

Citizenship Education in Multicultural Society



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Contents

Introduction	7
Chapter 1. England	25
Historical Development of Multicultural Society in England	26
English Society Today: the Context of Diversity	31
Citizenship Education in England	34
Crick Report and Introduction of Citizenship Education to Schools (1998–2002)	34
Riots, Disturbances, and Terror Attacks as an Incentive for Change (2001–2007)	39
Ajebo Report and Cultural Diversity in Citizenship Education (2007–2010)	41
Policy of Conservatives, Return to National-Oriented Curricula and Declining the Role of Citizenship Education (2010–ongoing)	44
Conclusions	49
References	50
Chapter 2. The Netherlands	55
The Context: from Nation-State to Welfare State	55
The Evolution of the Dutch Approach to Multiculturalism	61
Educational Freedom in the Netherlands	73
Dutch Citizenship Education until 1980s – from Democratic Foundations to Instrumental Standardisation Era	77
Changes of the Dutch Citizenship Education at the Turn of the Century – from Moralising Citizenship to the Culturalization of Citizenship (1990s–2006)	80
Citizenship Education after 2021 – Advancing Clarity, Curriculum and Teacher Competence	87
Conclusions	89
References	92

Chapter 3. Canada (Ontario)	95
Introduction: Socio-Political Context in the Past and Today	95
Meanderings of the Concept of Multicultural Society	103
The Incipient Stage (pre-1971)	103
The formative period (1971–1981)	104
Institutionalisation (1982 to present)	105
Multicultural Education – the Case of Residential Schools	114
Trends in Citizenship Education in Canada/Ontario	119
Conclusions	129
References	131
 Chapter 4. Singapore	 137
A Small Country in a Big World. Introduction	137
Citizenship Education in the Phases of Educational Policy	138
Survival-Driven Phase (1965–1978)	146
Efficiency-Driven Phase (1979–1997)	147
Ability-Based, Aspiration-Driven Phase (1997–2011)	150
Student-Centric, Values-Driven Phase (2011–2019)	154
Learn for Life (2020–present)	161
Summary and Prospects of Moral and Civic Education in Singapore . .	168
References	172
 Final Remarks	 179

Introduction

The issues surrounding multicultural societies, multiculturalism, citizenship, and citizenship education are complex, dynamic, fluctuant, and often contentious. Historically, the concept of citizenship education has been a topic of discussion in Western societies since antiquity, featuring prominently in the works of philosophers such as Aristotle, Plato, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. These thinkers explored the education of the ideal citizen, a theme that has continued to evolve over the centuries.

The evolution of citizenship education reflects broader historical and social transformations, adapting to the needs of changing political and social environments. The establishment of state educational systems emphasised nation-oriented education for citizenship, a trend particularly reinforced after World War II. This period marked significant shifts, including decolonization and recognition of newly independent states, each developing its own educational policies. The fall of the Iron Curtain introduced additional challenges and complexities in citizenship education, with new approaches to address the changing political and social landscapes. In the era of globalisation and increased migration, traditional patterns of social structure have been transformed, forcing nation-states to reconsider their integration policies and approaches to social cohesion in increasingly diverse societies. The prevailing assimilationist models began to give way to more inclusive strategies that transformed the vision of citizenship education. Proposals emphasising celebrating diversity, social justice, and human rights-oriented education as central pillars of citizenship education emerged¹. These proposals for citizenship education in multicultural societies were fundamentally based on the ongoing search for balance between unity and diversity, between local, national, and global orientations in education. Ideally, this delicate balance aims to shape citizens who are not only aware of their cultural identities and values, but are also receptive and responsive to the global

1 See: J.A. Banks, *Diversity and Citizenship Education in Global Times*, [in:] *Education for Citizenship and Democracy*, (eds.) J. Arthur, I. Davies, C. Hahn, Sage, London 2008.

interconnectedness that defines contemporary life. Education systems in the 21st century strive to construct and cultivate the citizen equipped with an individual cohesive identity, prepared to integrate local, national, and global perspectives.

The evolution of academic citizenship education over the past fifty years has transitioned from its traditional political science roots to a more diverse interdisciplinary engagement. Discussions about citizenship, heavily influenced by T.H. Marshall's 1964 seminal work *Class, Citizenship and Social Development*², originally framed citizenship within the dimension of civil, political, and social rights, emphasising a foundational understanding of political systems and their institutions. As the discourse evolved in the latter half of the 20th century, it was enriched by contributions from prominent sociologists, such as Pierre Bourdieu in 1984³ or Will Kymlicka in 1995⁴. Those scholars extended the dialogue beyond the limits of political theory to explore the complex interplay between societal structures and political dynamics. The publication of Kymlicka's *Multicultural Citizenship* in 1995 marked a significant turning point in the field, challenging the traditional 'citizenship-as-rights' model and advocating for a greater focus on civic virtues and active political participation⁵. This perspective resonated and significantly influenced subsequent scholarly works.

As the 1990s progressed, theories of citizenship broadened to include considerations of identity, individual responsibilities, loyalties, and the roles of citizens, indicating a shift towards a multicultural framework in educational policies⁶. This trend extended beyond Western societies; with research delving into postcolonial multiculturalism in Asian contexts⁷. This geographical and cultural expansion underscored the global significance of multiculturalism in citizenship education, and illuminated varied strategies for managing cultural diversity within societies characterised by distinct historical and socio-political

2 T. H. Marshall, *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development: Essays*, Doubleday, New York 1964.

3 P. Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA 1984.

4 W. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1996.

5 Ibidem.

6 Ibidem; G. Delanty, *Citizenship as a Learning Process. Disciplinary Citizenship versus Cultural Citizenship*, "Journal of Lifelong Education", 2 (6), 2003, pp. 597–605; J. Raciborski, *Obywatelstwo w perspektywie socjologicznej*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2011.

7 See: W.O. Lee, *Emerging Concepts of Citizenship in the Asian Context*, Springer Netherlands, Dordrecht 2004; S. Moon, *Multicultural and Global citizenship in a Transnational Age: the Case of South Korea*, "International Journal of Multicultural Education", 12 (1), 2010; J.H. Ahn, *Transforming Korea into a Multicultural Society: Reception of Multiculturalism Discourse and its Discursive Disposition in Korea*, "Asian Ethnicity", 13 (1), 2012, pp. 97–109; A.T. Teo, *Civic Multiculturalism in Singapore. Revisiting Citizenship, Rights and Recognition*, Palgrave Macmillan, Cham 2019.

backgrounds. In 2002, J. Torney-Purta further enriched the discourse by introducing the psychological dimensions of citizenship, which emphasised the cognitive processes essential for the social and political development of young individuals⁸. This psychological perspective deepened the understanding of how young people comprehend and engage with political concepts and the emotional foundations of their civic actions.

Moreover, during the late 1990s and early 2000s, there was a heightened emphasis on human rights education, prominently championed by scholars such as Audrey Osler and Hugh Starkey⁹. They promoted a rights-based approach within citizenship education that emphasises individual freedoms and social justice. This era also marked a period of philosophical exploration with contributions from thinkers like Terence H. McLaughlin in 1992¹⁰ and Bernard Crick in 2007¹¹, who engaged in debates concerning the ethical underpinnings and democratic principles inherent in citizenship education. They grappled with the complexities of defining good citizenship and the ethical aspects of democratic participation. Notably, T.H. McLaughlin's differentiation between 'maximal' and 'minimal' citizenship¹² offered a comprehensive framework that articulates a spectrum ranging from basic law adherence to extensive civic involvement, thereby enhancing the scholarly dialogue on citizenship. In the same period, Joel Westheimer and Joseph Kahne articulated a vision for citizenship education that emphasised the development of personally responsible, participatory, and justice-oriented citizens¹³. They advocated for educational practices that engage students in exploring various ways to contribute to civic life, such as participating in public inquiries and serving on local government bodies. All these frameworks highlighted that effective citizenship education should not only foster individual

8 J. Torney-Purta, *The School's Role in Developing Civic Engagement: A Study of Adolescents in Twenty-Eight Countries*, "Applied Developmental Science", 6, 2002, pp. 202–211.

9 A. Osler, H. Starkey, *Changing Citizenship: Democracy and Inclusion in Education*. Open University Press, 2005.

10 T.H. McLaughlin, *Citizenship, diversity and education: A philosophical perspective*, "Journal of Moral Education", 21 (3), 1992, pp. 235–250.

11 B. Crick, *Citizenship: The Political and the Democratic*, "British Journal of Educational Studies", 55 (3), 2007, pp. 235–248.

12 The maximal and minimal interpretations of citizenship proposed by McLaughlin (1992) have been widely discussed in the theory and research of citizenship. A narrow understanding of citizenship sees the 'minimal' approach. The prospective citizens are taught mainly to be law-abiding. Since maximal interpretations include a broader definition of citizenship, maximal citizens are encouraged to be highly active and engaged. Thus, citizenship education can be either limited to achieve 'minimal' citizenship through knowledge transmission or oriented towards developing highly active and engaged citizens. However, minimalist and maximalist interpretations constitute a continuum and do not oppose each other; see: T. H. McLaughlin, *op. cit.*

13 J. Westheimer, J. Kahne, *What Kind of Citizen? The Politics of Educating for Democracy*, "American Educational Research Journal", 14 (2), 2004, pp. 237–269.

responsibility but also encourage active participation and critical examination of social injustices to promote a more equitable society.

These interdisciplinary contributions have significantly shaped the scholarly discourse on citizenship education, illustrating its evolution from a state-centric view to a complex interplay of social, psychological, and philosophical perspectives that accommodate and celebrate diverse identities and approaches to civic participation and political engagement in contemporary societies¹⁴. As Western societies increased their awareness of cultural diversity and pluralism, previously excluded groups began gaining rights. Those who deviated from the model of ‘normal’ citizens advocated for “a more inclusive conception of citizenship which recognizes (rather than stigmatises) their identities, and which accommodates (rather than excludes) their differences”¹⁵.

In our study, we adopt the viewpoint that citizenship is a multifaceted and expansive concept. It introduces new roles and identities for citizens and fosters the development of civic competencies that surpass traditional political and legal boundaries. According to Osler and Starkey, citizenship encompasses three dimensions: status, feeling, and practice. ‘Status’ mainly pertains to the legal dimensions of citizenship regulated by the state, including rights like granting citizenship or issuing passports. ‘Feeling’ involves the emotional connection and sense of belonging to a specific local, national, or global community. ‘Practice’ refers to active participation and engagement at various community levels, demonstrating how citizenship operates in diverse life aspects¹⁶. This comprehensive perspective underlines how citizenship is continually evolving as societies grow more inclusive and acknowledge the varied identities and contributions of their members.

We argue that there is a fundamental connection between the ideal pattern of citizenship adopted by the particular society and the practice of corresponding policies and pedagogical practices implemented in educational institutions¹⁷. Therefore, the purpose of our study is to analyse – from the macro perspective – the selected issues concerning the agenda of citizenship education policy and school practices in England, the Netherlands, Canada (Ontario), and Singapore.

14 J. Annette, *Active Learning for Active Citizenship: Democratic Citizenship and Lifelong Learning*, “Education, Citizenship and Social Justice”, 4 (2), 2009, pp. 149–160; D. Kerr, *Citizenship Education: An International Comparison*, [in:] *Education for Citizenship*, (eds.) D. Lawton, J. Cairns, R. Gardner, Continuum, London 2000; W. Kymlicka, *Contemporary political philosophy. An Introduction*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2002; J. Weinberg, M. Flinders, *Improving Citizenship Education*, [in:] *Whose Government Is It? The Renewal of State-Citizen*, (ed.) H. Tam, Bristol University Press, Bristol, 2019.

15 W. Kymlicka, op. cit., p. 327.

16 A. Osler, H. Starkey, *Education for Democratic Citizenship: a Review of Research, Policy and Practice 1995–2005*, “Research Papers in Education”, 24 (4), 2006, pp. 433–466.

17 See: B. Crick, *Essay on citizenship*, Continuum, London 2000.

We undertake a comprehensive review of the development of multicultural societies, and we delve into an analysis, discussion, and reconstruction of the current socio-political context of citizenship education in these countries.

The selection of countries for this study was not arbitrary. We chose to explore former colonial empires such as Great Britain and the Netherlands and former colonies like Canada and Singapore to provide diverse perspectives on how post-colonial legacies influence contemporary citizenship education. This approach allows us to explore the complexities and challenges of implementing citizenship education in systems shaped by their colonial histories. We hope our study will further contribute to the existing literature on citizenship education in multicultural countries, particularly from a post-colonial perspective.

The foundational premise of the discussions in this volume is the assumption that citizenship and citizenship education are dynamic social constructs, an idea derived from the social construction of reality as proposed by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann. Researchers are urged to consider everyday realities, shared experiences, and common knowledge, as these elements speak to the underlying social dynamics that shape our understanding. Consequently, knowledge itself is seen as a social construct and a catalyst for social change¹⁸. From this vantage point, citizenship is perceived as a product of social reality construction, with its interpretation being influenced by varying social contexts. This perspective enables diverse definitions and understandings of citizenship across different geographical and temporal contexts. Societal discourses on citizenship and citizenship education are constantly evolving, with older narratives weakening and giving way to newer, more dominant ones¹⁹.

Another important perspective in this volume stems from recent developments in citizenship studies that have introduced new models and concepts, connected with the transition from intimate to global, highlighting the significant expansion of multiculturalism within citizenship education²⁰. This growth has

18 P. Berger, T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, Penguin Books, London 1967.

19 D. Hejwosz-Gromkowska, *Edukacja obywatelska we współczesnej Anglii. Studium socjopedagogiczne*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, Poznań 2019.

20 See: Ibidem; S. Castels, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Response to the Dilemma of Globalisation and National Identity?*, "Journal of Intercultural Studies", 18 (1), 1997, pp. 5–22; H. Bannerji, *The Dark Side of the Nation: Essays on Multiculturalism, Nationalism and Gender*, ON Canadian Scholars' Press, Toronto 2000; B. Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory*, Macmillan, London 2000; V. Bader, *Defending Differentiated Policies of Multiculturalism*, "National Identities", 9 (3), 2007, pp. 197–215; J.A. Banks, *Diversity and Citizenship Education in Multicultural Nations*, "Multicultural Education Review", 1 (1) 2009, pp. 1–28; M. Murphy, *Multiculturalism: A Critical Introduction*, Routledge, New York 2011; T. Modood, *Multiculturalism*, Polity Press, Cambridge and Malden 2013; G. Bouchard, *Quebec Interculturalism and Canadian Multiculturalism*, [in:] *Multiculturalism and Interculturalism: Debating the Dividing Lines*, (eds.) N. Meer, T. Modood, R. Zapata-Barrero, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh 2016; A.T. Teo, op.cit.

captured the attention of numerous scholars, some of whom propose that national citizenship might be supplanted by cosmopolitan, post-national, or entirely novel concepts of citizenship²¹. The emergence of post-national citizenship is based on the premise that neither the nation-state nor nationality constitute the essential elements of an individual's status, identity, rights, or sense of belonging²². Additionally, the political concept of multiculturalism significantly alters the traditional idea of the nation-state, or even introduces an entirely new project aimed at remaking the nation and nation-state²³.

Advocates of post-national models of citizenship – including global, cosmopolitan, and multicultural perspectives – view these concepts as opportunities to promote global peace, universal human rights, tolerance, and sustainable development. Critics, on the contrary, dismiss these models as either utopian or trivial. Post-national citizenship has evolved in response to the post-war conception of citizenship, which traditionally values an expansion of civic 'rights' or 'rights to have rights'. However, this approach has proven inadequate in ensuring the inclusion of all community members, leading to criticism of national citizenship for accentuating individual differences and excluding marginalised groups such as immigrants, indigenous populations, and settlers²⁴. Multicultural citizenship as an emergent critique of post-war citizenship, can be understood in terms of cultural diversity, positive identity, dialogue renegotiation, and a social justice orientation. This critique stresses the need for a broader and more inclusive understanding of citizenship that accommodates diverse identities and fosters equitable participation in societal processes.

In this volume, specific terminology is used when discussing multiculturalism and multicultural citizenship in terms of theories or policies. From an epistemological perspective, we view theory as both shaping and shaped by empirical examples. It is important to recognize that while theories and case studies are interconnected in this way, case studies themselves are context-specific, flawed, and only somewhat reflect the theoretical ideals they are based on.

Initially, multiculturalism emerged as a political response to the realities of post-immigration, where the notion of 'difference' became pronounced. Chris-

21 G. Delanty, op. cit.

22 P. Mouritsen, *Beyond Post-national Citizenship: Access, Consequence, Conditionality*, [in:] *European Multiculturalism(s): Cultural, Religious and Ethnic Challenges*, (eds.) A. Triandafyllidou, T. Modood, N. Meer, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh 2012.

23 J. Dobbernack, T. Modood, *What Is Important in Theorizing Tolerance Today?*, "Contemporary Political Theory", 14, 2015, pp. 159–196.

24 See: E. Warren, *Chief Justice Earl Warren's Supreme Court Dissenting Opinion in Perez v. Brownell*, March 31, 1958; T.H. Marshall, *Class, Citizenship and Social Development*, Anchor, New York 1965; P. Mouritsen, op. cit.; J. Dobbernack, T. Modood, op. cit.; A.T. Teo, op. cit.

tian Joppke, in his seminal work *Is Multiculturalism Dead?*, delineates four distinct models or approaches to multiculturalism:

1. liberal multiculturalism: this model underscores individual rights and equality under the law. It seeks to accommodate cultural diversity within the confines of liberal democracy, ensuring that minority cultures are both respected and protected;
2. republican multiculturalism; it focuses on the public sphere and civic culture, this model champions the significance of a shared civic culture. It allows for diversity in private life and promotes the idea that citizenship entails active participation in a common political community;
3. critical multiculturalism; this approach is attuned to the power dynamics within societies and aims to challenge structural inequalities. Its goal is to address systemic injustices and enhance social justice for marginalised groups, often through challenging existing power structures and advocating for transformative changes; and
4. neoliberal multiculturalism; rooted in market-based solutions, this approach integrates diversity management within the broader context of globalisation and economic liberalism. It views diversity as an asset for economic growth and competitiveness, promoting multicultural policies to facilitate labour mobility and cultural exchange.

These frameworks offer diverse perspectives on managing cultural diversity in contemporary societies, each presenting its own set of strengths, weaknesses, and implications for policy-making and social integration²⁵.

In recent years, amid ongoing debates over multiculturalism, the concept of interculturalism has gained prominence as an approach for managing cultural diversity in liberal-democratic societies, especially in Europe. Christian Joppke, in his later work²⁶, discusses two primary variants of interculturalism and their differing stances on multiculturalism:

1. majoritarian interculturalism; originating in francophone Québec, this approach prioritises the acceptance and respect for the francophone majority culture by immigrants. It highlights the linguistic and religious dimensions, the significance of the French language and Christian values within public and educational realms. Proponents of this model view it as a way to embrace the majority culture while preserving national identity and heritage;

25 C. Joppke, *Is Multiculturalism Dead?: Crisis and Persistence in the Constitutional State*, Polity Press, Cambridge 2016.

26 C. Joppke, *War of words: Interculturalism v. Multiculturalism*, "Comparative Migration Studies", 6, 2018, pp. 1–10.

2. post-majoritarian interculturalism; this variant challenges the traditional majority-minority dualism of majoritarian interculturalism, criticising its focus on majority precedence. It advocates for a more inclusive and egalitarian approach, critiquing multiculturalism for reinforcing outdated notions of majority and minority identities and relations. Post-majoritarian interculturalism begins with recognizing the unprecedented diversity within societies and promotes intercultural dialogue to navigate this diversity, seeking to move beyond the simplistic categorizations of multicultural paradigms.

