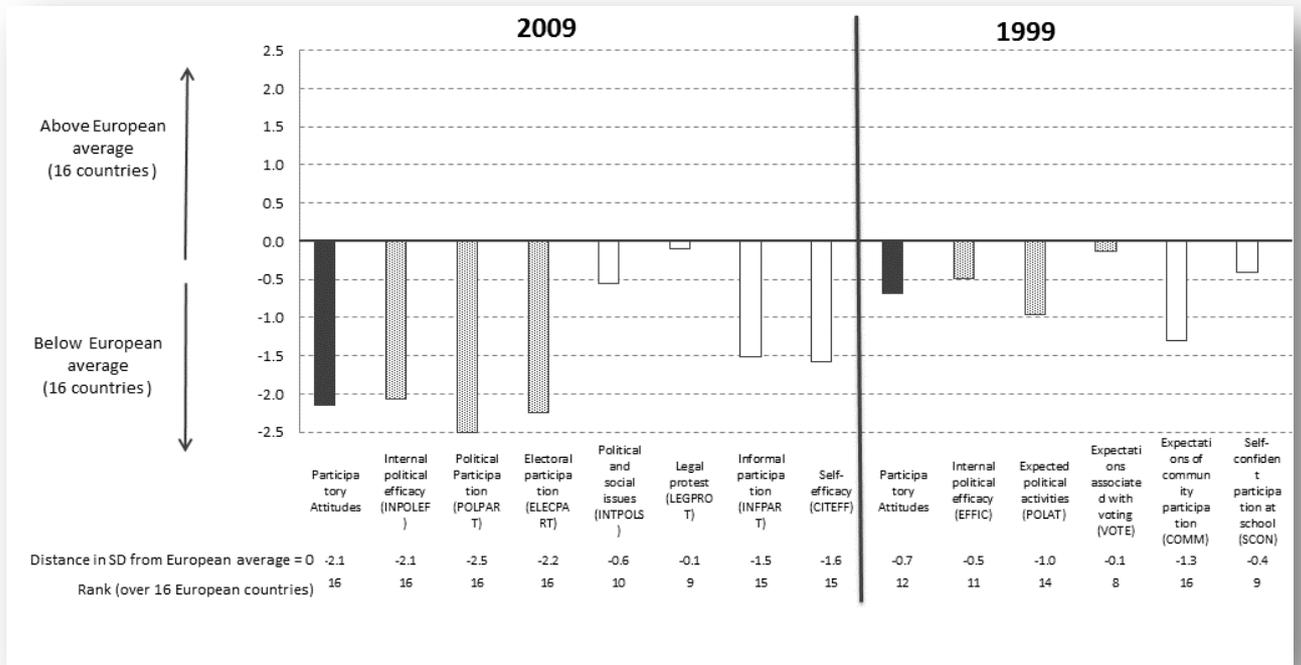
**FIGURE 11**  
**LATVIA. PARTICIPATORY ATTITUDES: COMPARING INDIVIDUAL INDICATORS IN 1999 AND 2009**