Both approaches to interculturalism represent significant shifts in how societies can manage cultural diversity. Unlike majoritarian interculturalism, which can position diversity in contrast to cosmopolitan multiculturalism, post-majoritarian interculturalism perceives diversity as integral to contemporary societies. It aims to tackle the challenges associated with diversity without depending on simplistic majority-minority binaries²⁷. Interculturalism advocates for deep understanding and accommodation of the cultural needs of immigrant populations within public administration, extending support across various sectors such as the workplace, education, and other social institutions²⁸.

Critics of multiculturalism argue that it encourages group separation, national-level grandstanding, theoretical abstraction, and a lack to compromise. However, R. Zapata-Barrero adopts a more conciliatory view, suggesting that interculturalism does not replace but rather complements multiculturalism. He identifies a major flaw of multiculturalism: its confinement of diversity to minority groups, which marginalises it from the majority's experience. Zapata-Barrero sees interculturalism as bridging the gap between the fading relevance of multiculturalism and the rigid duty-focused civic integration policies. In our volume, we analyse various citizenship education policies to assess it, at certain stages of their development, they strive to achieve this balance. A critical issue highlighted is that both multiculturalism and civic integration often exclusively associate diversity with minorities. We see the urgent need to integrate diversity into the mainstream, advocating for an inclusive approach that encompasses all societal segments²⁹. Interculturalism could serve as a 'conceptual' remedy to the

27 Council of Europe, *White paper on intercultural dialogue: 'living together as equals in dignity'*, Strasbourg 2008. Available at: https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/source/white%20paper_final_revised_en.pdf (accessed: 10.04.2024); G. Bouchard, *What is interculturalism?*, "McGill Law Journal", 56 (2), 2011, pp. 435–468.

28 W. Kymlicka, *Defending Diversity in an Era of Populism: Multiculturalism and Interculturalism Compared*, [in:] *Multiculturalism and Interculturalism: Debating the Dividing Lines*, (eds.) N. Meer, T. Modood, R. Zapata-Barrero, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh 2016.

29 R. Zapata-Barrero, *Interculturalism in the Post-Multiculturalism Debate: A defence*, "Comparative Migration Studies", 5, 2017, p. 1–23.

tendency of multiculturalism to promote ‘parallel lives’ and societal segregation. The undue emphasis on ‘race and class’ within multiculturalism is often at the expense of other aspects of diversity, such as ‘mixed race’, ‘sexual orientation’, or ‘faith differences’. As these aspects become increasingly relevant in contemporary societies, there is the need for a way of thinking, termed by T. Cantle as a ‘live in diversity’³⁰.

On the other hand, attempts to legislate interculturalism ‘from above’ can be seen as excessive state interventions. For instance, recent burka laws in France, Belgium, and Austria, which prohibit face coverings in public spaces, aim to enhance communication across ethnic boundaries, but contradict liberal principles by impeding crucial aspects of civil society reliant on reciprocal communication and accessibility. Such interventions can undermine societal cohesion and individual liberties. W. Kymlicka argues that without state efforts to redefine nationhood, local intercultural initiatives are jeopardised, stressing the need for multicultural rights to ensure justice³¹. He stresses the importance of revising national narratives to counter the exclusionary rhetoric of populist movements and protect minority groups. In this volume, we consider the ongoing debate between interculturalism and multiculturalism, noting considerations from scholars like Tariq Modood and W. Kymlicka, who suggest that interculturalists often misrepresent multiculturalism, particularly its liberal form. Ch. Joppke views the conflict between these concepts as largely semantic, with minimal substantive differences in practice³². Despite challenges from neoliberalism and nationalist populism, multiculturalism continues to be a robust framework for the recognition of cultural diversity, and a vital concept in today’s diverse societies. However, the critique from the intercultural standpoint is a valuable complementary perspective that needs to be considered.

Another challenging aspect of citizenship in multicultural societies is not only defining ‘who is a citizen’, but also – who qualifies as a ‘good citizen’. Terri-Ann Teo highlights the complexities in defining a ‘good citizen’, noting that this concept can marginalise both citizens and non-citizens who do not conform to specific cultural norms or socioeconomic statuses. Not all formal citizens are considered ‘good citizens,’ and migrants undergoing naturalisation are especially at risk of failing to meet these stringent standards³³. This dynamic of ‘first-class’ and ‘second-class’ citizens further complicates the discourse of citizenship, especially in contexts where diverse cultural backgrounds shape interpretations of what ‘good’ citizenship means.

30 T. Cantle, *Interculturalism: Learning to Live in Diversity*, “Ethnicities”, 16 (3), 2016, pp. 471–479.

31 W. Kymlicka, *Defending*, op. cit.

32 C. Joppke, *War*, op. cit.

33 A.T. Teo, op. cit.

The processual character of citizenship and the emergence of multicultural societies present new challenges to citizenship education policy. One such challenge is understanding how citizenship is (re)constructed in the key political, educational documents and school practices. Citizenship education aims to develop engaged and responsible citizens and support the ideals of democracy, often referred to as ‘good citizens’. However, like the notion of citizenship itself, ‘good citizenship’ is a fluid and contested concept. It is seen as the outcome of discursive struggles within societies, where the adjective ‘good’ encompasses a broad array of desirable practices, behaviours, beliefs, values, and attitudes necessary for social cohesion. They are cultivated within school institutions through official and hidden curricula, various pedagogical approaches, and ‘symbolic violence’³⁴. Citizenship education may function in the school system as a separate curriculum, within cross-curricular activities, or as a part of school policy and ethos³⁵. Depending on the society, its tradition, culture, and democratic maturity, the national and school curricula highlight different elements, such as democratic values, civic virtues, human rights, political literacy, respect for cultural diversity, and other. Moreover, the level of civic engagement depends on the incorporated approach to citizenship education.

The role of education today is to equip students with adaptable identities grounded on firm principles that enable them to navigate change. This necessity emerges from the public reality which, as Hannah Arendt described decades ago and which remains relevant today, ‘lost the power of illumination’ that was once inherent to it³⁶. Democratic citizenship education in multicultural settings must address this challenge identified by Arendt, where public discourse ‘darkens’ and global uncertainties make people prioritise personal freedoms and interests over collective concerns. Her decades-old observation about the disengagement of individuals from public and political spheres continues to be a significant concern. As Arendt noted, this withdrawal became more pronounced in the Western world where politics was historically embraced as a fundamental freedom³⁷. Despite the abundance of information available today, individuals often remain focused on personal issues, demonstrating a lack of commitment to the broader societal good. This situation accentuates the crucial role of citizenship education.

We trust that our book will provide comprehensive insights into the multifaceted reconstruction of citizenship and citizenship education within specific multicultural contexts across four selected multicultural societies. Our aim is for this work to serve as a valuable resource for scholars, educators, policymakers,

34 See: P. Bourdieu, *Key Concepts*, Acumen Publishing, Slough 2012.

35 See: P. Paludan, E. Prinds, *Evaluation of Education in Citizenship and Moral Judgement*, Danish Ministry of Education 1999.

36 H. Arendt, *Men in Dark Times*, Harcourt, Brace & World, New York 1968, p. 4.

37 Ibidem.

and individuals who want to understand and navigate the complexities of citizenship in multicultural environments. The volume is organised into four parts, each analysing the issues of citizenship education in a different multicultural territory: England, the Netherlands, Canada (Ontario), and Singapore. This structure facilitates a focused discussion on the unique challenges and approaches each country employs in integrating diverse populations through educational initiatives.

The first chapter explores the discussion on educational policy and multiculturalism in citizenship education in England. It begins by outlining the development of a multicultural society and the various approaches toward multiculturalism, national identity, Englishness, and Britishness. The transformation of citizenship education is divided into four key phases under the Labour and Conservative Party governments. Due to its imperial past, Great Britain, particularly England, has consistently exhibited a high cultural, ethnic, national, and religious diversity. In recent decades, the shift from a migrant to a post-migrant society has developed into the reality of super-diversity. Introducing compulsory citizenship education in schools was a response to growing ethnic tensions, a 'weak' sense of citizenship, and the search for shared values for social cohesion.

The chapter analyses the transformation of citizenship education from 1998, when Sir Bernard Crick chaired the Advisory Group on Citizenship to set the goals and purposes of citizenship education in schools (1998–2002). It then discusses the political debate concerning the escalation of ethnic tensions in England (2001–2007), which resulted in incorporating the fourth strand – diversity and identity – into the National Curriculum (2007–2010). The policies of the subsequent Conservative governments and the transformation of the citizenship curriculum are analysed in the following section (2010 – present). Nearly fifteen years of the Conservative governments have resulted in a significant shift toward a nationally-oriented curriculum that has marginalised the issues of cultural diversity. The period between 1998–2010 is described as the golden age of citizenship education in England. Despite evidence indicating positive outcomes of citizenship education in English schools – particularly in enhancing the civic and political participation of youth – it has not fully realised its potential. The analysis confirms that citizenship education remains a subject of political struggle; hence, pedagogical and educational goals are often overlooked.

The second chapter delves into the evolution of citizenship education within the Dutch education system, which has its roots in Christian values established in 1848 but has since – due to demographic, economic, and political changes – adapted to a diverse society with more religious pluralism than initially. The analysis of changes in citizenship education is placed within a broader context of multiculturalism in the Netherlands. The Dutch approach to multiculturalism

has evolved significantly from initially categorising migrants based on their origin and maintaining their cultural identities to adopting more integration-focused policies that stress socio-economic participation and cultural assimilation. Starting with the 1980s' recognition of diverse migrant groups as permanent social components, the Netherlands shifted towards policies that stress mutual adaptation, with recent strategies prioritising language acquisition and adherence to Dutch values as prerequisites for integration. This progression reflects a broader move away from multiculturalist policies towards a more assimilationist approach, influenced by socio-economic challenges and a changing political landscape. It culminates in contemporary policies that mandate individual responsibility for integration through formal education and citizenship requirements.

Introduced in 1969, the citizenship course *Maatschappijleer* aimed to develop democratic citizenry but shifted in the 1980s towards a technical focus on measurable outcomes, which limited pedagogical freedom and emphasised conformity over critical engagement. The subsequent decades saw a move towards the 'culturalization' of citizenship, which stressed individual responsibility and the internalisation of democratic norms. This approach was critiqued for minimising the state's role in addressing social inequalities. The 2006 legislation on Active Citizenship and Social Integration aimed to enhance participation and understanding among diverse students, but was criticised for its vagueness and inconsistent implementation. The 2021 revisions attempted to clarify goals related to civic participation and strengthen governmental oversight, but challenges persist, particularly in integrating citizenship education into teacher training programs. The Dutch system's constitutional freedom that allows schools to tailor their citizenship curricula to reflect community-specific ideologies while considering broader societal values clashes with multicultural dynamics. This interplay poses an ongoing challenge of balancing standardized citizenship education with diverse pedagogical practices and integrating various social group values into a unified framework of democratic citizenship in the Netherlands.

The third chapter addresses citizenship education in Canada, highlighting the complex interplay of multiculturalism in a nation marked by diverse cultural interaction and evolving social dynamics. Canadian multiculturalism, enshrined in the constitution and supported by governmental programs, reflects a dynamic process that continuously shapes the country's socio-economic reality. This ongoing evolution raises crucial questions about peaceful coexistence in a democratic and pluralistic society where diversity is celebrated and viewed as a source of contention. The chapter delves into the contemporary challenges in Canadian citizenship, particularly highlighting the distinct perspectives of Indigenous peoples, whose unique conceptualisation of identity and nationhood

often clash with mainstream societal values. These tensions are significant in the context of civics curricula, influencing social harmony, reconciliation efforts, and necessary educational reforms across Canadian provinces³⁸.

Focusing on Ontario, the latest civics education curriculum, introduced in 2018, is examined. This curriculum is designed to foster an understanding of the rights and responsibilities inherent in active citizenship within a democratic framework. It encourages students to engage with civic issues, understand the impact of social media, and develop digital literacy and critical thinking. The curriculum also covers the mechanisms of government, Indigenous governance structures, and the historical foundations of rights and freedoms in Canada, alongside the influence of government policy on citizens' lives. Moreover, the 2018 document promotes McLaughlin's maximal model of citizenship, which advocates for a critical understanding and questioning approach to civic matters, stressing ethnical complexity, personal responsibility for societal issues, and strategic planning for action in a globalised context. However, the chapter also notes a concerning trend where citizenship education in Ontario has become a battleground for political influence. Researchers Jesse Butler and Peter Milley highlight the recent civic curriculum's focus on the economic formation and roles of citizens, reflecting the ideological priorities of the Progressive Conservative (PC) government, elected in 2018 and again in 2022³⁹. This shift represents a politically charged effort to balance economic and civic educational goals in response to public expectations. It signals a considerable shift in the priorities of citizenship education in Ontario.

The final chapter explores Singapore's distinctive approach to citizenship education, tracing the evolution of its education policies since gaining independence on August 9, 1965. As a young state and a former British colony, Singapore has consistently leveraged its multi-ethnic and multilingual characteristics to foster a unique form of multiculturalism, based on social cohesion and civic attitudes through its education system. Central to this educational focus is Character and Citizenship Education (CCE), which integrates the cultivation of values, character, social-emotional well-being, and civic attitudes among stu-

38 See: F. Deer, J. Trickey, *The Language of Citizenship: Indigenous Perspectives of Nationhood in Canada*, [in:] *The Palgrave Handbook of Citizenship and Education*, (eds.) A. Peterson, G. Stahl, H. Soong, Palgrave Macmillan, 2020, Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-67905-1_76-1 (accessed: 20.04.2024).

39 J. K. Butler, *Reframing Citizenship Education: The Shifting Portrayal of Citizenship in Curriculum Policy in the Province of Ontario, 1999–2018*, "Education Policy Analysis Archives", 28 (83), 2020, pp. 25–26, Available at: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1255623.pdf> (accessed: 20.04.2024).

dents⁴⁰. The chapter outlines Singapore's educational policy development across five phases: the Survival-Driven Phase (1965–1978), the Efficiency-Driven Phase (1979–1997), the Ability-Based, Aspiration-Driven Phase (1997–2011), the Student-Centric, Values-Driven Phase (2011–2019), and the Learn for Life Phase (2020 – present). Each phase represents a strategic response to the changing needs of the country, from building a foundational economy to addressing the aspirations and abilities of Singapore's citizens in the globalised world.

Throughout its brief history, Singapore has modified its understanding of citizenship and civic education in response to the emerging needs of the country and the challenges it has faced. As a result, the policy of bilingualism, along with a focus on developing a knowledge-based economy and striving for social cohesion, has shaped a distinctive approach to civic education. This approach has contributed to the balanced management of education in favour of nationalism, diversity inclusion, and education for prosperity. This phenomenon has been termed “cosmopolitan nationalism”⁴¹. The contemporary approach to CCE is designed as a whole-school effort, positioning every teacher as a CCE educator and encouraging students to actively participate as citizens. This model extends to involve parents, particularly at the primary level, where they support their children in recognizing values across various life contexts. This chapter critically examines the shift from merely preparing youth for employment to a broader focus on nurturing individual and societal flourishing. It emphasises the role of education in empowering individuals to actively contribute to societal change and national development amidst the uncertainties of the future. Singapore's aim to prepare young people for the 21st century is by no means completed. This comprehensive review highlights the dynamic and responsive nature of Singapore's educational strategies in cultivating informed, resilient, and proactive citizens.

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40 O.S. Tan, *Strengthening Character and Citizenship Education*, “Singteach”, 86, 2023, p. 3. Available at: https://singteach.nie.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/SingTeach_Issue-86.pdf (accessed: 10. 04. 2024).

41 M. Yemini, L. Engel, M. Lee, C. Maxwell, *Cosmopolitan Nationalism and Global Citizenship Rhetoric: Analysis of Policies and Curricula in South Korea, Israel and the United States*, [in:] *World Yearbook of Education 2022* (pp. 219–234), Routledge, Oxfordshire 2022.

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Chapter 1. England

In 2008, Derek McGhee's book titled *The End of Multiculturalism? Terrorism, Integration, and Human Rights* was published. The author examines the debates on multiculturalism in contemporary Britain, including various perspectives from the right and left sides of the political spectrum. In this context, McGhee reviews accusations against the idea of multiculturalism, which are associated with '(1) the lack of integration between different communities, (2) the preferential treatment of some groups over others, and (3) a patriotic deficit in certain communities'⁴². He also addresses the issue of Muslims who, after September 2001 and the London suicide bombings, were associated with terrorism and extremism. As British society and its elites realised they were experiencing extremism from 'home-grown' suicide bombers, the issue of human rights came to the forefront. The critical points of the debate were 'the citizenship, residence, and human rights and freedoms of terror suspects and the communities that they are associated with in contemporary Britain'⁴³. The policy and political practices of the Labour Party government embrace 'civic assimilation', which valorises diversity on the one hand but, on the other, expects newcomers to integrate the values of the 'host' country⁴⁴. McGhee's analysis of contemporary policy toward minorities and his diagnosis of multiculturalism in Britain was published two years before Prime Minister David Cameron's famous speech in Munich, which announced the end of the multicultural state. He admitted that state multiculturalism had failed, allowing young Muslims to radicalise. In his speech, he also noted that multiculturalism had led to segregation because every ethnic, cultural, and religious group lives separately and does not integrate⁴⁵.

42 D. McGhee, *The End of Multiculturalism. Terrorism, Integration and Human Rights*, Open University Press, Berkshire 2008, p. x.

43 Ibidem, p. 3.

44 Ibidem, p. 82.

45 PM's speech at Munich Security Conference. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pms-speech-at-munich-security-conference> (accessed: 21.03.2024).

This chapter examines the varied approaches and paradigms contesting the understanding and meaning of multiculturalism in contemporary Britain. There are numerous interpretations of multiculturalism, ranging from an orientation towards pluralism and the celebration of diversity to civic assimilation and cultural separation.

Emerging trends in social policy – education included – towards ethnic, national, racial, and religious groups have become evident. The issues of multicultural policy and multiculturalism as a political idea are crucial in the educational policy of England; however, as outlined in this chapter, the objectives may differ. Citizenship education in English schools serves as an intriguing example of the policy applied to different minorities in education. The introduction of citizenship education as a statutory and separate subject in English schools in 2002 proved to be yet another course subjected to assignment and evaluation. As part of the National Curriculum, it has somewhat inhibited the development of a multicultural understanding. Citizenship education has integrated into a hierarchical, autocratic, and antidemocratic school system⁴⁶. Some researchers even go a step further and assert that citizenship education has failed to acknowledge England as a diverse and multicultural society⁴⁷.

This chapter explores the debates surrounding educational policy and multiculturalism in citizenship education in England. It traces the development of a multicultural society and reviews the diverse approaches towards multiculturalism, as well as concepts of Englishness and Britishness. The transformation of citizenship education is categorised into four key phases, corresponding to the periods governed by the Labour and Conservative Party governments.

Historical Development of Multicultural Society in England

This section examines the evolution of a multicultural and diverse society in England, focusing on issues of citizenship and Britishness. The complexities of diversity, immigration, and post-immigration society have received significant attention from scholars. However, due to the scope and objectives of this chapter, this section provides only a background on the complexity of these issues for further analysis.

46 D. Kerr, E. Cleaver, *Citizenship education longitudinal study: Literature review – Citizenship education one year on – What does it mean?: Emerging definitions and approaches in the first year of National Curriculum Citizenship in England*, Research Report 532, DfES, London 2004.

47 S. Tomlinson, *Multicultural Education in the UK*, [in:] *The Routledge International Companion to Multicultural Education*, (ed.) James A. Banks, Routledge, London 2009, p. 121.