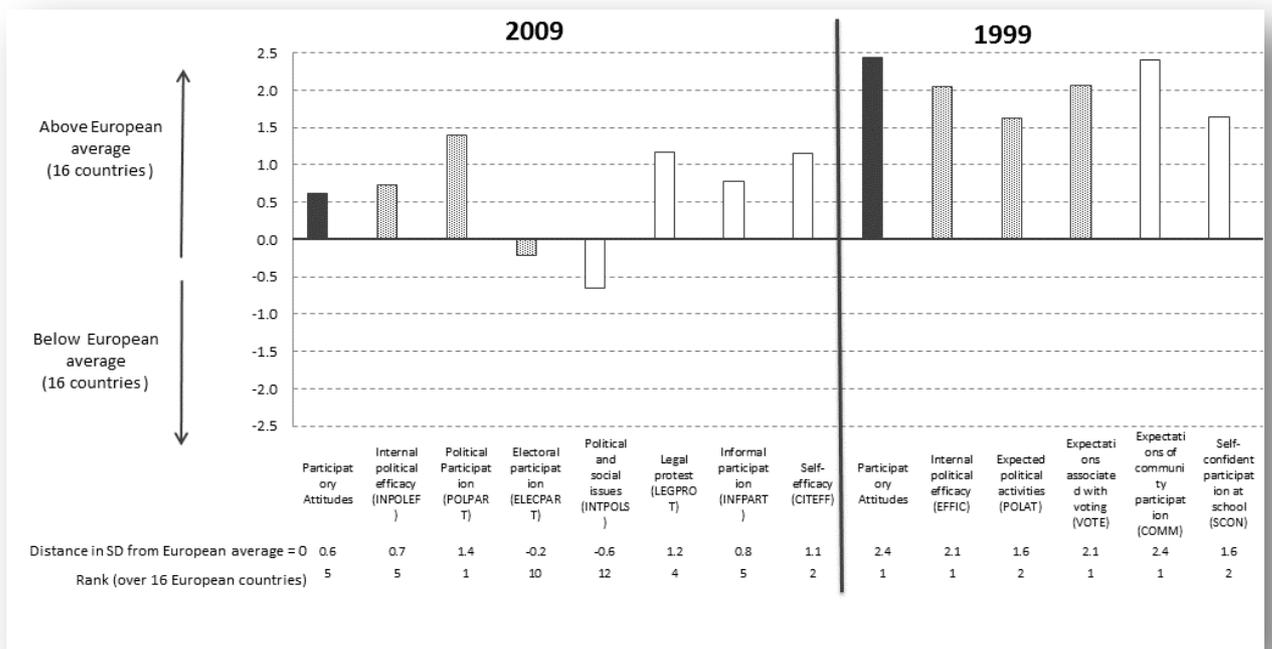
**FIGURE 12**  
**FINLAND. PARTICIPATORY ATTITUDES: COMPARING INDIVIDUAL INDICATORS IN 1999 AND 2009**



**FIGURE 13**  
**CZECH REPUBLIC. PARTICIPATORY ATTITUDES: COMPARING INDIVIDUAL INDICATORS IN 1999 & 2009**



**FIGURE 14**  
**CYPRUS. PARTICIPATORY ATTITUDES: COMPARING INDIVIDUAL INDICATORS IN 1999 AND 2009**



### *5.3 Social justice*

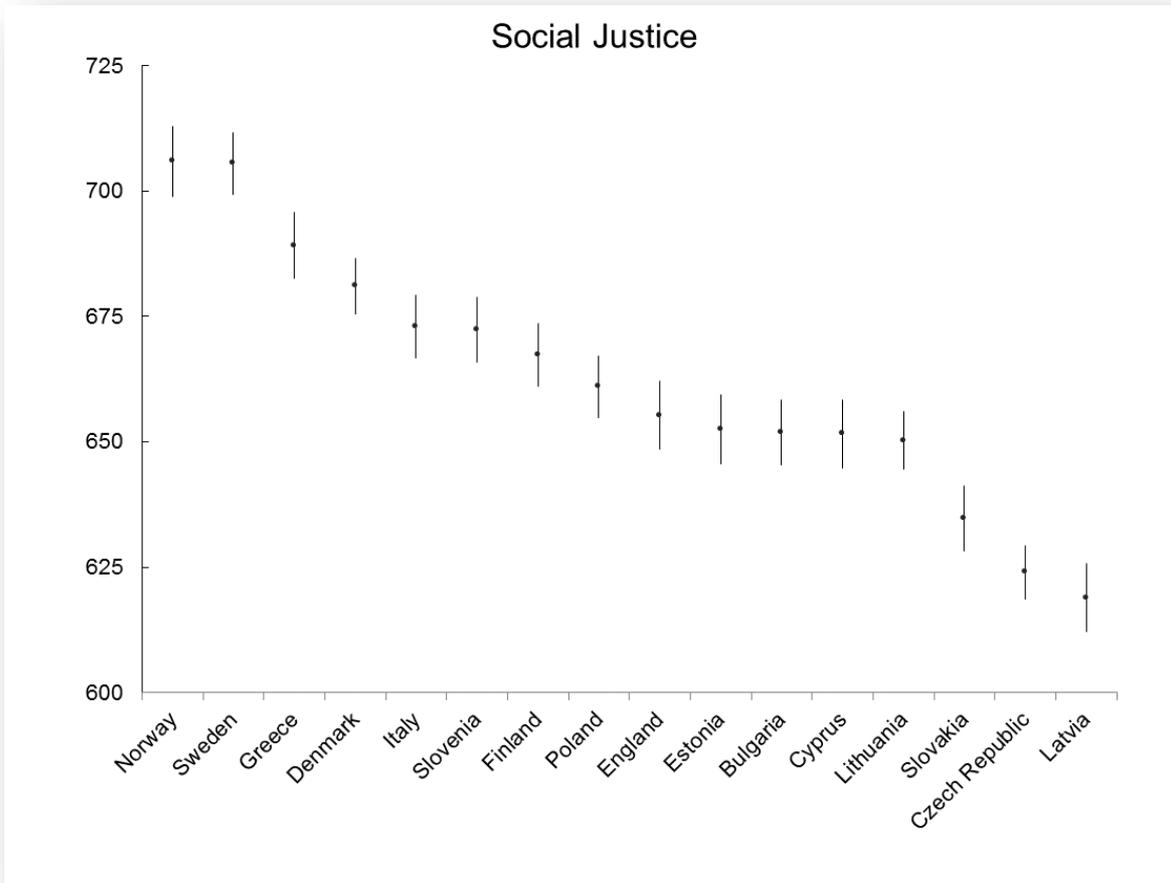
The results for the 'Social justice' dimension are quite different than those of the dimensions of 'Participatory attitudes' and 'Citizenship values'. The European countries who gain the highest performances are Norway and Sweden (Figure 15). These countries are followed by a fairly large group from Greece to Cyprus, which includes most of the countries selected (Figure 15). The next country grouping is The Slovak Republic by itself. Two European countries gain the lowest scores on the Social justice dimension: the Czech Republic and Latvia.