The British Empire emerged following the conquests and subsequent integration of the British Isles. The Norman conquest led to the unification of England, which later integrated with the peoples of Wales, Ireland, and Scotland to form the United Kingdom within a newly established British nation⁴⁸. The golden age of the British Empire occurred at the end of the 19th century, bringing new challenges, including the rise of nationalism in Ireland and Scotland. Nevertheless, British imperialism was perceived by the English establishment as a mission to spread British values globally⁴⁹. Imperial policy significantly influenced the development of English identity and the discourse surrounding the presence (or absence) of citizenship. English nationalism is contested and remains a subject of dispute. Some scholars argue that English identity and nationalism have evolved since the late 18th century, while others contend that English nationalism differed from other forms of European nationalism⁵⁰. Krishan Kumar suggests that nationalism, in the classical sense, did not develop in England, indicating that historical events inhibited the flourishing of 19th-century nationalism, as seen in continental Europe. Instead, other forms of national belonging emerged, including English patriotism, xenophobia, racial Anglo-Saxonism, and pride in isolationism stemming from the Whig interpretation of history⁵¹. Unlike other European nations, the issue of English identity was neither a focus of research agendas nor public debate. The subject of English identity and nationalism was also notably absent from the literature: 'Here is no English Herder or Fichte; no English Mazzini or Garibaldi; no Michelet or Mickiewicz'⁵². It is noteworthy that the English state and its people are closely associated with imperialism. The collapse of the British Empire has significantly impacted the development of English national identity⁵³. The absence of a pronounced English national identity and nationalism was eloquently explained by the English historian Herbert Butterfield:

'Because we in England have maintained the thread between past and present, we do not, like some younger states, have to go hunting for our personalities. We do not have to set about deliberate manufacture of national consciousness or to strain ourselves, like the

48 K. Kumar, *Empire and English nationalism*, "Nations and Nationalism", 12 (1), 2006, pp. 1–13.

49 K. Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2003, pp. 4–5.

50 See: G. Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History, 1720–1830*, St. Martin's Press, New York 1987; R. Langlands, *Britishness or Englishness? The historical problem of national identity in Britain*, "Nations and Nationalism", 5 (1), 1999; K. Kumar, op. cit.

51 K. Kumar, *English and French national identity: comparisons and contrasts*, "Nations and Nationalism", 12 (3), 2006, p. 420.

52 K. Kumar, *Empire*, op. cit., p. 9.

53 Ibidem.

Irish, in order to create a “nationalism” out of the broken fragments of tradition, out of the ruins of tragic past⁵⁴.

This narrative suggests that England did not need nationalism due to its power and lack of a struggle for independence or rights. While originating in the nineteenth century in England, Robert Young highlights that Englishness has evolved into a global identity. He also notes that the absence of aggressive nationalism in England has rendered Englishness more inclusive compared to other national identities⁵⁵. This inclusiveness might also be linked to the traditional English liberties epitomised by the myth of the ‘free-born Englishman’. English self-identification is founded on notions of ‘inheritance’ and ‘otherness’⁵⁶. Englishness is a contested, changeable, and fluid concept. Although it may appear more inclusive than other national identities, it comprises various values (also fluid), traits, and stereotypes that distinguish those who identify as English from ‘others’. Englishness relates to the nation, ethnicity, culture, symbols, and myths. As a fluid concept, it is sometimes conflated with Britishness (e.g., the ‘Island Race’), and at other times, it draws on Celtic sources⁵⁷. Considering Anthony D. Smith’s perspective on the nation-building process, the cultural heritage of the United Kingdom has been predominantly shaped by Englishness. Rebecca Langlands suggests that the British state and its political structures – the Crown, Parliament, and the unwritten constitution – possess an English character⁵⁸. Krishan Kumar points out that all nations residing in the British Isles have subordinated their identities to the English to the extent that English and British identities have become synonymous. However, today, the people of Great Britain are identifying more with specific nationalities, and national identity is undergoing a process of restoration. Thus, Britishness as a political tradition was constructed in English terms. Langlands asserts:

‘the English basis of Britishness is the source of its greatest strength, as well as its greatest weakness. It ensures strong English support for the state while simultaneously attenuating and ensuring the persistence of Scottish and Welsh national identities’⁵⁹.

Stuart Hall characterises Britishness as an ‘empty signifier, the norm, against which difference (ethnicity) is measured’⁶⁰. The construction of both Englishness

54 H. Butterfield, *The Englishman and his History*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1945, p. 114.

55 R. J. C. Young, *The Idea of English Ethnicity*, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford 2008, p. 236.

56 R. Langlands, op. cit., pp. 62–63.

57 Ibidem.

58 Ibidem, p. 60.

59 Ibidem, p. 63.

60 S. Hall, Conclusion: *The Multicultural Question*, [in:] *Unsettled Multiculturalism: Diasporas, Entanglements, Transruptions*, (ed.) B. Hesse, Zed Books, London 2000, p. 221.

and Britishness is fundamentally linked to concepts of ‘difference’ and ‘other’. This delineation has historically enabled the subordination of those not deemed legitimate bearers of English or British identity to colonial power. Furthermore, ‘race’ encapsulates all ‘otherness’, while whiteness, associated with Englishness, is privileged and dominant. As discussed later in this chapter, Britishness typically exhibits a more civic character, whereas Englishness is often perceived as national and monocultural. Nonetheless, these identities continually evolve, leading to diverse expressions of Englishness and Britishness.

From a historical perspective, the debates surrounding national identity in Great Britain typically centre on the crown, law, and religion. These elements continue to be pivotal in contemporary political and social discourse, particularly during times of crisis and uncertainty. The concept of Britishness gained prominence in the mid-1960s when the potential Balkanisation of the United Kingdom became a pressing concern – a topic that remains relevant today. On 14 July 1966, the election of Gwynfor Evans as Plaid Cymru’s first MP marked a significant shift in Welsh politics. Subsequently, in 1967, the Scottish National Party secured its second seat in Westminster, marking a pivotal moment in the political movements of Wales and Scotland. This event was foundational to their eventual success in achieving devolution in 1999. The issues of Britishness and social cohesion resurfaced on the political agenda during the Labour Party’s governance from 1997 to 2010, particularly following the disturbances in Bradford, Burnley, and Oldham in 2001. These events sparked a renewed debate on enhancing community cohesion and integration among settled migrants and newcomers⁶¹. Some Labour politicians, highlighting the fragility of British citizenship and community bonds, have voiced concerns. David Blunkett, a minister in Blair’s government, officially stated:

‘the UK had a relatively weak sense of what political citizenship should entail. Our values of individual freedom, the protection of liberty, and respect for difference have not been accompanied by a strong, shared understanding of the civic realm. This has to change’⁶².

McGhee suggests that the government’s policy introduced a novel integration strategy, combining ‘the concept of integration with the concept of active citizenship’⁶³. Furthermore, Blair’s office acknowledged a ‘national identity that valued cultural diversity and recognised the citizenship rights of settled minorities’⁶⁴.

61 D. McGhee, *op. cit.*

62 David Blunkett’s speech. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2001/dec/11/immigrationpolicy.race> (accessed: 10.04.2024).

63 D. McGhee, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

64 S. Tomlinson, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

According to McGhee, the Labour Party distanced itself from multiculturalism because, rather than fostering integration, it led to the division of British society and, at the local level, escalated communal tensions. The rhetoric of the Labour Party government, as highlighted in Ted Cante's Report, suggests that ethnic minorities should assimilate into the majority culture, specifically English culture. By the late 1990s, the Labour Party's adopted strategy shifted towards an integration policy known as 'civic assimilation'⁶⁵. Although the Conservative Party officially broke away from multiculturalism, the ideological shift began in 2001 with a renewed focus on managing diversity, incorporating elements of integration and assimilation, and moving 'beyond multiculturalism'⁶⁶.

The concept of multiculturalism is rooted in the post-war era when immigrants holding British citizenship (under *ius soli*) arrived in the United Kingdom. In the 1950s, Great Britain was in need of a cheap labour force, and job offers attracted unskilled workers from India, the Caribbean, and Pakistan. This period is characterized by an influx of migrants from the colonies of Commonwealth countries. Decades later, newcomers were mainly family members of the newly settled migrants⁶⁷. For some periods, the migrants and their relatives were invisible to the ruling class. The management of diversity in Britain evolved from an assimilation strategy in the 1950s to integration in the 1960s and then to multiculturalism in the 1970s⁶⁸. The transformation of the 1960s was driven by the emergence of movements for equality, supported by data revealing that assimilation was not an appropriate strategy and resulted in discrimination. Spatial segregation in the 1970s and 1980s led to the development of separate living conditions for newcomers and natives. Tomlinson suggests that cultural and religious diversity threatens British national identity⁶⁹. Despite growing tensions in society, subsequent governments did not reform schools and curricula to incorporate issues of diversity, race, or a multicultural perspective⁷⁰. The next significant influx of immigrants began in the early 1990s with a greater diversification of newcomers, particularly asylum seekers and economic migrants. Between 1994 and 2004, the number of new migrants increased by 40%, continuing after eight new members joined the EU⁷¹.

65 D. McGhee, op. cit., p. 134.

66 C. Joppke, *The retreat of multiculturalism in the liberal state: theory and policy*, "The British Journal of Sociology", 55(2), 2004, pp. 237–257.

67 S. Vertovec, *Super-diversity and its implications*, "Ethnic and Racial Studies", 30 (6), pp. 1024–1054.

68 F. Shain, *Race, nation and education. An overview of British attempts to 'manage diversity since 1950s*, "Education Inquiry", 4 (1), 2013, p. 68.

69 S. Tomlinson, op. cit., p. 123.

70 Ibidem, p. 124.

71 S. Vertovec, op.cit.

Contemporary Britain is somewhat returning to integration strategies for minorities. However, these strategies differ from those used in the 1960s because British society is now more diverse, and the minorities involved were born in Great Britain and are British citizens, reflecting a post-migration society.

English Society Today: the Context of Diversity

The perception of minorities and their social position is subject to dynamic changes. Within society, different categories of immigrants have emerged, labelled as 'dangerous,' 'neutral,' or 'friendly' to social cohesion. Today, reluctance towards minorities is not solely connected to racism but also to religion⁷². The contemporary minorities in Great Britain are complex groups, and individuals can adopt various identities. Britain is now described as a post-immigration and super-diversity society. Some minorities identify primarily with their race, others with their nationality, ethnicity, or religion. These identities do not contradict each other but instead play supplementary roles⁷³.

This is also the case with the aforementioned concept of Britishness, which is understood differently by various social groups⁷⁴. As a changeable social construct, Britishness should encompass and unite the diverse national identities within Great Britain. However, people also identify with specific nations, such as English, Welsh, Scottish, and Irish, while Britishness is associated with the civic dimension.

The British Academy Survey of 2017 revealed that most respondents do not differentiate between English and British identities. However, those with lower education levels tend to identify as English rather than British, suggesting that Britishness is associated with higher status and better education⁷⁵. According to the Commission for Racial Equality⁷⁶ (2005) and the British Academy survey (2017), most Britons from ethnic minority backgrounds living in England do not

72 D. McGhee, op. cit.; G. Crozier, *The politics of Education. Challenging Racial Discrimination and Disadvantage in Education in the British Context*, [in:] *The Politics of Education. Challenging Multiculturalism*, (eds.) C. Kassimeris, M. Vryonides, Routledge, New York – London 2012, pp. 17–13; P. R. Grillo, *Reflections on British Multiculturalism, 1967–2014*, [in:] *Living with Difference Essays on Transnationalism and Multiculturalism*, (eds.) P.R. Grillo et al., B and RG Books of Lewes 2015.

73 T. Modood, *Multiculturalism and integration: struggling with confusions*, [in:] *Defending Multiculturalism: A Guide For The Movement*, (ed.) H. Mahamdallie, Bookmarks, London 2011.

74 R. Sales, *What is 'Britishness', and is it important?*, [in:] *Citizenship acquisition and national belonging*, (eds.) G. Calder, D. Cole, J. Seglow, Palgrave Macmillan, London 2010, p. 136.

75 The British Academy, *English Identity and the Governance of England*. 2017, Available at: <https://www.britac.ac.uk/governing-england-devolution-and-identity> (accessed: 8.04.2024).

76 Commission for Racial Equality, *Citizenship and belonging: what is Britishness?* London 2005.

identify as English because this identity is associated with being 'white English'. Britishness is understood in civic terms, generally lacking exclusiveness, while Englishness is seen as more exclusive. Nonetheless, a majority of respondents (80%) believe that being English involves being a taxpayer, feeling English, and contributing to society's development. Fifty-six percent think it is essential to have parents born in England, while 41% disagree that this is important in defining English identity. In contrast, only 22% associate Englishness with white skin, although race is considered significant by the older generation⁷⁷. Similar findings are echoed by the study of Andrews and Mycock, which shows that students from ethnic minority groups consider themselves British, not English⁷⁸. The inclusive character of Britishness was also highlighted in the 2005 survey by the Commission for Racial Equality. However, this survey revealed that while minority respondents viewed ethnic diversity positively, white participants tended to view it negatively⁷⁹. Despite the reality of super-diversity, the concept of English identity, or Englishness, is constructed around 'whiteness', which is not merely associated with race but serves as a primary signifier of dominance. Consequently, race is associated with 'difference' and aligns more adequately with the political and civic category of Britishness, which acts as an empty signifier. Another study indicates that Britishness involves speaking English (95%), holding a British passport, and obeying the law (85%). According to most respondents, both civic and ethnic dimensions of identity are crucial to Britishness⁸⁰.

Today, English society is characterized by multiple identities, underscoring its multicultural nature. According to the 2021 census, 74.4% of the population identified as white, a decrease from 80.5% in 2011. Other ethnic groups included Asians (9.3%), Black (4.0%), Mixed (2.9%), and other ethnic groups (2.1%)⁸¹. In terms of religion, most people in England and Wales identify as Christians (46.2%), while 37.2% do not affiliate with any religion. The second-largest religious group is Muslims (6.5%)⁸². Like other European states, England is experiencing the reality of super-diversity⁸³.

77 The British Academy, op. cit.

78 R. Andrews, A. Mycock, *Dilemmas of Devolution: The 'Politics of Britishness' and Citizenship Education*, "British Politics", 3, 2008, p. 150.

79 Commission for Racial Equality, op. cit., p. 23.

80 A. Park, C. Bryson, J. Curtice, *British Social Attitudes 31*, NatCen 2014, Available at: https://www.euro-islam.info/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/bsa31_full_report.pdf (accessed: 20.04.2024), p. 64–72.

81 British Census 2021. Available at: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/national-and-regional-populations/population-of-england-and-wales/latest/> (accessed: 10.04.2024).

82 British Census 2021. Available at: <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/constituency-data-religion/> (accessed: 10.04.2024).

The shifting demographic landscape of Britain raises important questions about the school system, citizenship education, and national identity in a multi-diverse society. Studies suggest that the National Curriculum has continued to overlook the issue of ‘race’, perpetuating the Thatcher-era policy of colourblind narratives. S. Tomlinson points out that ‘By the first decade of the 21st century, there was no longer any official education policy or curriculum activity in British schools referred to as multicultural education’⁸⁴. Instead, multicultural education or education for diversity was supplanted in England’s educational policy by concepts of ‘social cohesion’ and integration practices. However, the adherence to colourblind narratives has not prevented the development of anti-racism and ethnoreligious identity activism, which are features of British multicultural society⁸⁵. Despite criticisms of colourblind narratives and the internal tensions provoked by political rhetoric, particularly towards Muslims, it is noteworthy that Rishi Sunak became the first British Asian and Hindu Prime Minister in 2022, and Humza Yousaf, the First Minister of Scotland, is the first Muslim to hold that office. Considering these developments, it would be difficult to argue that Great Britain is resistant to diversity.

The *shared values* were emphasized in the political agenda of the Labour Party to build social cohesion as a governmental priority following the Cantle Report. The project of ‘integration with diversity’ or ‘unity in diversity’ is described as:

‘a model of civic assimilation based upon the idea of forging allegiance to core principles shared by all, through the effective engagement of responsible active citizens located in active communities’⁸⁶.

This strategy had practical implications for both new and established migrants, providing English language training to overcome communication and cultural barriers⁸⁷. When the Conservatives came to power in 2010 and moved away from multiculturalism, the radicalization of policy toward immigrants was justified by the need to combat extremism⁸⁸. The Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities issued a report in 2021 stating:

‘In the UK, the best way to build trust is to emphasize to every ethnic group that we treat individuals fairly, and not on the basis of their ethnicity. We respect ethnic identities but also share a common, unifying, civic identity as British citizens. We must continually

83 S. Vertovec, op. cit.

84 S. Tomlinson, op. cit., p. 121.

85 T. Modood, *Multicultural Citizenship and New Migrations*, [in:] *Multicultural Governance in a Mobile World*, (ed.) A. Triandafyllidou, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh 2017, p. 188.

86 D. McGhee, op. cit., p. 89.

87 Ibidem.

88 P. Mattei, M. Broeks, *From Multiculturalism to Civic Integration: Citizenship Education and Integration Policies in the Netherlands and England since 2000s*, “Ethnicities”, 18 (1) 2018, pp. 28–29.

reflect on how to reinforce the symbols of Britishness which signal to minorities that they are considered full members of the British family while retaining their own distinctive identities⁸⁹.

The passage cited above reflects the policy towards minorities under the Conservative governments from 2010 onward. It highlights a continuing integration strategy that incorporates elements of assimilation and pursues an ethnic and race-blind policy. Furthermore, the document suggests that Britishness is conceived as a form of ‘postcolonial nostalgia’, an inclusive concept embracing those who adhere to fundamental British values. The dynamics of diversity policy in England are also evident in educational policies, including citizenship education, which will be analysed in the following sections.

Citizenship Education in England

This section is divided into four phases, each presenting the reforms and transformations in providing citizenship education in English schools. The evolution of citizenship education from its inception, starting with the Crick Report, through to the policies of the subsequent Conservative governments, reflects the changing approach to this subject in a multicultural society. Each phase highlights different aspects of these changes and their implications for how citizenship is taught and understood within the educational framework.

Crick Report and Introduction of Citizenship Education to Schools (1998–2002)

England was unique in not having had citizenship education as a statutory subject in schools prior to this period⁹⁰. The growing interest in citizenship education, aimed at increasing social and democratic participation as well as enhancing social cohesion in the political sphere, emerged after the Labour Party took power in 1997. This period saw a promotion of shared civic responsibility, in contrast to the previous Conservative approach that emphasized individual civic

89 Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities: The Report, March 2021. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6062ddb1d3bf7f5ce1060aa4/20210331_-_CRED_Report_-_FINAL_-_Web_Accessible.pdf (accessed: 10.04.2024), p. 47.

90 J. Beck, *A brief history of citizenship education in England and Wales*, [in:] *Debates in citizenship education*, (eds) J. Arthur, H. Cremin, Routledge, London – New York 2012; D. Hejwosz-Gromkowska, *Edukacja obywatelska we współczesnej Anglii. Studium socjopedagogiczne*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, Poznań 2019.

responsibility⁹¹. The interest in introducing citizenship education as a school subject stemmed from concerns about social apathy among the youth, often referred to as the ‘democratic deficit.’ To address this, the Advisory Group on Citizenship was appointed and chaired by Sir Bernard Crick to establish the goals and purposes of citizenship education in schools.

Following the report’s recommendations, citizenship education was made a statutory part of the National Curriculum and introduced as a compulsory subject for secondary school students aged 11 to 16⁹². The report emphasizes the role of active citizens, as illustrated in the following passage:

‘We aim at no less than a change in the political culture of this country both nationally and locally: for people to think of themselves as active citizens, willing, able, and equipped to have an influence in public life and with the critical capacities to weigh evidence before speaking and acting; to build on and to extend radically to young people the best in existing traditions of community involvement and public service, and to make them individually confident in finding new forms of involvement and action among themselves’⁹³.