The length of democracy this time appears to have had a positive influence on 'Social justice' as the countries with long democratic traditions of the Nordic countries perform well. These countries have also placed a greater policy emphasis on cosmopolitan citizenship including human rights and diversity which may account for these responses from young people (Telhaug 2008). In contrast, the recent and less stable democracies are found more at the lower end of the table, including Slovakia, Czech Republic and Latvia. All these countries are recently formed nations and their sense of national identity has been to a large extent based upon a common ethnic cultural heritage (Kohn 2008) which can at least partly explain the low scores on attitudes towards migrants and minorities. Daun and Sapatoru (2008 p.157) argued that for many of the former communist countries in Eastern Europe in the transition from communism to democracies the notion of equality 'lost the importance it had enjoyed before 1989' and the emphasis of the education system became focused on the double pressure to create human capital and enhance national/ethnic identities.

In order to provide an explanation for why Nordic countries perform so well on questions of social justice, it is helpful to examine more broadly the Nordic education system. In all of the Nordic countries democracy has played an important role as in the construction and purpose of the education system, for example, the Eurydice report (2012 p.61) explains that, 'In Sweden, both the Education Act as well as the national curriculum state that schools must operate democratically and be a place where both staff and students are empowered to participate in schoolwork and the learning/teaching environment.' However, there are differences within the Nordic approaches to citizenship education. In Sweden and Denmark the cross-curricular approach is favoured whilst in Norway and Finland they also have specific lessons. In Sweden and Denmark, in contrast to Norway, there is little in the way of regulation on how citizenship should be learnt in the schools (Eurydice 2012). Thus we could posit that rather than regulations or specific subjects being the crucial factor for citizenship education, it is more likely that the history and prominence of democracy and equality within the whole education system and society at large plays a role in facilitating Social justice values.

In addition to the more positive results from Sweden and Norway, we can also explore the citizenship education of the newer democracies of Latvia and the Czech Republic, who gain lower scores on Social justice. The Czech Republic and Latvia have been highly active in recent years constructing citizenship education within the school curriculum, partly as a result of the European Union adopting civic competence as 1 of the 8 key competences (Council and Parliament 2006). Both countries use two approaches to citizenship education: integrated (into a subject called man and society) and a cross-curricular approach. Furthermore, the Latvian school programme also suggests that once a week students should also discuss a series of different issues including patriotism (Eurydice 2012 p.22), which depending on the discussion content, may be less conducive as regards tolerance towards minorities or immigrants. On the other hand, in 2007/08 Latvia also ran a large-scale project bringing students from different ethnic groups and economic backgrounds together to enhance greater understanding and tolerance. Interestingly, both Czech Republic and Latvia share citizenship curriculum, content of 'property ownership' and 'money and the market economy' (Eurydice 2012) which suggests an orientation towards the western liberal market ideals of competition rather than a focus on democratic values, tolerance and equality. We could suggest that despite citizenship education becoming quite prominent in the curricula and in contrast to Nordic model, there are signs of a nationalistic and a liberal market focus on citizenship education that Daun and Sapatoru (2008) had described as providing the focus for former communist countries in their new education programmes.