Although citizenship education was introduced as a separate subject within the National Curriculum, the authors of the Crick report conceive of the process in broader terms as education for citizenship, aimed at preparing young people to be active citizens in their adult lives⁹⁴. The report envisions citizenship education as a tool for changing the political culture at both local and national levels, encouraging individuals to see themselves as active participants responsible for public life. According to the recommendations, citizenship education should not only increase youth participation but also facilitate the creation of ‘common ground between different ethnic and religious identities’⁹⁵. While the report does not explicitly mention Britishness, it underscores the importance of restoring a sense of common citizenship that embraces the diversity long present in the UK. In the report, British citizenship is understood inclusively in terms of national and local differences. However, when addressing cultural diversity, certain ethnicities are still perceived as ‘others’⁹⁶. Derek Heater views Crick’s report as an example of the ideological compromise between the republican emphasis on civic duties and the public good and the liberal values of autonomy, diversity, and

91 D. Kerr, A. Smith, C. Twine, *Citizenship education in the United Kingdom*, [in:] *Education for citizenship and democracy*, (eds). J. Arthur, I. Davies, C. Hahn, Sage, London 2008, s. 252.

92 J. Beck, op. cit.; D. Kerr, A. Smith, C. Twine, op. cit.

93 Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, *Education for citizenship and teaching democracy in schools*, London 1998, pp. 7–8.

94 Ibidem.

95 Ibidem, p. 17.

96 A. Osler, H. Starkey, *Citizenship Education and National Identities in France and England: inclusive or exclusive?*, “Oxford Review of Education”, 27 (2), 2001, p. 293.

democracy. In this way, the report aligns with Labour's 'third way' policy, which seeks to blend elements of both traditional socialist and conservative approaches to address contemporary social issues⁹⁷.

The recommendations from the report were incorporated into the framework of the National Curriculum, with a particular emphasis placed on three main spheres:

- 1) Social and Moral Responsibility: The curriculum aims to install 'learning from the very beginning self-confidence and socially and morally responsible behaviour both in and beyond the classroom, both towards those in authority and towards each other'. This aspect focuses on developing personal integrity and ethical behaviour as integral components of citizenship.
- 2) Community Involvement: Students are encouraged to engage in 'learning about and becoming helpfully involved in the life and concerns of their communities, including learning through community involvement and service to the community'. This sphere emphasises the importance of active participation and service, fostering a sense of belonging and responsibility towards local communities.
- 3) Political Literacy: The curriculum includes 'learning about and how to make themselves effective in public life through knowledge, skills, and values'⁹⁸. Political literacy equips students with the understanding and skills necessary to participate effectively in public life, ensuring they are informed, thoughtful, and capable of making a positive impact.

According to Crick's report, schools were granted the flexibility to adopt a 'light touch', giving them a high degree of freedom in how they deliver citizenship education lessons⁹⁹. In the context of a multicultural society, the report provides limited recognition of issues related to cultural diversity. The authors suggest that minorities should integrate into British society. The report positions citizenship education as a means to prepare the future generation to live in a unified culture – specifically, British culture – while still respecting the cultures of minorities. This approach is encapsulated in paragraph 3.16 of the report:

'Majorities must respect, understand, and tolerate minorities, and minorities must learn and respect the laws, codes, and conventions as much as the majority – not merely

97 D. Heater, *The history of citizenship education in England*, [in:] *Citizenship education*, (eds.) J. Arthur, I. Davies, Sage, London 2008, pp. 112–116.

98 Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, op. cit., pp. 12–13.

99 House of Commons, *Select Committee on Education and Skills Second Report*, March 2007. Available at: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmselect/cmeduski/147/14705.htm> (accessed: 10.04.2024).

because it is useful to do so, but because this process helps foster common citizenship'¹⁰⁰.

This orientation of Crick's report aligns more closely with a two-way integration strategy than with a multicultural one. As noted by Joppke, it is as an example of the centrist or third-way civic integration policy'¹⁰¹. The issue of diversity is viewed with concern because it is seen as leading to social and national disintegration. Within this framework, diversity is not considered an integral part of citizenship; rather, it is seen as a source of social tensions'¹⁰². This approach supports the maintenance of a homogeneous and dominant culture of the majority, viewing minorities as potential threats to social cohesion. It also stands in opposition to the multicultural ideal, which perceives culture as a dynamic and evolving process'¹⁰³. Audrey Osler and Hugh Starkey critique Crick's report for expressing a colonial sentiment toward minorities, particularly those with ancestry outside Europe (visible minorities), who are required to change and adapt in order to achieve common citizenship'¹⁰⁴. In this approach, the responsibility for change, assimilation, and integration is placed on members of ethnic minorities, while white British citizens are merely required to tolerate these minorities. The report notably omits consideration of issues related to race, gender, social inequalities, and identities, thereby limiting its scope and failing to address deeper societal divisions and challenges.

Although the initial years of implementing Citizenship Education (CE) as a statutory subject in secondary schools in England yielded some positive outcomes'¹⁰⁵, the so-called 'implementation gap'¹⁰⁶ soon became apparent. The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) indicated that some schools had not implemented adequate programs and delivered poor teaching. This issue was compounded by a shortage of teacher staff specialized in citizenship, as em-

100 Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, op. cit., p. 18.

101 C. Joppke, op. cit.

102 D. Kiwan, N. Kiwan, *Citizenship education: the French and English Experience*, [in:] *Young people in transition. Becoming citizens?*, (eds.) C. Pole, J. Pilcher, J. Williams, Palgrave Macmillan, London 2005, p. 137.

103 See: C. Joppke, S. Lukes, *Multicultural questions*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1999.

104 A. Osler, H. Starkey, op. cit.

105 See: D. Hejwosz-Gromkowska, op. cit.; A. Keating, A. Green, G. Janmaat, *Young Adults and Politics Today: disengaged and disaffected or engaged and enraged? The latest findings from the Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study (CELS)*, Working Paper 2015, Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331477599_Young_Adults_and_Politics_Today_disengaged_and_disaffected_or_engaged_and_enraged_The_latest_findings_from_the_Citizenship_Education_Longitudinal_Study_CELS (accessed: 11. 11. 2023), p. 78.

106 J. Weinberg, M. Flinders, *Improving Citizenship Education*, [in:] *Whose Government Is It? The Renewal of State-Citizen*, (ed.) H. Tam, Bristol University Press, Bristol, 2019, p. 184.

phasized by Ofsted and the Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study (CELS)¹⁰⁷. The ‘implementation gap’ was also exacerbated by the low prioritization of citizenship as a subject, indicating that it was often lost among other ‘selective’ courses¹⁰⁸. The Crick Report, while providing a theoretical framework for CE, overlooked pedagogical and practical issues. Teachers were not adequately trained to deliver the classes, and this crucial aspect of preparation was overlooked by subsequent governments¹⁰⁹. Moreover, in schools with low numbers of ethnic-minority students, the issue of diversity was often ignored¹¹⁰. The National Curriculum reduced the concept of ‘diversity’ to merely ‘cultural and religious difference, thus excluding other forms of diversity such as social or white British diversity’¹¹¹. Consequently, the idea of Britishness was conflated with Englishness, whiteness, and Christianity, perpetuating a narrow understanding of Englishness as being born in England, white, and Christian. By understanding diversity solely through the prism of ethnic minorities, the educational discourse inadvertently reinforced elements of an assimilation strategy. In the context of multiculturalism, such attitudes reflect a ‘romantic’ form of multiculturalism from the 70s and 80s, which failed to address structural inequalities and was understood only in terms of the nation-state¹¹².

The Crick Report marked a significant milestone in the implementation and development of citizenship education in English schools. The recommendations outlined in the report formed the foundation of the National Curriculum. However, it also displayed certain limitations, particularly in its approach to cultural diversity and ethnic minorities, which were somewhat marginalized. Instead, the report emphasized national (civic) identity and the promotion of social participation among the youth. These focal points reflect a specific vision for integrating citizenship education, prioritizing a cohesive national identity and active civic engagement over a broader exploration of cultural and ethnic diversity.

107 Ofsted, *Citizenship established? Citizenship in schools 2006/09*, Reference no: 090159, 2006; D. Hejwosz-Gromkowska, op. cit.; A. Keating et al., *Citizenship education in England 2001–2010: young people’s practices and prospects for the future: the eighth and final report from the Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study (CELS)*, Department for Education, London 2011.

108 D. Hejwosz-Gromkowska, op. cit.; Weinberg, op. cit., p. 185.

109 Ibidem.

110 R. Gholami, *The art of self-making: identity and citizenship education in late-modernity*, “British Journal of Sociology of Education”, 38 (6), 2017, p. 802.

111 Ibidem.

112 A. Osler, *Citizenship education and the Ajegbo Report: Re-imagining a cosmopolitan nation*, “London Review of Education”, 6 (1), 2008; pp. 11–25.

Riots, Disturbances, and Terror Attacks as an Incentive for Change (2001–2007)

Following the riots and racial disturbances in Oldham, Burnley, and Bradford in 2001, and the subsequent events in Birmingham, as well as the terrorist attack in London in 2005, the issue of home-grown terrorism came into public debate. These incidents raised critical questions about the integration and community cohesion of newcomers and settled immigrants in the UK¹¹³.

Society in England and Britain continued to be a mosaic, with cultures and values often appearing detached from common principles. After the disturbances, members of Tony Blair's government began to criticize multiculturalism and its underlying policies, marking what many considered the beginning of the end for this approach. In 2005, Trevor Phillips, the head of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, voiced significant concerns about the trajectory of multicultural policies in the UK:

'In recent years, we've focused far too much on the 'multi' and not enough on the common culture. We've emphasized what divides us over what unites us. We have allowed tolerance of diversity to harden into the effective isolation of communities, in which some people think special separate values ought to apply (...) This is not only, or even principally, about Muslims. But the aftermath of 7/7 forces us to assess where we are. And here is where I think we are: we are sleepwalking our way to segregation. We are becoming strangers to each other, and we are leaving communities to be marooned outside the mainstream'¹¹⁴.

The focus on integration, community cohesion, and promoting Britishness took centre stage in policy discussions, raising questions about the role of multiculturalism in fostering social cohesion. It is important to note, however, that ethnic tensions in Birmingham have been documented since the late 1960s. Reports from that time indicate that minorities were marginalized due to unemployment and poverty. Furthermore, it was observed that many parents did not embrace the British values promoted in schools, which in turn hindered their children's ability to integrate with broader society¹¹⁵.

The disturbances in Bradford are particularly noteworthy. Over 50% of the population there were young people from ethnic backgrounds, primarily second-generation immigrants, many of whom faced persistent unemployment. The source of the disturbances was not solely due to low levels of community integration but also the economic situation. In other words, it wasn't just the

113 D. McGhee, op. cit.

114 P. Trevor, *After 7/7: sleepwalking to segregation*, Manchester Council for Community Relations, 22 September 2005.

115 D. Gereluk, *Education, extremism and terrorism. What should be taught in Citizenship education and why*, Continuum, London 2012, pp. 31–32.

politicians' convictions about weak citizenship and poor integration that triggered the unrest, but also long-term social exclusion, racism, and institutional oppression towards minorities. Following these events, government bodies and academics debated the significant relationships between exclusion, social and economic inequalities, and extremism¹¹⁶. Low socioeconomic backgrounds and residential segregation, particularly in inner cities, exacerbated social inequalities¹¹⁷, prompting the adoption of new solutions and policies with schools positioned as the centres of local communities. Alveena Malik (2012) suggests that if school curricula promote policies of diversity and the social engagement of youth, the risk of ethnic segregation will diminish. Although diversity issues have been marginalized in English schools, Malik advocates for 'integration with diversity', suggesting a more inclusive approach that values and integrates diverse cultural backgrounds within the community fabric¹¹⁸.

Building social cohesion through the promotion of Britishness was predominantly a political goal, rather than an educational one. To some degree, developing a sense of Britishness requires individuals to diminish or soften their own national identities¹¹⁹. The Crick report advocated that schools should prepare youth to live in multicultural societies by fostering community bonds and creating opportunities for social engagement¹²⁰. This educational approach aligns with Derek McGhee's critique of 'naïve multiculturalism' and Christian Joppke's proposal for a policy of civic integration aimed at newcomers and immigrants¹²¹. Some studies suggest that the school culture in England has historically not promoted cultural and ethical diversity, lacked democratic processes, and failed to involve students in decision-making or support their active engagement¹²². In response to these deficiencies, and influenced by subsequent studies and recommendations, a fourth strand focusing on diversity issues was incorporated into the National Curriculum, following the works of a new advisory group.

116 McGhee, op. cit.

117 M. Cross, *Racism and racial inequality: the British case in a European context*, [in:] *Challenging racism in Britain and Germany*, (eds.) Z. Layton-Henry, C. Wilpert, Palgrave Macmillan, London 2003, p. 82.

118 A. Malik, *Citizenship education, race and community cohesion*, [in:] *Debates in citizenship education*, (eds.) J. Arthur, H. Cremin, Routledge, London – New York 2012, pp. 67–69.

119 See: H. Starkey, *Antiracism*, [in:] *Education for citizenship and democracy*, (eds.) J. Arthur, I. Davies, C. Hahn, Sage, London 2008.

120 A. Malik, op. cit.

121 Ibidem.

122 See: D. Garratt, H. Piper, *Citizenship education in England and Wales: theoretical critique and practical considerations*, "Teachers and Teaching", 14 (5), 2008, pp. 481–496; K. Ajegbo D. Kiwan, S. Sharma, *Diversity and citizenship curriculum review*, DfES, London 2007.

Ajebo Report and Cultural Diversity in Citizenship Education (2007–2010)

The *Identity and Diversity: Living Together in the UK* report, commonly referred to as the Ajebo Report, was published in 2007 and led to significant revisions in the National Curriculum. Following its recommendations, a fourth strand focusing on identity and diversity was incorporated. This new strand was designed to encompass three key conceptual components:

- critical thinking about ethnicity, religion and ‘race’;
- an explicit link to political issues and values;
- the use of contemporary history in teachers’ pedagogy to illuminate thinking about contemporary issues relating to citizenship.

Additionally, the report specifies that the following areas should be included in the curriculum to provide a comprehensive view of the UK’s diverse identity:

- contextualised understanding that the UK is a ‘multinational’ state made up of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales,
- immigration,
- Commonwealth and the legacy of Empire,
- European Union,
- extending the franchise (e.g. the legacy of slavery, universal suffrage, equal opportunities legislation)¹²³.

It’s significant to note that one of the Ajebo Report’s objectives was to develop new approaches in citizenship education that simultaneously teach core British values while appreciating cultural diversity. According to the recommendations, ‘Britishness’ should be explored through various contexts – cultural, historical, and religious. The implementation of the ‘fourth strand’ into the National Curriculum aimed to achieve a balance between diversity and integration, encapsulating ‘Britishness’, human rights, and shared values¹²⁴. From this perspective, school education is tasked with promoting and delivering a common ground expressed as shared values, and also finding a balance between diversity and unity. The report drew on Banks’ idea of balancing unity and diversity in multicultural states as a keynote. Moreover, the revised curriculum shifted the approach to diversity from merely being linked to understanding and skills, to being about active citizenship:

‘the link between education for diversity and Citizenship education is clear: whilst we need to understand and celebrate the diverse cultures and backgrounds of the UK’s

123 Department for Education and Skills (DfES), *Curriculum Review: Diversity and citizenship (Ajebo Report)*, p. 97.

124 *Ibidem*, p. 21.

population, we also need to acknowledge what brings us together as active citizens and agents of change¹²⁵.

The concept of ‘Britishness,’ although frequently used as a political buzzword by the Labour Party, is presented in the Ajegbo Report as an abstract and nuanced notion. It is perceived more as a community of shared experiences than a community bound strictly by uniform values. This complexity is captured in the report’s reflection:

‘The term *British* means different things to different people. In addition, identities are typically constructed as multiple and plural. Throughout our consultations, concerns were expressed, however, about defining *Britishness*, about the term’s divisiveness, and how it can be used to exclude others¹²⁶.

While the Ajegbo Report is generally optimistic about diversity and citizenship, avoiding heavy reliance on assimilation, it has not escaped criticism for harbouring some outdated ideas. Audrey Osler critiques the report for what she perceives as its adherence to a romanticized form of multiculturalism reminiscent of the 1970s and 1980s. This approach, she argues, fails to adequately address structural inequalities, choosing instead to focus on celebrating diverse identities without confronting deeper systemic issues. Furthermore, Osler criticizes the report’s language, suggesting that it conforms to political correctness, especially when discussing global inequalities. This, she believes, trivializes crucial aspects of citizenship in the context of social injustice¹²⁷. Her critique implies that while the report makes strides toward inclusivity and understanding, it may gloss over the harsh realities of inequality and injustice that complicate the lived experiences of citizenship in a multicultural society.

Unlike Crick’s report, which advocates for assimilation, Ajegbo’s report rejects this strategy; however, some elements of assimilation are still apparent. For instance, Crick’s report required minorities to change their behaviours and adapt to the cultural patterns of the majority, without expecting similar changes from the majorities. Instead, majorities were expected to develop a tolerant attitude toward minorities, a requirement not imposed on the minorities. According to the Ajegbo report, white pupils from areas with mixed ethnic backgrounds are discriminated against. However, the report fails to explain what this means, and overlooks other factors such as poverty, social deprivation, social capital, crime rates, and unemployment, thus suggesting that ‘other culture’ is a source of creating disadvantaged communities¹²⁸. Moreover, the report also indicates that

125 Ibidem.

126 Ibidem, p. 8.

127 A. Osler, op. cit.

128 Ibidem.

white students experience discrimination and labelling only in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods. Neither report explicitly recommends that tolerance and respect be mutual in multicultural societies. It is worth referring to Olser's doubts here:

'my fear is that the Ajegbo report and the addition of a fourth strand on *identity and diversity: living together in the UK* will prove to be a new placebo. If schools are invited to promote a depoliticised multicultural approach which does not encourage political literacy or critical analysis of democracy and diversity there is a real danger that this will leave unchallenged (and possibly disguise) the considerable inequalities within schools, while at the same time allowing individual institutions to assert they are fulfilling their statutory duty to promote community cohesion'¹²⁹.

Despite the implementation of the 'fourth strand,' which recognizes diversity, various studies indicate that the curricula remain nation-oriented, promoting nationalistic values and identities (Britishness and Englishness). Diversity is understood in narrow terms, and certain concepts in educational policy, like racism, are susceptible to misinterpretation or even manipulation¹³⁰. The Ajegbo report also faced criticism from teachers' trade unions, who argued that adding new elements to an already overloaded curriculum was ill-advised. Moreover, the subsequent changes to the new subject did not receive the teachers' approval¹³¹.

Undoubtedly, the revision of the citizenship education curriculum outlined in the Ajegbo report addressed previously omitted and silenced issues of diversity. However, the recommendations failed to consider scholarship on the complexities of diversity in multicultural societies, global challenges, and the intricacies of identity, rendering them more political than substantive¹³². The report also neglected the promotion of intercultural dialogue and continued to recognize citizenship in monocultural terms¹³³. As Olser noted, such an approach might enforce formal pluralism, leading to further social divisions. The main goal of citizenship education for diversity in a multicultural society should not be to highlight cultural differences but to engage all individuals, regardless of their status – be it citizenship, nationality, or minority group – in active participation

129 Ibidem, p. 18.

130 See: Ibidem; U. Maylor et al., *Diversity and Citizenship in the Curriculum: Research Review*, The Institute for Policy Studies in Education, London Metropolitan University, 2007; R. Gholami, op. cit.

131 P. Brett, *Identity and Diversity: Citizenship Education and Looking Forwards from the Ajegbo Report*, 2007. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/284724247_Identity_and_Diversity_Citizenship_Education_and_looking_forwards_from_the_Ajegbo_Report (accessed: 21.03.2024).

132 A. Olser, op. cit.

133 See: J. A. Banks et al., *Democracy and diversity: Principles and concepts for educating citizens in a global age*, University of Washington, Seattle 2005.

in schools, neighbourhoods, and local communities¹³⁴. At the political level, there was a belief that many problems in multicultural societies could be resolved through citizenship education in schools. In practice, however, most issues remain unresolved due to insufficient funding, oversized classrooms, and inadequate preparation of teaching staff and educational materials¹³⁵.