**FIGURE 15**  
**SOCIAL JUSTICE: AVERAGE COUNTRY SCORES (WITH CONFIDENCE INTERVALS)**

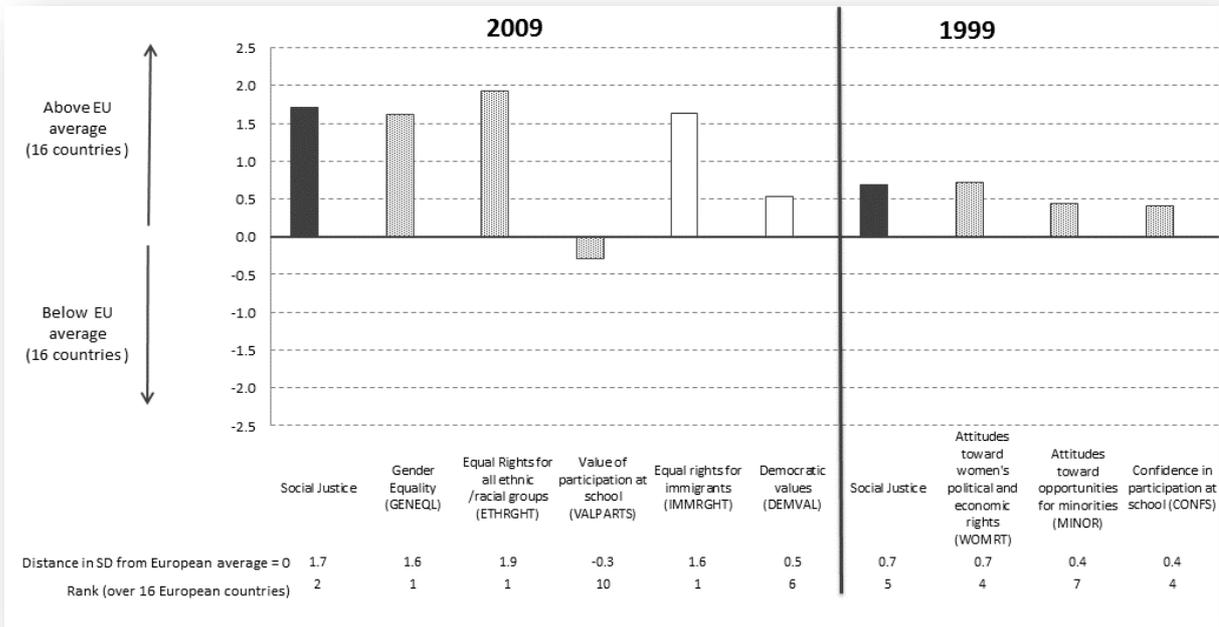


*NOTE- Confidence intervals are calculated at 95% level based on a multi-comparison test.*

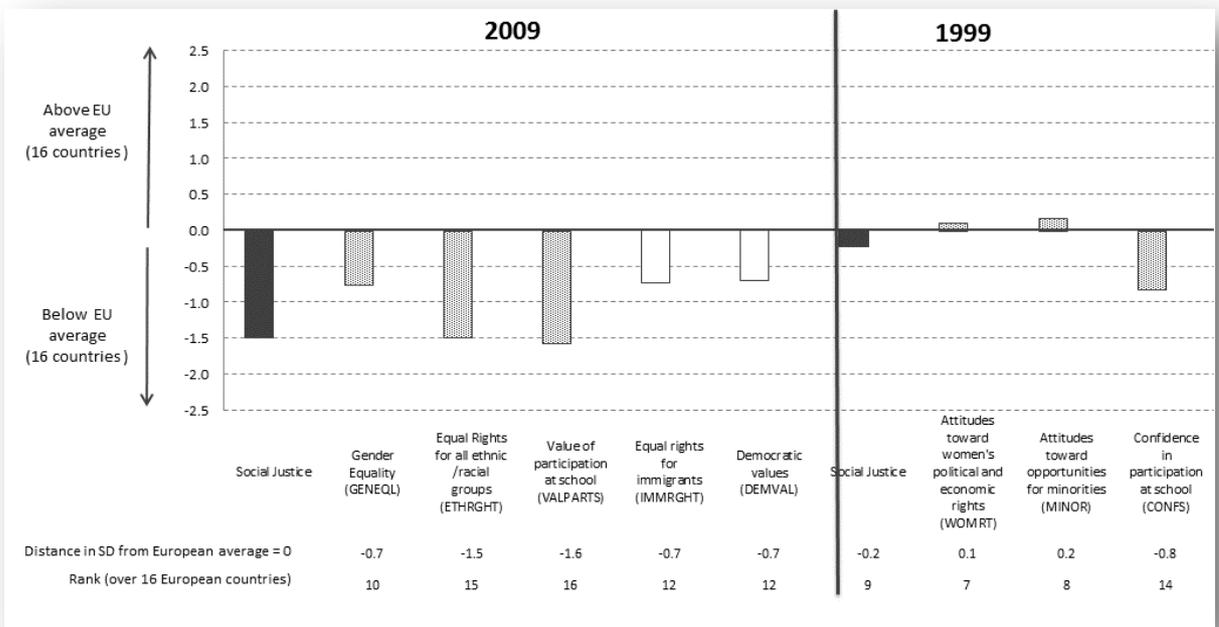
*Social justice attitudes between 1999 and 2009*

There are just 3 scales in the Social justice dimension in which we have equivalents from the CivED 1999 study; Gender equality, equal rights for minorities and the value of school participation. Compared to the 16 country mean, Sweden has increased its scores on gender and minority rights since 1999 by almost 1 SD (Figure 16) whilst Norway has maintained its' level from 1999. In contrast, the Czech Republic and Latvia are below the 16 country mean for each scale in this dimension in 2009. Whilst Latvia gives the lowest score for gender equality and minority rights in 2009, the Czech Republic has comparatively decreased on these two indicators from being just above the 16 country mean in 1999 to being below the mean in 2009 (Figure 17).

**FIGURE 16**  
**SWEDEN. SOCIAL JUSTICE: COMPARING INDIVIDUAL INDICATORS IN 1999 AND 2009**



**FIGURE 17**  
**CZECH REPUBLIC. SOCIAL JUSTICE: COMPARING INDIVIDUAL INDICATORS IN 1999 AND 2009**



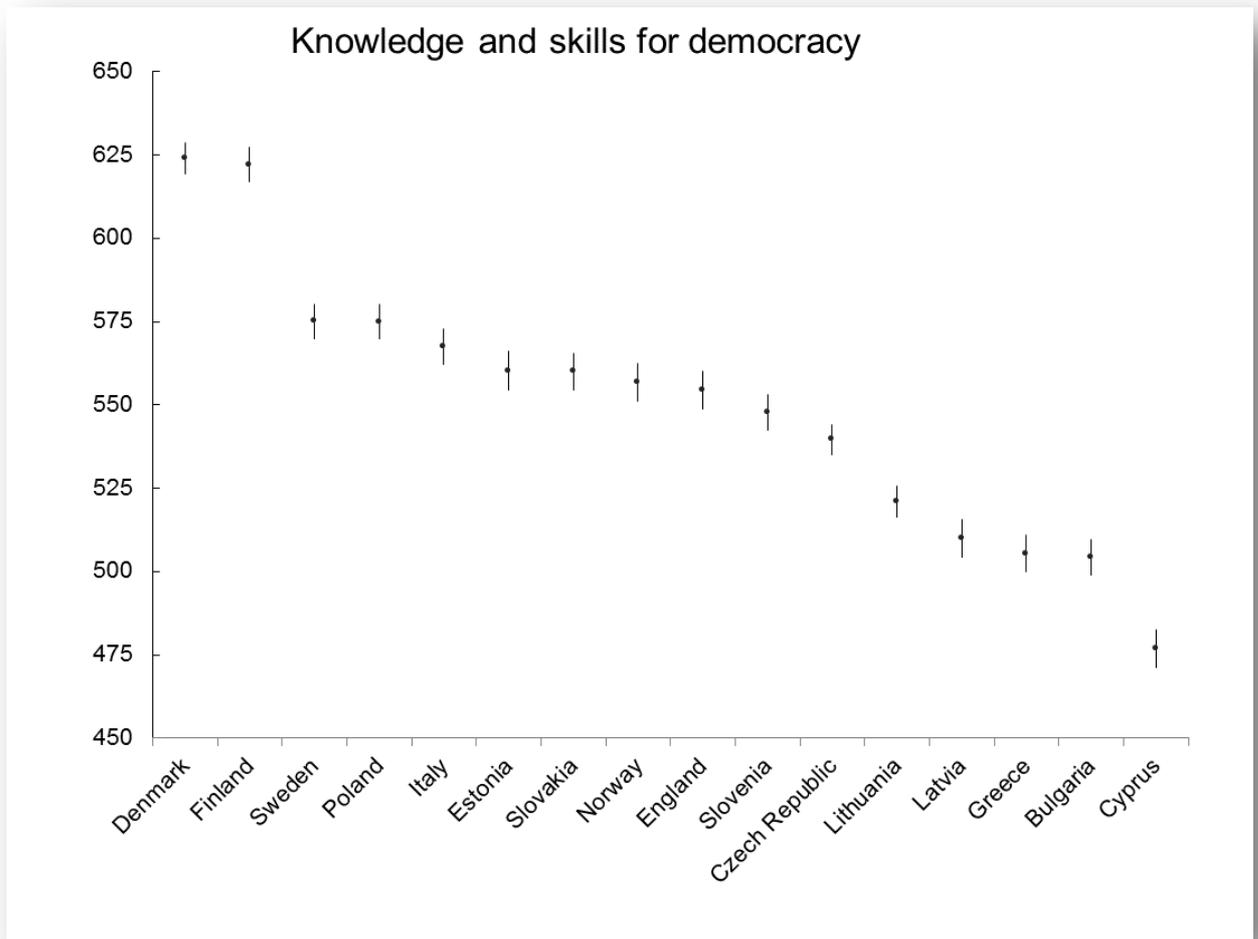
#### *5.4 Knowledge and skills for democracy*