Policy of Conservatives, Return to National-Oriented Curricula and Declining the Role of Citizenship Education (2010–ongoing)

British political preferences were most often directed toward the Conservatives. The Tories won the parliamentary election of 2010 under the leadership of David Cameron. When he took his seat in the party, he announced reforms that led to moving away from ‘Thatcherism,’ which entailed less market orientation and more social inclusivity¹³⁶. After taking power, the Conservatives, along with the Liberals, began to implement the idea of building a stronger sense of society, the so-called ‘Big Society’. The government’s role was to actively strengthen the capacity of local communities, social enterprises, charities, and voluntary organizations¹³⁷. The new prime minister took a clear stance on diversity, announcing the end of the multicultural state in 2011, and indicating the need to create a national identity open to everyone¹³⁸. From this perspective, conservative policy did not emphasize the role of minorities but focused on majorities. David Cameron stressed, during his speech at a security conference in Munich, that young radical Muslims did not identify with British values because the British identity needed to be strengthened. He also pointed out that multiculturalism leads to segregation because each ethnic, cultural, national, and religious group lives separately and does not integrate¹³⁹.

The political declaration of ending the multicultural state does not signify the end of a multicultural society. England, as well as the UK, remains a society diverse in culture, ethnicity, race, religion, and nationality. What has changed is the imposed meanings of practices, policies, and social discourse towards mi-

134 A. Osler, op. cit.

135 See: D. Kerr, et al., *Vision vs Pragmatism: Citizenship in the Secondary School Curriculum in England*, NFER, London 2007.

136 P. Dorey, *A New Direction or Another False Dawn? David Cameron and the Crisis of British Conservatism*, “British Politics”, 2, 2007, p. 139.

137 HM Government, *Building a Stronger Society*, 14. 10. 2010. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/supporting-a-stronger-civil-society> (accessed: 3.03.2024).

138 O. Wright, J. Taylor, *Cameron: My war on multiculturalism*, “The Independent”, 5.02.2011. Available at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/cameron-my-war-on-multiculturalism-2205074.html> (accessed: 7.03.2024).

139 P. R. Grillo, op. cit.

norities. Multiculturalism – like other *-isms* (capitalism, consumerism, nationalism, etc.) – is a set of social and political practices used by dominant and powerful groups and/or institutions to manage cultural diversity. The policies of subsequent governments were aimed at building social cohesion but proved to be insufficient. The year 2011 saw the London riots, and subsequent terrorist attacks occurred in 2017 in Manchester and London. David Cameron, in condemning the London riots, blamed young people from disadvantaged and dysfunctional families, whom he described as an underclass¹⁴⁰. Cameron placed the responsibility for the London riots on the parents and neighbourhoods. The rhetoric of Cameron’s cabinet suggests a shift from the ‘communitarian ideals of justice-oriented citizenship and civic engagement, towards a staunchly individualized, depoliticized, and personally responsible mode’¹⁴¹.

The governmental actions – both under Labour and then the Conservatives – suggest the incorporation of elements of assimilation practices into their policies, though they are termed differently¹⁴². The suspicion and fear directed toward the ‘other’, along with increased surveillance of minority members, escalated after September 11th and has been termed the ‘war on terror’. Preventive measures were taken among Muslim minorities, refugees, asylum seekers, and even foreign students. The British nation exhibits signs of ‘postcolonial melancholy’, which serves as a catalyst for shaping interactions with minorities. The reliance on assimilation practices tends to increase when the economic and political situation of the British populace weakens¹⁴³.

Citizenship education has undergone significant transformations under Conservative governments since 2010, experiencing a notable decline in interest at the political, academic, and school practice levels. The body of literature on citizenship education proliferated considerably from 1998 to 2010, followed by a noticeable decline. One contributing factor to this decline was a shift in education priorities under the leadership of Michael Gove, who prioritized reforms aimed at increasing school autonomy. Consistent with Conservative ideology, he emphasized discipline-based learning within school curricula and diminished the role of citizenship education as a subject¹⁴⁴. I fully concur with J. Weinberg and M. Flinders, who argued that the Conservative government initiated a ‘vision shift’

140 D. Gereluk, op. cit.

141 J. Weinberg, M. Flinders, op. cit., p. 186.

142 D. McGhee, op. cit.

143 See P. Gilroy, *After Empire: Multiculture or postcolonial melancholia*, Routledge, London 2004.

144 I. Davies, E. K. M. Chong, *Current challenges for citizenship education in England*, “Asian Education and Development Studies”, 5 (1), 2016, pp. 20–36.

that placed greater emphasis on knowledge delivery at the expense of promoting active citizenship, which was reduced merely to volunteering¹⁴⁵.

The 2014 reforms shifted the focus of citizenship education toward a knowledge-based curriculum, emphasising charity and volunteering, and also prioritised managing the domestic budget in response to the 2008 economic crisis. Human rights issues were curtailed, and active citizenship was limited to volunteering¹⁴⁶. Contrary to other reforms, there was a renewed emphasis on political, judicial, and economic knowledge, and topics related to the monarchy were expanded¹⁴⁷. The nation-state and national values became central themes in the revised National Curriculum of 2014, whereas international issues, global citizenship, and supranational institutions (including the EU) were sidelined. Furthermore, the focus on diversity issues highlighted in the Ajegbo report diminished after the revision. The policy direction under Michael Gove's tenure suggested a regression toward elements of an assimilation strategy in educational discourse, notably in the promotion of 'fundamental British values', which primarily 'targeted British Muslim pupils'¹⁴⁸.

The Conservatives shifted from promoting shared British values to advocating for fundamental British values, emphasising these alongside the reinforcement of national identity within the educational system. These fundamental British values are intended to build social cohesion and combat extremism. It is important to note that the *Prevent Duty* document, reformed in 2015, was issued to counteract terror attacks. Under this legislation, every person responsible for education is required to prevent young people from becoming involved in terrorist activities¹⁴⁹. This educational policy aims to enhance social prevention by minimizing the risk of extremism. However, it may inadvertently foster a culture of fear and suspicion, potentially damaging social cohesion and encouraging people to live in isolation. Excessive prevention against potentially harmful content can lead to adverse outcomes such as restrictions on freedom of speech, intercultural dialogue, and the exchange of ideas and experiences, all of which are vital to a democratic and civic society. The future development of citizenship education faces threats due to political interests focused on prevention, stem-

145 J. Weinberg, M. Flinders, op. cit.

146 D. Kerr, *National Curriculum Implications for Citizenship*, Citizenship Foundation, London 2013. Available at: http://www.citizenshipfoundation.org.uk/lib_res_pdf/1614.pdf (accessed: 09.02.2024).

147 Department for Education (DfE), *The National Curriculum in England, Key stages 3 and 4 framework document*, December 2014, pp. 3–12.

148 See: C. Alexander, D. Weeks-Bernard, *History lessons: inequality, diversity and the national curriculum*, "Race, Ethnicity and Education", 20 (4), 2017, pp. 478–494.

149 *Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance> (accessed: 29.03.2024).

ming from fears and the perceived need for social surveillance¹⁵⁰. Education has been overshadowed by a shift towards prevention and military orientation rather than democratic engagement. Moreover, Michael Gove was convinced that the school system should replace citizenship education with character or moral education¹⁵¹. Subsequent Conservative governments have continued this national orientation in citizenship education – a trend that has become known as the ‘visible shift’. For example, the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities report from March 2021 indicates that:

‘pupils need to be exposed to the rich variety of British culture and the influences that have shaped it, ranging from the influence of classical civilizations, the European Enlightenment, the inflows and outflows of the British Empire, and the stream of new arrivals in the post-war period to the present day’¹⁵².

Subsequent Conservative governments have significantly altered the role and emphasis of citizenship education in schools. Firstly, there was a marked shift towards prioritizing knowledge transmission, which narrowed the curriculum to basic civics or minimal citizenship education. Secondly, there was an expansion of character education within the citizenship curriculum, complemented by the introduction of a military ethos, supported by increased funding for organizing boot camps. Thirdly, issues of diversity were sidelined in favor of a focus on national history, with educational policies increasingly promoting (white) national heroes and imperial achievements. The revision of the history curriculum has shown that many students living in a multicultural society do not identify with the historical narratives taught in English schools¹⁵³. Research conducted by Claire Alexander and Debbie Weekes-Bernard indicates that reforms under Michael Gove’s administration present ‘a largely exclusionary, monochrome and defended Britishness, which has erased our more controversial and contested past and placed ethnic minorities firmly on the margins of British history’¹⁵⁴. The shift toward nationally oriented curricula has neglected aspects of global citizenship, human rights, cultural diversity, and sustainability¹⁵⁵. Reza Gholami

150 See: F. Furedi, *Spot the Little Terrorist in Your Midst: Why it’s wrong to turn teachers into spies on extremist kids*. Available at: <https://www.spiked-online.com/2015/07/01/spot-the-little-terrorist-in-your-classroom/> (accessed: 29.03.2024).

151 Department for Education, *Measures to help schools instil character in pupils announced*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/measures-to-help-schools-instil-character-in-pupils-announced> (accessed: 13.04.2024).

152 Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, op. cit., p. 90.

153 M. Watson, *Michael Gove’s war on professional historical expertise: conservative curriculum reform, extreme whig history and the place of imperial heroes in modern multicultural Britain*, “British Politics”, 15, 2020, pp. 271–290.

154 C. Alexander, D. Weeks-Bernard, op. cit., p. 489.

155 T. Nygren et al., *Global Citizenship Education for global citizenship? Students’ views on learning about, though, and for human rights, peace, and sustainable development in Eng-*

points out that ‘the nationalistic approach to citizenship education is far from adequate and is leaving many young people with a sense of indifference and disillusionment rather than a commitment to conviviality’¹⁵⁶. From this perspective, the curriculum reforms have taken on an ideological character that aligns with conservative and nationalist orientations:

‘yet the government has neglected the obvious route for doing this: by helping schools teach high-quality citizens lessons. The number of trainee citizenship teachers is down from 240 in 2010 to just 54 in 2016. Training bursaries are no longer provided. The ever-increasing proportion of schools, which are academies and free schools, are no longer required to teach citizenship. Ofsted no longer takes much of an interest in whether they do, so – not surprisingly – many don’t. It’s time for an urgent rethink on the part of government. As we approach the 100th anniversary of major reform in 1918, which extended the right to vote to millions, and the 20th anniversary of the Crick report of 1998, which called for every young person to learn about citizenship, democracy is facing unprecedented threats. We need a national programme to raise the profile and quality of citizenship teaching with the same focus that is given to subjects such as maths or history’¹⁵⁷.

Although the availability of studies, data, and evidence suggests that citizenship education has had a positive impact on the social and civic behaviours of youth, interest in this area has declined academically, socially, and pedagogically during the Conservative governance, compared with the previous decade¹⁵⁸. According to the longitudinal Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study (CELS) conducted from 2002 to 2009, citizenship education achieved the goals proposed in the Crick report in less than a decade. Students who received maximal citizenship education in school were 14.9% more likely to vote and exhibited greater political participation in adulthood compared to those who received minimal citizenship education¹⁵⁹. Furthermore, data suggest that citizenship education can have a ‘compensatory effect’ on students from deprived communities, as evidenced by their increased intention to vote¹⁶⁰. However, this study also reveals a declining trust in politics. The survey highlighted a pattern of an ideal citizen, emphasizing

land, India, New Zealand, South Africa, and Sweden, “Journal of Social Science Education”, 19 (4), 2020, pp. 63–97.

156 R. Gholami, op. cit.

157 T. Franklin, *Citizenship lessons more vital now than ever*, “The Guardian”, 8.06.2017. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/youngpeople?page=171> (accessed: 29.03.2024).

158 See: L. Sturman et al., *Citizens in Transition – Civic Engagement and Political Participation among Young People 2001–2011*, Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), Slough 2012.

159 A. Keating, A. Green, G. Janmaat, op. cit., p. 78.

160 J. Weinberg, M. Flinders, op. cit., p. 184.

law-abiding behaviour, suggesting that students received ‘minimal’ citizenship education, primarily focused on adherence to laws¹⁶¹.

Over the past twenty years, the recommendations for citizenship education in key governmental documents have evolved. These recommendations have reflected the public and political discourse on national identity within the context of social cohesion in a multicultural society.

Conclusions

The political transformation in Britain, particularly England, demonstrates the profound relationship between governmental policy, education, and school practices. Educational policies reveal conflicting approaches and narratives concerning citizenship education and diversity. The Crick report emphasized civic knowledge and the promotion of political participation among youth as a means to foster social cohesion, yet it failed to adequately address the cultural diversity present in a multicultural society. Conversely, the Ajegbo report, by introducing the fourth strand, aimed to enhance the focus on issues of diversity. The political shift of 2010 marked a significant change in the recognition and importance of citizenship education, leading to a subsequent decline in both interest in and perceived significance of this subject. Rooted in conservative ideologies, there is now an emphasis on ensuring that students acquire a broad knowledge of national history and receive moral education.

Some scholars and experts argue that the emphasis on developing national identity and fundamental British values may create tensions within a diverse society. As suggested by Gholami, all the core values such as respect, tolerance, diversity, citizenship, and globalization of the national curriculum are ‘defined with reference to national(ist) ideology’¹⁶². He also notes that at the governmental level, politics is threatened by the possibilities of globalization, which, in turn, strengthens the nationalistic orientation. Furthermore, the national curriculum and the education system as a whole tend to perceive identity as a monolith, prioritising national identity above all. However, the issue is not about the development of a national identity *per se*, but rather, as Banks suggests, maintaining a balance between local and global, and uniformity and diversity. The challenge lies in developing comprehensive and balanced citizenship education within the reality of ‘super-diversity’, where the current approach delivers only minimal citizenship education. Mere legal and political knowledge and the promotion of

161 See: D. Kerr, *Citizenship Education: An International Comparison*, [in:] *Education for Citizenship*, (eds.) D. Lawton, J. Cairns, R. Gardner, Continuum, London 2000.

162 R. Gholami, *op. cit.*

volunteering may not be sufficient to fully realise the potential of citizenship education as a subject.

The golden age of citizenship education in England spanned from 1998 to 2010. Despite evidence indicating positive outcomes of citizenship education in English schools – notably in increasing civic and political participation among youth – the Tory government marginalized the significance of this subject within the educational process¹⁶³. As suggested by J. Weinberg and M. Flinders, the implementation of citizenship education in England has not fully realized its potential¹⁶⁴. The prominence of political and ideological objectives over educational ones is evident.

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163 J. Weinberg, M. Flinders, op. cit., p. 183.

164 Ibidem, p. 177–194.

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Chapter 2. The Netherlands

The Context: from Nation-State to Welfare State

Though the Netherlands is not an island country like the British Isles or Singapore, it nevertheless shares significant geographical characteristics with regions surrounded by water. It was literally ‘built on water-born power, and engaged in a constant battle to protect and reclaim the Low Countries from the encroaching seas’¹⁶⁵. Dutch history is permeated with representations of flood disasters that have played a crucial role in constructing national identity, understood as the self-image of the ‘imagined community’¹⁶⁶. Analysis of various media types, including literary works, songs, sermons, visual arts, poems, newspapers, memorials or educational materials, reveals that these media have employed a set of recurrent themes linking national identity to the capacity for coping with floods. In her multidisciplinary analysis, Lotte Jensen highlights the importance of heroic role models, particularly members of the royal family, in reinforcing the link between Dutch national identity and the nation’s struggle against water. The media coverage of the royal family’s involvement in efforts following flood disasters portrays them as central figures in unifying the national community. Moreover, Jensen points to the narrative of *luctor et emergo* (‘I struggle, but I emerge’) that has become deeply ingrained in Dutch national identity¹⁶⁷. The myth-making process, including the invention of heroes like Hansje Brinker, and the celebration of the Dutch expertise in water management, illustrates how cultural discourses and media representations have perpetuated the image of the Dutch as a resilient community bound by a shared history of overcoming floods. The historical narrative of the Netherlands, intricately linked with its battle against the encroachment of water, portrays this challenge as not only a catalyst

165 M. Kemp, *Art in History. 600 BC – 2000 AD*, Profile Books, London 2014, p. 85.

166 B. Anderson, *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*, Verso Books, London 2006.

167 L. Jensen, *Floods as shapers of Dutch cultural identity: media, theories and practices*, “Water History”, Volume 13, 2021, p. 228.

for resilience, but also as a foundation for cultivating a culture of cooperation and consensus. The imperative of collective action for survival necessitated and reinforced these societal traits.

The unification of the Dutch provinces, which began in the 14th century and encompassed territories now known as Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, and the northwestern part of France, marked a gradual shift from the feudal dominion of the Burgundians and, later, the Habsburgs. The path toward independence gained momentum with the dissolution of the centralised governance of the Burgundian dukes over the Dutch, notably through the so-called Great Privilege of 1477. This pivotal moment led to the abolition of numerous central offices and granted cities and provinces a degree of autonomy, notably Holland, while simultaneously strengthening the power of the States General – the precursor to the Dutch parliament. This era is often referred to as *Pax Burgundica*. Within these united Dutch provinces, ‘a distinctive political character emerged, characterised by the ascendancy of the urban middle class at the forefront of the social hierarchy’¹⁶⁸.

The quest for political autonomy in the Netherlands during the Habsburg reign, initiated in 1482 under Emperor Maximilian I of Habsburg, set the stage for escalating conflicts and subsequent open revolt against the imperial crown. This tumultuous period was marked not only by the Habsburgs’ centralist and biased economic policies, but also by the transformative events of the Reformation and the rise of Protestantism. The Dutch populace’s alignment with Martin Luther’s critique of the Catholic Church further intensified the Habsburgs’ counter-reformative measures¹⁶⁹. Support for the Reformation among Dutch elites, characterised by a strong emphasis on individualism, practical approaches to religious tolerance, and the pervasive influence of humanistic education, was notably robust in comparison with other European societies. By as early as 1520, the humanist ethos began to influence education, effectively shaping an entire generation of elites. Through the works of Desiderius Erasmus and Dirk Cornhert, and later Hugo Grotius and Baruch Spinoza, it instilled a spirit of inquiry and a value system that prized civic responsibility and intellectual freedom. This laid the groundwork for the Netherlands’ later advancements in science, trade, and the arts during the Dutch Golden Age. It also served as a wellspring of inspiration for an array of public figures – regents, educators, state officials, and lawyers¹⁷⁰.

168 L. Niekrasz, *Kraj na przekór naturze*, Warszawa, 1986, p. 79.

169 Ibidem, p. 80.

170 M. Korzewski, *O Tolerancji w Społeczeństwie i Prawie Holenderskim*. Nomos, Kraków 2005, p. 114.

The consolidation of Protestantism, particularly Calvinism, in the Netherlands emerged from a rejection of the absolutist and feudal governance systems, and a strengthening of the autonomy and privileges once granted by the States General during the Burgundian era. This movement was significantly propelled by William of Orange, who led the revolt against the Habsburgs' political-religious regime, culminating in the Eighty Years' War of liberation. In 1581, the Act of Abjuration was ratified by the States General, formally renouncing loyalty to Philip II and heralding the Dutch Republic's sovereignty, and its republican character. This moment symbolised the triumph of nascent capitalism, withdrawal from Spanish Habsburg feudalism, and a shift away from traditional Catholic ethics towards the Protestant work ethic of the northern provinces¹⁷¹. In the latter half of the 16th century, the Netherlands saw the emergence of national consciousness. E.g. Dutch students enrolling in Italian universities identified themselves with unified terms like *Flamandus*, instead of by province. This period also featured significant developments in the Dutch and Flemish languages, and the strengthening of the bourgeoisie's political and social identity, especially in the north¹⁷².