As with the Social justice dimension, Nordic countries gain the highest performances in the citizenship assessment with Denmark and Finland attaining similar scores (Figure 18). Sweden and Poland form the next group of countries followed by a large group of countries from Italy to the Czech Republic that are not significantly different (Figure 18). Lithuania can be found next, followed by Latvia, Greece and Bulgaria which are not significantly different. Cyprus forms a group on its own with the lowest score. In general, again, we can posit that it is the less wealthy and newer democracies that are the lower performers.

There is little surprise that Finland achieves high scores on cognitive tests as they typically do well on international assessments such as PISA. At a country level there is a significant and reasonably high correlation (0.84) between the cognitive scores for countries who participated in the IEA ICCS study and in the OECD PISA test results. Although this relationship is not known for individual students, the high correlation at the country level may be partly due to the similarity in the cognitive processes tested, for example, the capacity to analyse, reason, reflect and evaluate on a written text. In addition, those students with higher reading literacy are more likely to have learnt knowledge on citizenship through reading (Hoskins 2011). Denmark and Sweden, however, perform better on the ICCS citizenship assessment than in their students' performance on the PISA tests. Again it could be the Nordic comprehensive and democratic concept of education that enhances their cognitive achievement on citizenship related topics.

What is striking to consider is that the countries that perform very well on the citizenship knowledge and skills test were the ones that gained significantly lower scores on Citizenship values (Finland and Denmark) and also Participatory attitudes (in the case of Finland). One explanation could be tied to the fact that teachers from the top 3 performing countries, Finland, Denmark and Sweden, all placed higher priority on 'promoting students' critical and independent thinking', with at least 80% of teachers selecting this as a main aim of citizenship education (Eurydice 2012). Perhaps the focus on critical independent thinking has enhanced Knowledge and skills on democracy but has also developed critical thoughts on the concept of the 'good citizen', which may have the unintended effect of underscoring the difficulties of creating real change, thus reducing their enthusiasm for engagement.

**FIGURE 18**  
**KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FOR DEMOCRACY: AVERAGE COUNTRY SCORES (WITH CONFIDENCE INTERVALS)**



*NOTE- Confidence intervals are calculated at 95% level based on a multi-comparison test.*

*Knowledge and skills for democracy between 1999 and 2009*

The low results for Cyprus and Greece are in stark contrast to the cognitive results from 1999 where both countries were near the top of the cognitive rankings. The Nordic countries, in contrast, performed well in both assessments. When comparing the trends for the cognitive tests, it is more accurate to reflect upon the set of cognitive test items that were given to both sets of students. The IEA have provided analysis of the trend items for 14 of the 16 countries that we have studied (Cyprus and Denmark were not included as the first made changes to the target population and the second changed translations to instruments). From those countries included, Slovenia is the only country that has significantly increased its score (Shulz et al 2010). In contrast, there were significant decreases in scores for Bulgaria, The Czech Republic, The Slovak Republic, Poland, Greece, Norway

and England. The first four of these countries' mean scores dropped by approximately 10 points and the next four by approximately 5 points (Shulz et al 2010). Finland increased its score but not significantly whilst Sweden decreased its score but not significantly. Slovenia's improved scores lend some support to arguments forwarded by modernisation theory as over the past 10 years, Slovenia has had a more successful economy than most of its former communist neighbours, which may have contributed to its increase in performance.

## 6. Conclusions

The results have shown that the Nordic countries, that combine democratically based education systems with teachers who believe that citizenship education is about promoting autonomous critical thinking, a political context of a long and stable democracy and economic prosperity, have been able to enhance the Social justice values and citizenship knowledge and skills of their students (Table 3). However, not all Nordic countries, in particular Finland and Denmark, have had the same success in enhancing young people's qualities of Citizenship values or Participatory attitudes. In contrast, the more recent democracies that have stronger nationalistic roots tended to score more highly on Citizenship values and Participatory attitudes. A possible explanation is that the same countries have faced much greater instability in recent years in their democratic system and may well see the acute need to engage either in the conventional political system or through protest-based activities. These findings are similar to the first civic competence composite indicator (Hoskins et al 2008) constructed using IEA CivEd data from 1999. From the new IEA data collected ten years on, although we can clearly see some individual country variation for the results of the four dimensions, for example, Italy increasing and Greece and Cyprus declining, the socio-political histories of the countries that perform well in the different dimensions remain rather constant and none more so than for Citizenship values.

It is interesting to note that the distinctions between the four dimensions also exist at the individual level. The correlations showed a relationship between Knowledge and skills for democracy and Social justice values but no relationship between Knowledge and skills and either Citizenship values or Participatory attitudes. The highest correlation was between Citizenship values and Participatory attitudes. Combining the individual with the country level information, we could suggest that the Nordic educational system enhances more of the qualities of both Knowledge and skills for democracy and Social justice values and, in contrast, the newer democracies that include a civic or ethnic nationalistic element within citizenship education enhance the qualities of both Participatory

attitudes and Citizenship values (figure 19). There are few countries that facilitate the learning of all four dimensions that suggests that different program approaches help to facilitate the learning of particular dimensions of civic competence. It is possible that the Nordic teachers' priority on developing critical-autonomous citizens facilitates cognition on citizenship and equality values but may be a less fruitful approach in enhancing Participatory attitudes or concepts of a 'good' citizen, which may be better supported by Italian teachers' priority on responsibility that draws from civic republican traditions. Further research on the individual level on the relationship between the different dimensions of civic competence and how they are learnt is therefore necessary. An examination of the role of national culture may also be relevant.

**TABLE 3**  
**KEY FINDINGS OF THIS REPORT**

Theories that explain cross national variation	Key findings of this report
Years of Democracy	<p>The years of democracy that a country has experienced (see van Deth et al., 2007 for a related research on adult population) has a positive relationship with young people's 'Social justice values' and 'Knowledge and skills for democracy'</p> <p>In contrast, the more recent democracies that have stronger nationalistic roots tended to score more highly on 'Citizenship values' and 'Participatory attitudes' for the 14 years old population (a similar to the previous composite, see Hoskins et al, 2008). A possible explanation is that these countries have faced much greater instability in recent years in their democratic system and may well see the acute need to engage either in the conventional political system or through protest-based activities</p>
Economic development	<p>Slovenia's improved cognitive scores for the 14 year old population lend some support to arguments forwarded by modernisation theory (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005) as over the past 10 years, Slovenia has had a more successful economy than most of its former communist neighbors', which may have contributed to its increase in its cognitive performance.</p> <p>The economic recession in Greece and reduction of adult trust in political institutions between 2008-2010 (Hoskins et al 2012b) may well have contributed to the reduction in their conventional citizenship norms as measured in the youth population.</p>
Influence of citizenship concepts	<p>Civic republicanism traditions (Lovett, 2010) found in Greece and Italy could provide an explanation for their 14 year olds high scores in 'Citizenship values' and 'Participatory attitudes'.</p> <p>Cosmopolitan policies (Held, 2010) related positively to the 'Social justice' and 'Knowledge and skills' dimensions but the evidence suggests that these principles may well undermine 'Citizenship values' and 'Participatory attitudes' in the youth population.</p>