In the early stage of Dutch statehood, the departure from the Habsburg imperial rule was characterised not only by the new governance, but also by a new religion. By 1618, the Dutch Reformed Church and Protestantism were officially endorsed by the state, despite Catholics constituting around 40% of the population. Although formally marginalised and deprived of rights such as public worship, guild memberships, and university admission, the religious landscape was marked by pragmatic pluralism, with 'the anti-Catholic edicts in the Netherlands being incompletely enforced'¹⁷³. The particular nature of religious pluralism in the 17th-century Netherlands can be attributed to policies of pragmatic tolerance and the tacit acknowledgement of religious minority activities. However, religious pluralism stemmed not only from pragmatic politics; it also served as a useful method of managing social relations. In daily life, the peaceful co-existence of individuals from varied denominations was predominant, justified as much by moral as by economic reasoning¹⁷⁴. The Netherlands, a burgeoning hub of commerce and cultural exchange, fostered an environment where economic pragmatism often trumped religious strictures.

Tolerance in the Netherlands functioned on three distinct levels: the pragmatic tolerance of political elites, the mercantile tolerance of traders, and the everyday tolerance in the immediate social environment. It's noteworthy, that despite the

171 L. Niekrasz, op. cit.; M. Korzewski, op. cit.

172 J. Balicki, and M. Bogucka. *Historia Holandii*. Ossolineum, Warszawa 1989, p. 154.

173 Ibidem, p. 205.

174 M. Korzewski, op. cit.

actual presence of religious pluralism, the preferential treatment of the Reformed Church translated into a dominance of the Calvinist ethos in both public and private domains. The rise of Calvinists to influential positions during the 17th century and their exclusive right to establish public schools pointed to the Calvinist catechism as foundational to education. ‘Calvinization through education’ resulted in the creation of ‘a unified semantic framework for all involved in the educational system. Regardless of their disagreements with certain formal aspects, Catholics, Lutherans, Arminians, and Mennonites shared common symbols with the Protestants of the prevailing Reformed Church’¹⁷⁵.

This multifaceted political culture of the Netherlands played a pivotal role in shaping its educational policies. The pragmatic approach to conflict resolution meant that ‘ideological differences were often addressed and resolved behind closed doors. In these settings, politically charged issues were depoliticized, allowing factions to reach the necessary consensus’¹⁷⁶. The art of compromise in politics, religion, and economics emerged as a defining trait of Dutch society. It reflected the Dutch tradition of ‘living apart together’, a concept highlighted by E. H. Bax, and underscored the country’s commitment to autonomy within each province alongside a culture of political compromise. While the strong individualism inherent in Calvinism, particularly in congregational forms, could have led to conflicts, it also fostered an appreciation for diversity. Thus, tolerance became the practical approach to ensuring peaceful cohabitation among different groups, a sentiment that was echoed by the confessional parties at the end of the 19th century¹⁷⁷.

The French period played a crucial role in fostering a sense of nationhood among inhabitants of the former United Provinces. The proclamation of the ‘Dutch nation’ in 1813 during William VI of Orange’s ascension signified a crucial shift towards national unity in the Netherlands¹⁷⁸. The unification of the Low Countries by the French marked a starting point, but it wasn’t until the 1870s that distinct Dutch legal and technical progress led to the establishment of the Netherlands as a nation-state. This newfound identity was progressively solidified through developments in communication infrastructure, such as the introduction of the telegraph in 1852 and the telephone in 1888. It was further enhanced by the synchronisation of national media and the standardisation of the Dutch language in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Political engagement increased with the adoption of a proportional electoral system in 1917 and the extension of voting rights to all citizens in 1922. The cultural integration of the

175 M. Korzewski, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

176 *Ibidem*, p. 123.

177 M. Wintle, *An Economic and Social History of the Netherlands, 1800–1920: Demographic, Economic and Social Transition*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2004, p. 264.

178 J. Balicki, M. Bogucka, *op. cit.*, p. 297.

19th century became a reality with Queen Wilhelmina's accession to the throne in 1898, which ignited a surge of patriotism and a deeper connection to the monarchy. Influenced by historic artists such as Rembrandt, a new generation of painters celebrated the country's landscapes and national heroes, enhancing a sense of national pride, and paying homage to what was considered the Netherlands' Golden Age¹⁷⁹.

The mid-19th century liberal intellectual elite of the higher middle class, favouring the humanistic tradition of public and non-religious education, as well as the development of care initiatives, fostered the secularisation of public life. Driven by the new middle-class elite (*burgerlijk*), these ideals became the foundation of 19th century Dutch national identity. The old elite (regent patriciate) and the small bourgeoisie supplemented this tradition, expressing both a commitment to uphold civil values, and making Calvinism a constitutional element of Dutchness. This confrontation, especially in the educational sphere, between secular and religious worldviews led to the establishment of the so-called pillarization system¹⁸⁰.

Ultimately, pillarization (*verzuiling*) has two interpretations. It can refer to the general political concept of consociationalism as it is understood in political science. Alternatively, it denotes a uniquely Dutch version of this concept, which incorporates both consociationalism and the ideas of pillarization and corporatism. This Dutch-specific blend emerged in the late 19th century and became a defining characteristic of the country's political ethos throughout the 20th century. The distinction between the broader model and the particular Dutch application has been extensively explored in literature, including work like Verhallen et al.'s 'Corporatisme', Bax's 'Modernization and Cleavage in Dutch Society', Lijphart's 'The Politics of Accommodation', and Ellemers's definition of 'Pillarization'¹⁸¹. Pillarization meant the sociopolitical division of Dutch society into several distinct 'pillars' based on their ideological or religious affiliations, the most prominent being the Protestant, the Catholic, the socialist, and the liberal pillars. Each one had its own social institutions (e.g. schools, universities, hospitals, newspapers) and individuals would largely interact within the confines of their pillar's structures. The structure led to a segregated society, where different

179 N.C.F. van Sas, *Varieties of Dutchness*, [in:] *Images of the Nation: Different Meanings of Dutchness, 1870–1940*, (eds.) Annemieke Galema, Barbara Henkes, and Henk te Velde, Rodopi, Amsterdam 1993, pp. 13–14.

180 M. Korzewski, op. cit., pp. 155–157.

181 See: H.J.G. Verhallen, R. Fernhout, & P.E. Visser, *Corporatisme in Nederland*. Alphen aan den Rijn, Samson 1980; E. H. Bax, *Modernization and Cleavage in Dutch Society: A Study of Long Term Economic and Social Change*. Gower Pub Co, Aldershot 1990; A. Lijphart, *The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1975; J.E. Ellemers, *Pillarization as a Process of Modernization*. "Acta Politica", vol. 19, 1984, pp. 129–144.

groups lived side by side but separately, with little interaction outside their own pillar.

The concept of *verzuiling* as a new social structure became entrenched in Dutch political life with the advent of universal suffrage, relying on the balanced representation of various social pillars. These ideological pillars were integral to the state's modernization, leading to a codified system of political and social interaction that is emblematic of Dutch political culture. Most recent scholarly work agrees that pillarization is a defining characteristic of modern Dutch history. However, this system is often seen as an artificially maintained state, either as a form of self-imposed isolation or as a product of elite manipulation; a mechanism developed to ease societal tensions, aiming to 'calm the Dutch state of mind'¹⁸². Pillarization served as a tool for managing and regulating societal developments across sectors like education and media, tying into broader governance and societal control. It became the vehicle for the distinct Dutch brand of tolerance, often viewed more as a pragmatic necessity for coexistence than as 'true' freedom; a means to mitigate conflict and ensure all opinions are acknowledged within the state apparatus, thereby maintaining social order and stability.

Since the 1960s, the Netherlands has shifted from a pillarized structure to a more unified and secular welfare state. The transformation was influenced by secularisation and a move toward greater individualism, with the waning influence of religious institutions as a notable factor. Secular trends, especially evident in the 1970s, saw a decline in church attendance and reduced religious influence in daily life. By 1971, significant cultural shifts had redefined women's roles as equal to men in marriage, reflecting broader changes driven by youth culture, consumerism, and external events like the Vietnam War. These changes propelled the society towards more liberal and individualistic values, culminating in debates like those on abortion, which led to the enactment of progressive abortion law aligning with international norms¹⁸³.

Lijphart's studies categorise the Netherlands as a consensual democracy, where a consensus-oriented approach remains predominant over other political behaviours. However, the nature of Dutch political evolution presents a conundrum. As analysed by M. Bogaards¹⁸⁴, from one viewpoint, it seems that the political system seems to have undergone significant changes, yet from another, it appears relatively unchanged. Closer inspection, especially when examining

182 M. Wintle, op. cit., p. 265.

183 E. Ketting, P. Schnabel, Induced Abortion in the Netherlands: a Decade of Experience, 1970–1980. *Studies in Family Planning*, 11(12), pp. 385–394.

184 M. Bogaards, *Consociationalism in the Netherlands: Polder Politics and Pillar Talk*, [in:] *Power-Sharing in Europe Past Practice, Present Cases, and Future Directions*, (eds.) S. Keil, A. McCulloch, Palgrave Macmillan, Cham 2021.

the three types of democracy pertinent to Dutch politics, reveals more continuity than change; societal shifts are more pronounced than political ones. The old pillars have dissolved without the formation of new ones, suggesting a stagnation in democratic reforms. Some scholar even refer to ‘reinventing tradition’ as the optimal path for democratic reform in the Netherlands. They highlight that the old Dutch method of pacification and accommodation has reemerged in new forms. Currently, the Dutch employ new terminologies but still engage in their time-honoured practice of consensus, leading to a work environment marked by pragmatic cooperation. This collaborative approach to politics has become so characteristic of the Dutch that it has been verbalised in the term *polderen*¹⁸⁵ – finding compromises and making decisions through extensive negotiation and cooperation among all stakeholders.

The Netherlands’ historical engagement with water has necessitated a culture of compromise and collective endeavour, essential for navigating the complexities of a pluralistic society. The evolution from feudal governance to a middle-class-dominated polity fostered a tradition of tolerance and pragmatic cooperation, reflected in the Dutch pillarization system. Understanding this historical context is fundamental to appreciating the Dutch model of multiculturalism, rooted in a legacy of consensus-building and integrative practices within a diverse populace.

The Evolution of the Dutch Approach to Multiculturalism

From the onset of post-war shifts in the European ‘ethnoscape’¹⁸⁶, the Netherlands adopted a distinctive approach to multiculturalism. In confronting the dual phenomena of decolonization and labour migration, the Dutch government – unlike Germany, for instance – formally recognized its new multicultural dimension and the enduring presence of ‘ethnic minorities’ as early as the 1970s. Since the post-war period, various groups have migrated to the Netherlands, though they were not initially recognized as immigrants. Instead, they were categorised under different labels and subjected to different policies.

Between 1945 and 1962, the term ‘repatriates’¹⁸⁷ in the Netherlands referred to individuals relocating from the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) to the

185 M. Bogaards, op. cit, p. 34.

186 A. Appadurai, *The power of the imagination*, [in:] *Project Migration*, (ed.) F. Krangenberg, DuMont, Cologne 2005.

187 The term ‘repatriate’ is misleading in this context, as many of these individuals were born and raised in the Dutch East Indies and had never lived in the Netherlands before. However, they were considered Dutch citizens and were ‘repatriating’ to the Netherlands as the

Netherlands. This migration followed World War II and the subsequent Indonesian National Revolution, culminating in Indonesia's independence from Dutch colonial rule in 1949. The migrants, often Dutch citizens and their families who had lived in the Dutch East Indies, included Europeans, those of mixed European-Indonesian descent (often referred to as 'Indo-Europeans' or 'Indos'), and Moluccans who had served in the colonial army. Approximately 300,000 people moved to the Netherlands between 1945 and the early 1960s., driven by political instability in Indonesia and the pursuit of economic opportunities in the Netherlands. The individuals who arrived from the former Dutch East Indies encompassed a diverse mosaic of backgrounds, illustrating the rich tapestry of cultures and identities within this group.

The arrival and subsequent 'temporary' status of Moluccan soldiers and their families highlighted a complex period of transition, challenge, and enduring tensions¹⁸⁸. In 1951, following Indonesia's independence and the disbandment of the Royal Netherlands East Indies Army (KNIL), Moluccan soldiers and their families were brought to the Netherlands under the pretence of temporary relocation. Having refused demobilisation in Java, these soldiers aimed to return to the Moluccas to establish an independent state. After legal disputes, the Dutch government transported 12,500 soldiers and their families to the Netherlands in 1951¹⁸⁹. Initially housed in separate, makeshift camps, including repurposed WWII concentration camps, this temporary arrangement extended, leaving the Moluccans in a state of uncertainty as promises of a return to an independent Moluccan state remained unfulfilled. They began relocating to specially built residential areas in the late 1960s and 1970s. This move, aimed at improving their integration into Dutch society, led to the establishment of 'Moluccan neighbourhoods'¹⁹⁰. Despite efforts to enhance living conditions and promote com-

metropole of their colonial citizenship, in the wake of decolonization and the violent conflicts that accompanied Indonesia's struggle for independence.

188 The Moluccan community in the Netherlands experienced a profound sense of displacement and broken promises, leading to social and political tensions. Unlike other migrants, they were not integrated into Dutch society, but maintained a strong community identity, hoping for a return to their homeland. Over time, this community became a permanent fixture in the Netherlands. Over time, while some tensions have eased through efforts at dialogue, integration, and mutual understanding, the legacy of these early challenges continues to influence the Moluccan experience in the Netherlands (see: R. Penninx, *Postwar Immigration and Integration Policies in the Netherlands: An Unstable Marriage*, [in:] *Relations Between Immigration and Integration Policies in Europe: Challenges, Opportunities and Perspectives in Selected EU Member States*, (eds.) D. Pyszczółkowska, M. Duszczak, M. Pachocka, Taylor & Francis, 2020, pp. 79–80).

189 R. Penninx, op. cit., p. 79.

190 Even today, Moluccan neighborhoods still exist in about 45 municipalities, where the fourth generation of Moluccan immigrants is brought up (J. C. Droogleever Fortuijn, *Demography*

munity ties, the transition faced challenges, including issues of identity, integration, and discrimination. While not completely resolving tensions over their unique status, this shift marked a significant advancement towards integrating the Moluccan community into Dutch society.

Migrants from Suriname represented yet another distinct category of newcomers, characterised by a *sui generis* legal status, and subject to different immigration and integration policies. By 1980, approximately 180,000 Surinamese citizens had migrated to the Netherlands. This significant migration was largely facilitated by the fact that Surinamese were Dutch citizens by virtue of Suriname's status as a Dutch colony until its independence in 1975. As part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, individuals born in Suriname were granted Dutch citizenship, which allowed them the right to move freely between Suriname and the Netherlands. The legal framework and the historical ties between Suriname and the Netherlands made it easier for Surinamese citizens not only to migrate, but also to integrate and seek better economic opportunities and educational prospects. Their migration was particularly pronounced in the period leading up to and following Suriname's independence, as many Surinamese sought to escape potential political instability and economic uncertainty associated with the transition to independence.

It was however the labour migration of the 1960s that represents a watershed in the demographic history of the Netherlands, emerging as the most consequential moment of national transformation in the postwar period. Inspired by the German model, the Dutch government's structured recruitment of foreign workers was a response to acute labour shortages within its rapidly expanding economy. Focused particularly on labour-intensive sectors such as mining, shipbuilding, textiles, and blast furnace operations, this policy transitioned from industry-led recruitment to a state-regulated process by 1968. This marked a pivotal institutionalisation of the 'guest-worker' system, which, despite previous experiences with migration, fundamentally redefined the social and cultural contours of the Dutch nation. The distinct official and organised character of this immigration influx set it apart as the most profound episode of societal change in the country's recent history¹⁹¹.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the emergence of multiculturalism marked a shift in perspectives on immigration in the Netherlands. Initially, there was a strong conviction that the country should not function as a destination for immigrants, resulting in a lack of formal integration policies. The influx of migrants during

[in:] *The Netherlands and the Dutch: A Physical and Human Geography*, (eds.) E.F.J. de Mulder, B.C. de Pater, and J.C. Droogleeve Fortuijn, Springer 2019, p. 206).

191 L. Minnard, *New Germans, New Dutch: Literary Interventions*, Amsterdam University Press, 2009, pp. 19–20.

the 1960s and 1970s was largely seen as an unintended consequence of economic and political circumstances, with the expectation – similar to Germany's *Rotationsprinzip* – that most immigrants would eventually return to their homelands. Policies enacted during this era often adhered to the differentialist model¹⁹², adopting a 'two-track' approach, that encouraged migrants to participate in the socio-economic sphere while still distinguishing them from Dutch society in other aspects. This approach, encapsulated in the slogan 'integration with retention of one's own identity' (*integratie met behoud van eigen identiteit*), initially focused on the social and economic integration of migrants during their stay. Migrant groups were recognised as distinct entities based on diverse origins such as Surinamese, Antilleans, Moluccans, and foreign workers, emphasising their non-Dutch background. The underlying premise of this policy was to facilitate potential return migration by allowing migrants to maintain their cultural identities and internal group structures as much as possible¹⁹³.

Since the late 1970s however, Dutch policies on migration and integration have significantly evolved, reflecting shifts in political, economic, and social dynamics both domestically and globally. Following the 1973 oil crisis, the Netherlands halted its recruitment of foreign workers amid an economic downturn and rising unemployment. This shift transformed the public perception of 'guest workers' from contributors to economic prosperity to burdens on society and competitors for scarce jobs, exacerbating tensions and contributing to a more negative discourse about their presence in the country¹⁹⁴. In 1974, the Dutch government launched the Reintegration of Emigrant Manpower and Promotion of Local Opportunities for Development (REMPOD), a program aimed at encouraging guest workers from countries like Turkey, Tunisia, and Morocco to return to their countries of origin and start their own businesses with support from the Dutch state. Noted as one of the earliest voluntary repatriation schemes in Europe, REMPOD also distinguished itself by targeting economic development in the migrants' countries of origin as a key objective. The Dutch Ministry for Development Cooperation supported this initiative with the intention of fostering

192 Under the theoretical model of differentialism, or 'ethnic segregationism', cultural distinctions between groups are formally recognised and embedded into institutions. The approach to immigrant integration in this context emphasised supporting the independence of different groups within their distinct communities (P.W.A. Scholten, *Framing Immigrant Integration. Dutch Research-Policy Dialogues in Comparative Perspective*, IMISCOE Research, Amsterdam 2011). The dominant group demonstrates reluctance to accept immigrants and their descendants as full members of the nation, evident through exclusionary immigration policies, stringent naturalisation regulations, and the rejection of being countries of immigration (S. Castles, M.J. Miller, *The age of migration*, The Guilford Press, New York 2003, p. 249).

193 P.W.A. Scholten, op. cit., p. 100.

194 L. Minnard, op. cit., p. 21.

structural conditions conducive to rural development. Despite its innovative approach, REMPOD's outcomes fell short of policymakers' expectations, particularly considering the financial costs involved, leading to its discontinuation in the mid-1980s.¹⁹⁵

The official cessation of labour recruitment agreements in 1973 did not decrease the immigrant population in the Netherlands; instead, it initiated a consolidation phase where many foreign workers began family reunification processes, thus establishing long-term residency¹⁹⁶. By the late 1970s, the perception of migrants' roles in Dutch society had shifted due to several key events. Not only was the Netherlands grappling with labour migration, but also with significant immigration following the Suriname's decolonization in 1975. Ethnic riots in Rotterdam and Schiedam in 1972 and 1976, coupled with terrorist acts by Moluccan migrants, profoundly altered prevailing attitudes towards immigration and multiculturalism. Furthermore, the emergence of political parties with anti-immigrant agendas in city councils mirrored and intensified public concerns about social cohesion, economic competition, and cultural identity, promoting stricter immigration controls and assimilation policies. These developments highlighted escalating tensions regarding the country's immigration policy, and underscored the need for proactive governmental support in immigrant integration.