Theories that explain cross national variation	Key findings of this report
Citizenship education	<p>The combination of opportunities for participation and decision making combined with taught courses on citizenship could well be factors that facilitate the qualities of valuing citizenship engagement.</p> <p>Rather than specific regulations or specific subjects being the crucial factor for citizenship education it is more likely that the history and prominence of democracy and equality within the whole education system and society at large plays a role in facilitating Social justice values in the youth population.</p> <p>Offering more civic republican style to the citizenship education that emphasizes responsibilities as well as rights could well be an additional factor that enhances concepts of the good citizens.</p> <p>Perhaps the focus on critical independent thinking has enhanced Knowledge and skills on democracy but has also developed critical thoughts on the concept of the ‘good citizen’, which may have the unintended effect of underscoring the difficulties of creating real change, thus reducing their enthusiasm for engagement.</p>
Nationalism	<p>Recently formed nations that have their sense of national identity based upon a common ethnic cultural heritage (Kohn 2008) partly help to explain the low scores on young people’s attitudes towards migrants and minorities in the ‘Social justice’ dimension.</p> <p>Nationalistic and a liberal market focus on citizenship education that Holger and Sapatoru (2002) described as providing the focus for former communist countries in their new education programmes was found to relate negatively with the ‘Social justice’ dimension.</p>

Finally, it should also be taken into account that we do not have full knowledge of the relationship between 14 year olds’ civic competence and their trajectories into adulthood attitudes and behaviour. Tentative research findings based on cross sectional survey data have shown that the Nordic’s youth comparative lack of enthusiasm for participation at 14 is not found in older age groups (17-25) (Amna and Zetterberg 2010). Amna and Zetterberg (2010) investigated the comparatively low rates of Nordic youth on intended participation compared to their southern European counterparts within the CivEd database. When studying an older age cohort using a separate international dataset (European Social Survey) they noted that already by the age of 17-25, the enthusiasm of the youth from Southern Europe has gone and the interest, voting and protesting is much higher amongst the Nordic youth. The authors suggest that the reasons for the differing processes of democratic transitions across regions are that young people in the Nordic countries have greater opportunities for political engagement as they become older compared to their Southern European counterparts. The youngsters in Nordic countries are encouraged to engage in a wide range of public activities in the formative period of their late teens and this encourages involvement of the more reluctant

youngsters. In contrast, the Southern European adolescents' early intention to participate has dissipated.

To provide better evidence for policy and practice for monitoring civic competence and on the learning of these qualities, regular monitoring of older cohorts are also needed. In addition, to provide a more comprehensive answer, comparative longitudinal research would be needed to trace the learning of citizenship and follow comparatively the democratic transitions of young people into active citizens.

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## **Abstract**

Civic competence is seen not only as a tool for empowering the individual to control their own lives beyond the existing social circumstances but can also help to create social capital and thereafter to underpin democracy and social and economic development. The European Commission has listed civic competence as one of the key competences to be developed under the EU Lifelong Learning strategy. This report describes the development of a measurement model along four dimensions of civic competence using the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) to monitor the levels of youth citizenship (young people aged about 14) across Europe. The model combines the traditions in Europe of liberal, civic republican and critical/cosmopolitan concepts of citizenship. Results suggest that Social justice values and Citizenship knowledge and skills of students are facilitated within the Nordic system that combines a stable democracy and economic prosperity with democratically-based education systems in which teachers prioritise the promotion of autonomous critical thinking in citizenship education. In contrast, medium term democracies with civic republican tradition, such as Italy and Greece gain more positive results on Citizenship Values and Participatory attitudes. This is also the case for some recent former communist countries that retain ethnic notions of citizenship. Yet, what emerges from this study is that the Nordic teachers' priority on developing critical and autonomous citizens may not be sufficient to enhance participatory attitudes or concepts of a good citizen, which may be better supported by the Italian teachers' priority on civic responsibility.

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