Koopmans and Statham¹⁹⁷ posit that the Dutch integration policy of this period, which focused on preserving minority cultures, represented a continuation of the pillarisation policy – granting cultural rights to ethnic minorities. The emergence of Dutch multiculturalism developed through political compromises, significantly influenced by the unrest among young Moluccans' in the 1970s., and the broader socio-economic and political repercussions of the 1973 crisis. The Netherlands' early immigration stance on immigration was distinctively shaped by its historical context of pillarisation, which traditionally supported separate cultural communities within a pluralist society. In 1979, the Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR)¹⁹⁸ issued a report addressing issues of integration, identity, and migration impact on Dutch society. The report emerged during a transition from a guest worker policy, which presumed temporary migration, to recognition of the permanence of many migrant groups and

195 R. E. B. Lucas, *International handbook on migration and economic development*, Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham 2014.

196 L. Minnaard, op. cit., p. 22.

197 R. Koopmans, P. Statham, *How National Citizenship Shapes Transnationalism. A Comparative Analysis of Migrant Claims-Making in Germany, Great Britain and the Netherlands*, "Revue Européenne des Migrations Internationales", vol. 17, no. 2, 2001, p. 79.

198 The Scientific Council for Government Policy – *Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeeringsbeleid* (WRR).

the need for a comprehensive integration strategy. The tension between maintaining one's own identity and achieving integration became central to debates on multiculturalism and assimilation. In the pivotal section on 'an Open, Multi-Ethnic Society', the report criticises cultural isolation and ethnic segregation, and advocated for a significant policy shift¹⁹⁹:

'The Council wishes to emphasize that just as minorities and majority need to respect one another's attitudes, both have to recognize that an optimal participation in society by minorities will necessitate cultural change on both sides. (...) The objective of 'preservation of cultural identity' tends to promote a static look on ethnic minority cultures. It fails to recognize the flexibility and adaptability of those cultures towards social change'.

The WRR report highlighted the necessity for integration policies to delicately balance encouraging migrants to fully participate in Dutch society while permitting them to preserve their cultural identities. This equilibrium was considered essential for cultivating a cohesive society – one that appreciates diversity yet advocates for common values and norms. Contrary to earlier approaches, the notion of 'integration with retention of one's own identity' was explicitly dismissed by the Council as a viable policy option²⁰⁰.

In the early 1980s., the Netherlands formally introduced its first immigrant integration policy with the draft of the Minorities Memorandum in 1981, which was subsequently solidified by the Ethnic Minorities Policy (EMP) Bill of 1983. This policy marked a significant shift by assuming that ethnic minorities would permanently settle in the Netherlands, and moving away from previous perceptions of their temporary presence. Migrants were officially recognized as permanent settlers, or as cultural and ethnic minorities within Dutch society, and were no longer classified merely by their foreign origins. The EMP conceptualised Dutch society as multi-ethnic or multicultural, explicitly incorporating the term 'multicultural' in the Memorandum. The earlier slogan 'integration with retention of identity' was discarded in favour of a more dynamic approach to immigrant cultures. Recognising the asymmetrical relationship between minorities and the majority, the policy emphasised mutual adaptation and emancipation, promoting a bidirectional integration process²⁰¹. This policy framework emphasised the importance of protecting and promoting the rights of minority groups to facilitate their full societal participation and the preservation

199 R. Penninx, *Integration while preserving your own culture and identity? Looking back at the framing of the migrant culture and identity in integration policies in the Netherlands*, [in:] *Against Better Judgement: Rethinking Multicultural Society*, (eds.) J. Elahi, S. Trienekens, and H. Ramsøedh, Brill 2022, p. 98.

200 Ibidem.

201 Ibidem, p. 99.

of their cultural identities. Concurrently, it recognised that these groups have corresponding responsibilities essential for their integration and the overall societal cohesion. The framework acknowledged that when the values and norms of minority cultures clash with the fundamental norms of Dutch society, 'the integration of minorities would inevitably require some degree of adaptation to Dutch society'²⁰². The obligations mentioned in the 1981 Memorandum included acquiring 'an adequate command of the Dutch language'²⁰³, as well as understanding and respecting the fundamental societal values, and actively participating in the social, economic, and political life of the country. These responsibilities were not intended to suppress the cultural identities of minorities, but were seen as essential in ensuring that all members of society could interact effectively and share a common foundation of mutual respect and understanding.

The EMP of 1983 established two primary objectives: the development of a tolerant society that appreciates multicultural and multi-ethnic diversity, thus enabling the self-determination of ethno-cultural groups; and the promotion of socio-economic equality by addressing disparities that affect the societal status of minority groups', and combating systemic discrimination. The policy outlined that specialised measures were necessary to safeguard the essential rights of these groups within a multicultural context, and it tasked immigrant organisations with preserving and enhancing their cultural identities. Government agencies were advised to adopt a non-interventionist stance, focusing instead on removing societal barriers and prejudice. To foster socio-economic equality, the policy mandated the integration of equal opportunity measures across key sectors such as the labour market, education, and housing, ensuring access and non-discriminatory treatment. The concept of 'proportional representation or share' emerged as the benchmark for evaluating effective governance in immigration policy during the 1980s²⁰⁴.

From the late 1980s onwards, a public discourse emerged in the Netherlands infused with apprehensions concerning immigrant populations, often depicted as culturally and socio-economically 'backward'. Contrary to its portrayal as the zenith of Dutch multiculturalism, this period was marked by contentious debates around the integration of newcomers. These debates intensified particularly

202 P.W.A. Scholten, op. cit., p. 102.

203 R. Penninx, op. cit., p. 99.

204 R. Penninx, *Postwar Immigration and Integration Policies in the Netherlands: An Unstable Marriage*, [in:] *Relations Between Immigration and Integration Policies in Europe: Challenges, Opportunities and Perspectives in Selected EU Member States*, (eds.) D. Pszczółkowska, M. Duszczuk, M. Pachocka, 1st ed., Taylor & Francis, 2020.

after the pivotal year of 1989²⁰⁵. Criticism of the EMP centred on its perceived ineffectiveness. A pivotal 1989 report by the WRR – which had initially supported EMP – highlighted the policy’s insufficient progress in crucial areas like labour market participation and education for migrants. The report critiqued the overemphasis on multiculturalism and support for ethnic organisations, arguing that these approaches had impeded rather than facilitated individual integration and employment opportunities for migrants. It advocated for a recalibrated approach with more compulsory measures in labour and education, aligning migrants’ responsibilities with their rights and shifting the policy focus from cultural rights to more pragmatic integration aspects²⁰⁶. The 1989 WRR report marked the beginning of a significant shift in the Dutch integration strategy.

During the 1990s., amidst significant political changes, Frits Bolkestein became a prominent leader within the conservative-liberal *Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie* (VVD). His leadership was crucial for the party’s significant electoral successes in the 1994 general elections. Bolkestein’s formation of the ‘purple cabinet’, an alliance with the Labour Party (PvdA) and Democrats 66 (D66), marked a departure from the Christian democratic dominance. Bolkestein’s political strategies significantly boosted the VVD’s popularity, as seen in their increased parliamentary presence after the 1998 elections²⁰⁷. Additionally, under Bolkestein’s leadership, the VVD adopted a new approach to multiculturalism, sparking intense debates over integration and national identity. In a key 1991 statement, Bolkestein argued that Islamic culture was inherently incompatible with Western values of tolerance and gender equality²⁰⁸. This ideological shift from a previously tolerant multicultural stance to a more critical and directive approach was significantly influenced, though not solely, by VVD.

The 1994 policy document, *Contourennota*, marked a further transition in Dutch integration policy by placing an emphasis on ‘good citizenship’ and ‘self-responsibility.’ This approach explicitly posits that citizenship involves not only rights but also obligations, with an expectation for individuals to take initiative and be self-reliant. Consistent with the 1989 WRR report mentioned above, the policy shifted focus from collective groups to individuals, especially those who

205 De Jong, W., *Decolonizing citizenship: democracy, citizenship and education in the Netherlands, 1960–2020*, “European Review of History: Revue européenne d’histoire”, 29 (6), 2022, p. 1013. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13507486.2022.2131507> (accessed: 23.04.2024).

206 R. Penninx, op. cit.

207 In the 1998 general elections, the VVD achieved significant success, securing an additional seven seats in the House of Representatives, which brought them the total to 38 seats. This outcome affirmed the VVD’s position as a major force in Dutch politics and solidified the leadership of F. Bolkestein.

208 F. Bolkestein, *Integratie van minderheden moet met lef worden aangepakt* (The integration of minorities must be tackled with courage). *NRC Handelsblad*, 1991, September 12.

are disadvantaged, with a pronounced interest in socio-economic integration through employment and educational opportunities. It steered away from cultural and multicultural strategies and reduced support for immigrant organisations²⁰⁹.

In the early 1990s in the Netherlands, a noticeable shift in public sentiment began to emerge, characterised by increasing scepticism towards multiculturalism and the integration of immigrants. This societal change coincided with – and arguably contributed to – the rise of conservative parties within the political landscape, reflecting a complex interplay between social attitudes and political dynamics. A critique of the liberal attitudes of the 1960s and a yearning to reclaim Dutch national identity marked this shift. Publications from this era, such as Marcel ten Hooven's essay 'The Conservative Offensive' (1995) and Hans Wansink's book 'The Conservative Wave' (1996), reflect a conservative resurgence. Ten Hooven observed a newfound conservative sentiment advocating for a moral revival led by the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA) and VVD. Meanwhile, Wansink highlighted a conservative movement inspired by international figures, such as Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, aiming to revitalise traditional values against leftist ideologies²¹⁰.

As the 1990s drew to a close, CDA experienced a resurgence, culminating in its return to power. The period was marked by Christian Democrats' dominance in Dutch politics, with Jan Peter Balkenende leading four consecutive cabinets from 2002 to 2010. This political ascendancy accentuated a revitalised conservative sentiment, positioning itself as an alternative to the liberal-conservative synthesis championed by F. Bolkestein, and reflecting a further shift within the Dutch political spectrum towards conservative ideologies. The conservative pushback against the ethos of multiculturalism was also initiated within the polemical field of conservative intellectuals and journalists. In December 2000, amid a sustained intellectual critique of the 1960s' liberal values – which were linked to a range of societal issues, including increased crime rate, immigrant integration problems, the dilution of national identity, and widespread moral decline – the Edmund Burke Foundation was established. This organisation set the ideological-polemical stage in the media for subsequent populist movements. Marked by a robust defence of Dutch cultural identity and a focus on the challenges posed by radical Islam, it significantly influenced the political field and played a key role in the rise of populist leaders such as Pim Fortuyn and Geert Wilders²¹¹.

209 R. Penninx, op. cit., p. 91.

210 M. Oudenampsen, *The Rise of the Dutch New Right: An Intellectual History of the Rightward Shift in Dutch Politics*, Routledge, 2021.

211 M. Oudenampsen, op. cit.

At the onset of the 21st century, Dutch government policy underwent a significant shift as it grappled with issues concerning national minorities. A pivotal moment occurred with the publication of Paul Scheffer's 2000 essay *Het Multiculturele Drama* ('The Multicultural Tragedy'), which sparked intense discourse over integration and societal cohesion within the Netherlands. The debate intensified amid a sequence of high-profile incidents that highlighted the tensions wrought by cultural and religious diversity. This turbulent period, referred to as 'the long year of 2002', became emblematic of the era's societal strains. During this time, Pim Fortuyn, a populist politician, brought the issue of immigrant integration to the forefront of the national conversation. His outspoken views, advocating for 'zero-immigration' – citing the country's perceived saturation – and a 'cold war against Islam', which he controversially termed as 'an idiotic culture,' polarised public opinion²¹². This era of heated debate was tragically highlighted by Fortuyn's assassination during the 2002 parliamentary election campaign. Despite his assassination, Fortuyn's party, Pim Fortuyn List (*Lijst Pim Fortuyn* – LPF), went on to achieve significant success in the 2002 elections. Although it demonstrated structural fragility, evidenced by its rapid disbandment following Fortuyn's death, it managed to secure an unprecedented number of seats (26) for a new political entity and became a substantial parliamentary force²¹³.

In 2003, a parliamentary investigative committee was convened to scrutinise the inefficacy of Dutch immigrant integration policies²¹⁴. That same year, Rita Verdonk, who served as the Minister of Immigration and Integration from 2002 to 2007, announced the 'Integration Policy New Style' (*Integratiebeleid Nieuwe Stijl*). In her written communication to parliament, she stated that future efforts should shift focus from fostering cultural identities to prioritising 'shared citizenship'. This policy entailed an expectation for immigrants to speak Dutch, adhere to fundamental Dutch values, and actively engage in societal contributions²¹⁵. R. Taras summarises the new policy direction as follows:

'Rather than social-cultural emancipation being a condition for socio-economic participation (as in the Minorities Policy) or socio-economic participation being a condition for social-cultural emancipation (as in the Integration Policy), the new causal

212 P.W.A. Scholten, op. cit., p. 104.

213 N. Bolleyer, *New parties in old party systems: Persistence and decline in seventeen democracies*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2013, p. 178.

214 P.W.A. Scholten, op. cit., p. 104.

215 R. van Oers, *Deserving Citizenship: Citizenship Tests in Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom*, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, Leiden – Boston 2014, p. 53.

story was that social-cultural differences could form an obstacle to socio-economic participation²¹⁶.

This new era was termed by many scholars as a policy shift towards assimilationism²¹⁷, marking a significant deviation from previous strategies in integrating immigrants into Dutch society. R. Penninx describes this new framing as “hyper-politicisation”²¹⁸. In 2004, debates, decisions, and actions surrounding immigration and integration issues became heavily influenced by political agendas, with political parties adopting increasingly polarised views on cultural assimilation and societal cohesion²¹⁹. The conservative pushback against the ethos of multiculturalism drew on the assertion that there was a ‘taboo’ surrounding the discussion of crime, unemployment, and ‘maladaptation’ within ethnic minority communities. For example, Minister Verdonk openly warned in the explanatory memorandum to the new Integration Act (2005) that ‘continuity of the society would be threatened’ if a considerable portion of the citizenry failed to engage ‘actively in society and the economy’. To address this concern, the government proposed an ‘integration obligation’²²⁰.

Under the forthcoming legislative framework, immigrants were mandated to pass a language and integration exam, with non-compliance potentially leading to residency or naturalisation denial and financial sanctions. The impending legislative framework underscored a paradigm shift towards further individualization in the context of the Dutch immigrant integration policy, positing integration as an individual achievement rather than a collective endeavour. By mandating immigrants to successfully pass a language and integration examination, the legislation implicitly assigns a heightened degree of personal responsibility upon the immigrants themselves for their successful assimilation into the host society. These stipulations are positioned as dual-purpose instruments – both as motivation for the immigrant’s proactive integration/assim-

216 R. Taras, *Challenging Multiculturalism: European Models of Diversity*, Edinburgh University Press, 2013, p. 105.

217 E. Vasta, *From Ethnic Minorities to Majority Policy: Changing Identities and the Shift to Assimilationism in the Netherlands*, Oxford: COMPAS, WP-06-26, 2006; P.W.A. Scholten, op. cit.

218 R. Penninx, *Integration*, op. cit., p. 93.

219 In the Netherlands, conservative ideologies have resonated particularly in faction within the VVD (People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy), the CDA (Christian Democratic Appeal), and the PVV (Party for Freedom). The rise of two new far-right parties, the Party for Freedom (PVV) in 2006 and the Forum for Democracy (FvD) in 2016, marked the Netherlands alignment with the broader European trend of emerging right-wing populist movements. These parties have thrived by exploiting public discontent with mainstream politics, globalization, and cultural changes, significantly polarizing the Dutch political landscape (see: K. Vossen, *The power of populism: Geert Wilders and the Party for Freedom in the Netherlands*, Routledge, New York 2017).

220 R. Van Oers, op. cit., p. 53.

ilation and as a safeguard for the Dutch societal fabric. The requirement serves not only as a prerequisite for securing residency or naturalisation, but also acts as a litmus test for the immigrants' willingness and capacity to adapt to the cultural, linguistic, and societal norms of the host country. Moreover, the financial onus for integration courses, estimated at around €4,300, is transferred to the immigrants, aligning with the government's retreat from a formerly service-oriented model to one that allocates this responsibility to the private sector, specifically to accredited language and educational entities²²¹. As discussed by Vasta²²², using the examples of the Netherlands and England, the shift in European discourse reflects a broader move away from multiculturalism towards a dominant contemporary narrative. The focus has increasingly been on integrating minority cultures into a dominant culture, rather than maintaining a mosaic of different cultures. This narrative has opened discussions on national identity, immigration, integration policies, and social cohesion within European countries. Christian Joppke observes that the Netherlands has moved from multiculturalist policies due to challenges such as socio-economic disparities and high unemployment rates²²³, while Han Entzinger notes a similar transition towards assimilation due to the limitations of previous multicultural policies²²⁴.

This transition towards integrating minority cultures into a predominant one significantly altered the Dutch approach to citizenship education. With the introduction of formal citizenship education in 2006, the curriculum began to emphasise assimilation and the common values, norms, and history that define Dutch society. It shifted focus towards what unites citizens, including an understanding of the Dutch language, legal system, and democratic principles. The aim was to forge a shared sense of identity and belonging among students from diverse backgrounds, emphasising the responsibilities that come with Dutch citizenship. Veugelers et al. highlight²²⁵ that, in the realm of educational policy, discourse surrounding democratic citizenship education in the Netherlands has become significantly more prominent than it was two decades ago.

Historically, Dutch society was hallmarked by a consensus democracy that required collaboration among political minorities, necessitating coalitions and compromises. This shaped the social fabric and educational imperatives, par-

221 Ibidem, p. 54.

222 E. Vasta, op. cit.

223 Ch. Joppke. *The Retreat of Multiculturalism in the Liberal State: Theory and Policy*. "The British Journal of Sociology", vol. 55, no. 2, 2004, pp. 237–257.

224 H. Entzinger. *The Parallel Decline of Multiculturalism and the Welfare State in the Netherlands*, [in:] *Multiculturalism and the Welfare State*, (eds.) K. Banting, W. Kymlicka, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2006, pp. 177–201.

225 W. Veugelers, I. de Groot, V. Stolk, *Research for CULT Committee – Teaching common values in Europe*, European Parliament, Policy Department for Structural and Cohesion Policies, Brussels 2017.

ticularly within citizenship education. However, over the past two decades, the political landscape in the Netherlands has evolved, showing a diminished emphasis on consensus, with parties often operating within slim majorities. Concurrently, the educational context has had to grapple with the rise of right-wing populism, which has significantly influenced political debate and policy. As a result, citizenship education in the Netherlands must adapt to these socio-political shifts, fostering an understanding of both traditional collaborative governance and contemporary political dynamics characterised by narrower majoritarianism and heightened ideological divides.

Educational Freedom in the Netherlands

In the Dutch education system, educational oversight, including the establishment of statutory requirements for all stages of schooling, is provided by the government. However, the execution of educational programs rests with individual schools, which enjoy considerable autonomy²²⁶. Education is compulsory between the ages of 5 and 16, or until 18 if a diploma has not been achieved. Children typically start primary education at age 4 and move to secondary education around age 12, which offers six distinct pathways from pre-vocational to pre-university levels. A majority of students pursue post-secondary education, with various options including vocational (MBO), higher vocational (HBO), and academic studies at universities. The Netherlands boasts a high tertiary attainment rate of 56.4% among individuals aged 25–34, exceeding the EU average of 42%. This educational success extends to EU nationals residing in the Netherlands, who have an even higher attainment rate of 58.8% compared to the Dutch-born population at 57.4%, indicating the country's appeal to highly skilled professionals from other EU states. Additionally, the non-EU-born population in the Netherlands achieves a tertiary attainment rate of 48.2%, which is higher than the EU average of 35.7%. Employment prospects for these highly educated individuals are also promising, with a 94.3% employment rate for recent tertiary graduates, outpacing the EU average employment rate of 86.7%. Similarly, strong employment outcomes are consistent for those completing secondary vocational education and training, with an employment rate of 92.8%. In terms of gender

226 As stated in the Eurydice report: 'A distinctive feature of the Dutch education system is that it combines a centralised education policy with the decentralised administration and management of schools. With due regard for the provisions of the Constitution, the central government creates enabling conditions for education through legislation which applies to both publicly and privately run institutions' (Eurydice, *Levels of Autonomy and Responsibilities of Teachers in Europe*, 2008. Available at: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/b36880f0-c8be-4517-a3d0-e4a23dc6f323> (accessed: 25.04.2024).).

disparity, the situation is favourable for women in this age group who are highly skilled, as they hold tertiary degrees at a rate 8.3 percentage points higher than men, while the gender gap in the EU averages 11.1 percentage points²²⁷.

As formulated by J. Soper et. al.: ‘The Dutch concept of pluralism translates, when applied to education, to a deep and lasting commitment to freedom of choice²²⁸. Article 23 of the Dutch Constitution establishes the principle of educational freedom and has been pivotal in shaping the country’s educational system for over two centuries. It endows schools with three foundational freedoms: the freedom of establishment (*vrijheid van stichting*), which permits the creation of schools; the freedom of conviction (*vrijheid van richting*), safeguarding the right to educate and be educated in accordance with specific religious or philosophical beliefs; and the freedom of organisation of teaching (*vrijheid van inrichting*), authorising schools to self-govern their teaching methods and curricula. Historically, this article facilitated the founding of schools by diverse religious groups within the constitutional framework. Following a significant revision in 1917, the legislation mandated that privately managed schools receive funding on par with public schools, establishing a precedent for financial equality in education. Presently, a majority of students attend publicly funded schools, with a minuscule proportion, less than one percent, enrolled in privately funded institutions. As de Groot et. al. put it: ‘Most schools are therefore publicly funded and privately managed, or publicly funded and publicly managed²²⁹. Regardless of their operational management, all publicly funded schools in the Netherlands are subject to the same legal standards, illustrating a commitment to an equitable educational framework that respects a plurality of educational philosophies.

In the Dutch educational system, 70% of primary and secondary education students attend schools that are publicly funded and privately managed, often based on specific religious or ideological principles. This rate of enrolment in non-public schools is uniquely high among Western democracies²³⁰, with about two-thirds of students in these settings – a contrast to the rest of Europe. In primary education, publicly managed schools educate 30% of students, while Roman-Catholic and Protestant schools serve 33% and 28% of the student body,

227 European Commission. Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, *Education and training monitor 2023: The Netherlands*, European Commission, 2023, Available at: <https://op.europa.eu/webpub/eac/education-and-training-monitor-2023/en/> (accessed: 25.04.2024).

228 J.C. Soper, K.R. den Dulk, S.V. Monsma, *The Challenge of Pluralism: Church and State in Six Democracies*, Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham 2017, p. 101.

229 I de Groot, R. Daas, H. Nieuwelink, *Education for democratic citizenship in Dutch schools: A bumpy road*, “Journal of Social Science Education”, 21 (4), 2022. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.11576/jsse-5381> (accessed: 23.04.2024), p. 4.

230 J.C. Soper et. al., op. cit., p. 102.

respectively. Other private management structures, including non-religious, Reformed, or Muslim ideologies, account for 10% of enrollment. In secondary education, 27% of students attend publicly managed schools, 23% attend Roman-Catholic schools, 21% Protestant schools, and 28% are in a variety of other privately managed public schools. These figures highlight the Netherlands' distinctive, pluralistic educational sector, emphasising a strong commitment to educational diversity and choice²³¹. Educational choice is a cornerstone of the Dutch educational system. In this context, the full funding of religious schools is not regarded as a violation of the separation of church and state, but rather as a vital means of ensuring governmental neutrality in matters of religion and belief. Providing equitable financial support is deemed essential to prevent bias and to safeguard the free exercise of all belief systems in a pluralistic society.

The established societal framework in the Netherlands generally serves its populace effectively; however, it has faced challenges, mainly concerning the Muslim demographic. Firstly, the events of September 11th, the assassination of filmmaker Theo van Gogh in 2004, and subsequent Islamist extremist activities have sparked a new strain of suspicion and tension in the Dutch community – a sentiment previously confined to the societal periphery. Secondly, the Muslim community itself is internally fragmented along ethnic lines, with significant groups from Moroccan, Turkish, Indonesian, and Surinamese backgrounds, leading to polarising views between progressive and conservative factions within. Despite the establishment of the *Commissie voor Contact van Moslims met de Overheid* formed in 2004²³², there remains a scarcity of comprehensive Muslim organisations to facilitate dialogue with state authorities on behalf of the wider Muslim populace. Consequently, although the Dutch traditional approach to religious and cultural diversity – the ‘pillarization’ model – should ostensibly accommodate the requirements of a minority faith group, its application in the Muslim context has been less than seamless. Observers are advocating for a return to the Netherlands' traditional educational and philosophical roots to foster unity and fully integrate Muslim minority, rather than allowing segregation or the formation of enclaves resistant to integration. ‘While the Netherlands continues to debate whether separate schools may stifle the integration of

231 D. Hildebrandt-Wypych, *System edukacji w Holandii*, [in:] *Systemy edukacji w krajach europejskich*, (eds.) E. Potulicka, D. Hildebrandt-Wypych, C. Czech-Włodarczyk, Impuls, Kraków 2013, pp. 196–197.

232 The 2004 Minister of Integration, R. Verdonk, advocated for the establishment of a liaison body, the Committee for Contact between Muslims and the Government (CMO – *Commissie voor Contact van Moslims met de Overheid*). This initiative, which mirrors similar entities in France and several other Western European nations, aimed to foster dialogue and understanding between Muslim communities and the state.

Muslim immigrants into Dutch society, freedom of education has persisted as a defining national norm²³³.

The Dutch educational system, particularly in primary and secondary schooling, is still marked by the significant role of religion, mainly through private-denominational schools. These schools, which constitute over 60% of the educational institutions, receive full government funding contingent upon meeting statutory quality standards. While these schools generally embed a religious ethos in their curriculum, the extent of its integration varies. Typically, religious principles do not always overtly influence everyday teaching. However, in certain schools – specifically orthodox Christian, Jewish, and Islamic – there is a cohesive community built around their religious values, which permeate all facets of the school’s atmosphere. A recent legislative change is the enactment of the 2021 *Meer ruimte voor nieuwe scholen* (More room for new schools) law, which revises the criteria for establishing private schools. This law now allows educational beliefs, as opposed to only religious or ideological beliefs prevalent in Dutch society, as a basis for creating schools. This has sparked new discussions about the nature and scope of educational freedom. The debate on educational freedom in the Netherlands, particularly in the context of expressing minority viewpoints, has been intensified by instances such as those reported by *NRC Handelsblad* in 2021. This reporting highlighted how Orthodox Reformist and Muslim schools are scrutinised for practices that diverge from mainstream societal norms. For example, controversies have arisen from a Reformist school requiring parents to sign a statement disavowing homosexuality based on their belief in traditional marriage, or a Muslim school perceived as not promoting democratic values among students. This tension was underscored by investigative reporting which revealed pressures from Reformist school organisations²³⁴ on prominent publishers to exclude certain content from school textbooks²³⁵, such as imagery and texts related to ‘fantasy figures or rainbow’²³⁶

233 J.C. Soper et. al., op. cit., p. 102.

234 In the context of the Netherlands, ‘reformed schools’ refer to educational institutions or governing bodies associated with the ‘reformed’ tradition, which is a branch of Protestantism. These organisations manage schools that adhere to orthodox Reformed Christianity. They uphold traditional Christian values and beliefs, resist liberal political and ethical influences, emphasise traditional gender roles, and reject modern technologies. ‘Reformed schools’ are predominantly located within the region known as the Bible Belt (J. Exalto, G. Bertram-Troost, *Strong religion in a secular society: the case of orthodox reformed schools in the Netherlands*, “Education Sciences”, 9 (1), 28; 2019. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci9010028> (accessed: 29.04.2024).

235 The title of the media article was: “Dinosaurs and short skirts are banned from school textbooks”; Available at: <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2021/10/08/dinos-en-korte-rokjes-wor-den-uit-de-schooleboeken-geweerd-a4061168> (accessed: 25.04.2024).

236 Families that include parents who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, or asexual (LGBTQIA+) and their children.

families²³⁷. These incidents raise complex questions about the limits and responsibilities of educational institutions in balancing educational freedom with social norms.

The Dutch government sets curriculum objectives to ensure a national standard for educational content across schools, while granting individual schools the flexibility to determine the pedagogical approaches best suited for achieving these objectives. Local school boards have considerable autonomy, and parents enjoy significant choice in selecting their children's educational paths. In the Netherlands, schools particularly excel in autonomy related to curriculum design and assessment, surpassing levels seen in other OECD countries. This autonomy extends to the selection and management of teaching aids and personnel, as well as the development and maintenance of school facilities. The quality and efficacy of the education provided within this autonomous framework are monitored by the Dutch Inspectorate of Education, which acts as a regulatory body to uphold educational standards. Understanding the breadth of educational freedom is crucial for grasping both the policy and practice of citizenship education. The scope of educational freedom is constantly being tested: on one hand, there is the right of schools to impart teachings based on their religious or ideological beliefs; on the other hand, there is the public interest in creating environments that respect diversity and uphold democratic values. These debates reflect a societal struggle to balance the autonomy of private educational institutions with the need to maintain a socially cohesive and inclusive public space. Article 23 not only influences the formulation of policies on citizenship education in the Netherlands, but also shapes the lived experiences of citizenship for teachers/educators and learners in educational settings.

Dutch Citizenship Education until 1980s – from Democratic Foundations to Instrumental Standardisation Era

In the post-war period, *Maatschappijleer* or 'Social Studies', emerged as an integral subject in Dutch secondary education, reflecting the nation's commitment to fostering informed citizenship in a rapidly modernising society. The development of social and political education in the Netherlands shows substantial evolution, especially from the 1960s through the democratisation wave of the 1970s, where political education became as a tool for societal change. During the 1970s, progressive political figures and activists aimed to liberate society from patriarchal norms, integrating these efforts with peace education and support for

237 I. De Groot et. al., op. cit., p. 5.

decolonization movements, such as in Angola. In 1985, Henk Hofland, a notable liberal journalist, coined the term ‘decolonization of daily life’ to capture the essence of societal change beginning from the 1960s. This period was marked by protests, sexual liberation, and generational debates, with institutions from politics to universities grappling with change. The term symbolised a widespread release from patriarchal constraints, often referred to as ‘depaternalization’ (*ontvoogding*), reflecting a collective move towards greater autonomy²³⁸. During this time, educators were also formulating an early postcolonial view, though it hadn’t yet gained mainstream recognition.

The introduction of *Maatschappijleer*²³⁹ in Dutch secondary education in 1969 coincided with a nationwide educational reform aimed at revitalising democratic participation among citizens, especially the youth. The subject emerged in response to the need for a curriculum that was both practical and aligned with societal changes, specifically to foster a well-defined political consciousness among students. *Maatschappijleer* was designed to encapsulate a comprehensive understanding of citizenship, covering social, economic, and political aspects. The curriculum reform of 1968 and the subsequent introduction of a syllabus for first-degree teachers in 1971, marked a shift towards a more structured approach to citizenship education²⁴⁰. The Committee for Programme and Course Content, established in 1971, worked to refine the citizenship education syllabus to ensure it was not overly theoretical or sociological, highlighting the country’s commitment to a balanced approach that is both academic and practical. As explicitly mentioned in the 1981 report by the Dutch Curriculum Institute:

‘Social Studies represent social and political education. Social and political problems and phenomena are the object of Social Studies. They have to be treated in a thematic way. Six thematic fields define the content: education and training, living environment, work and leisure, technology and society, government and society, intercultural relations²⁴¹.

This holistic approach emphasised the need for thematic treatment of these fields, ranging from education and the environment to intercultural relations and governance. The report, well-received at the time, influenced teachers and

238 W. de Jong, op. cit., p. 1006.

239 R. Veldhuis defines the subject as follows: ‘Social Studies (*Maatschappijleer*) in the Netherlands means social and political education. Fits in with and accentuates the role of the pupil as a social, cultural and political citizen’ (R. Veldhuis, *Social and Political Education: A Case Study of the Netherlands*, [in:] *Charting the Future: Social and Political Education in the Senior Cycle of Post-Primary Schools*, CDVEC Curriculum Development Unit and Combat Poverty Agency, 2005, p. 31).

240 R. Veldhuis, op. cit., p. 31.

241 *Ibidem*, p. 32.

trainers, underscoring the importance of addressing current social and political issues as a central component of citizenship education.

Next shift in Dutch citizenship education policy occurred in the 1980s and was characterised by a move towards a more technical-instrumental approach. This shift was influenced by the global trend toward standardising education to meet the demands of standardised testing. Coinciding with the election of a centrist government in 1982, the Netherlands adopted technocratic neoliberal policies to address economic challenges. During this period, the expansion of the welfare state drew criticism for allegedly fostering dependency among citizens, prompting a focus on individual 'emancipation'. The liberal democratic framework emphasised identity development for all citizens, particularly targeting women, homosexuals, and immigrants. The emphasis on individual empowerment was underscored by the broad political support for the 1984 abortion law, which illustrated the country's commitment to female empowerment. As ethnic and gender diversity became central to the Dutch national ethos, citizenship education began to embody a new conceptualization of citizenship defined by 'a moral understanding of citizenship in terms of tolerance'²⁴².

During this period, there was an increased emphasis on equipping students with knowledge and skills that could be readily measured and compared. As part of this shift, the subject of *Maatschappijleer* within the Dutch secondary education system underwent significant changes. It became more knowledge-oriented, aligning with the formalised goals of education²⁴³. This adjustment allowed students to select citizenship education as a subject for their final exams, thereby enhancing the subject's status within the academic curriculum²⁴⁴. As highlighted by R. Veldhuis, the first national examination in citizenship education took place in 1988, focusing on themes such as political decision-making and the mass media. The content for this examination was articulated as an advanced

242 W. de Jong, op. cit., p. 1008.

243 Notably, 'in the Netherlands, curricula as commonly understood do not exist. However since 1993, the aims and targets to be reached have been set by order or in regulations applicable to both primary education (for which they were revised in 1998 and 2006) and secondary schools. Rather than describing educational content, these goals help schools set minimum pupil attainment levels. In primary education, they do describe content in a general way but without specifying in any great detail the outcomes required. Instead, teachers are obliged to do all they can to ensure that pupils achieve the goals concerned. In all cases, teachers are accountable for their performance and, where necessary, have to explain why pupils have underachieved. Much the same applies to lower secondary education for which the corresponding goals were established in 1993 and revised in 2006 (when 58 new aims were identified). The government establishes a general reference framework and schools exercise freedom of choice within it' (Eurydice, op. cit., p. 21).

244 I. de Groot et. al., op. cit., p. 6.

level of achievement, and was grouped into three distinct perspectives: the political-legal, the socio-economic, and the socio-cultural aspects²⁴⁵.

Scholars have identified two notable weaknesses of the neoliberal shift in Dutch citizenship education. Firstly, the formalisation of *Maatschappijleer* content meant that the subject was defined in terms of specific learning outcomes, which significantly impacted the pedagogical freedom of teachers. This restriction limited teachers' ability to freely select topics for discussion in the classroom²⁴⁶. Secondly, the time allocated to citizenship education within the school curriculum became more rigidly demarcated. This restriction posed challenges to the depth of engagement in democratic participatory and educational activities – vital components of comprehensive citizenship education. As noted by De Groot & Eidhof, the opportunity for such participatory engagement, e.g. organising mock elections, was constrained in many Dutch schools. This reflects a broader trend of marginalising the practical application of democratic values and skills in education²⁴⁷. Overall, the policy changes in Dutch citizenship education since the 1980s have mirrored broader educational trends towards standardisation and accountability. While this approach has brought certain benefits, such as increased clarity and status for citizenship education as a subject, it has also introduced challenges, particularly in the realms of teacher autonomy and the promotion of active, participatory and inner-directed citizenship.

Changes of the Dutch Citizenship Education at the Turn of the Century – from Moralising Citizenship to the Culturalization of Citizenship (1990s–2006)

As highlighted by Wim de Jong: 'The 1990s would become a battleground for new ideas and norms of citizenship'²⁴⁸. This period marked the emergence of a discourse that reconceptualized citizens as bearers of risk, potentially jeopardising the social order if they failed to exhibit appropriate conduct. The shift in per-

245 R. Veldhuis, op. cit., p. 32.

246 As discussed by W. de Jong, despite the conservative government's neoliberal narrative of reducing its role (*terugtrekkende overheid*), in reality, the 1980s policy changes led to the rise of 'a pedagogic state' that concentrated on shaping citizens to adhere to established norms. This trend towards regulating behaviour increased over the years, evident in the growing focus on 'civic education' that emphasized conformity over individual freedom (W. de Jong, *Decolonizing citizenship...*, op. cit., p. 1011).

247 I. de Groot, B. Eidhof, *Mock elections as a way to cultivate democratic development and a democratic school culture*, "London Review of Education", vol. 17, no. 3, 2019, pp. 362–382.

248 W. de Jong, op. cit., p. 1012.

spective, which implicated the very contours of civic behaviour and societal expectations, was not only advanced by conservative elements within the polity. Instead, it found resonance across a broader ideological spectrum, gaining acceptance among Social Democrats and the progressive social-liberals associated with the Democrats '66 (D66) party²⁴⁹. During the 1990s, there was a growing focus on citizenship education, spurred by educational discourse and initiatives such as the Platform for the Pedagogical Task of Education (*Platform Pedagogische Opdracht van het Onderwijs*). The platform's 1995 report notably emphasised the importance of instilling 'universal values, which form the basis for a democratic and humane society and are considered a common cultural asset' into the educational system²⁵⁰. The 1990s marked the emergence of 'moralising citizenship' on the political agenda, a concept that de Jong describes as representing a societal and political push to reinstate certain behavioural norms and values within the citizenry. This initiative emphasised individual responsibility in adhering to democratic norms as a remedy for perceived societal fragmentation and declining social cohesion²⁵¹. The term 'moralizing citizenship' signified a shift from state-driven or paternalistic social policies towards a more libertarian approach, where the responsibility of maintaining societal order was placed on the individual. The focus was on cultivating a self-regulated citizenry that would embody and uphold democratic values, contribute to social cohesion, and navigate the complex interplay of individual and collective interests²⁵². However, despite this increased attention, substantive legislative action to formally incorporate citizenship education into the curriculum was slow to follow. It was not until the onset of the new millennium that legislative efforts began to align with the conceptual discussions²⁵³.

The dawn of the new millennium in the Netherlands brought a growing concern over the unsatisfactory integration of minorities, sparking widespread discourse. Public and political debates increasingly focused on the perceived erosion of shared norms and values, as well as unconventional behaviour exhibited by certain demographic groups. In the broader political context, discussions about the new citizenship education law intersected with what Rinus

249 Ibidem.

250 I. de Groot et. al., p. 7.

251 Politicians from the D'66 party, including figures like Roger van Boxtel and Gerrit-Jan Wolffensperger, expressed concern over the erosion of societal structures, warning against ghettoisation and a growing sense of insecurity among citizens. Van Boxtel's call for citizens to 'internalise' democratic norms reflects this moralising stance, implying that individuals should inherently understand and abide by the expectations of civic behaviour without explicit enforcement or guidance (W. de Jong, op. cit.).

252 W. de Jong, *Civic Education and Contested Democracy: Towards a Pedagogic State in the Netherlands post 1945*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2020, p. 193–194.

253 I. de Groot, op. cit., p. 7.

Penninx identified as the ‘neoliberal citizenship policy’ era. From 1994 to 2002, integration policies shifted to not only provide immigrants with opportunities for structural adaptation to Dutch society, but also to frame integration as a primary obligation of the immigrants themselves. This conceptual shift influenced the educational landscape as a part of the state’s integration strategy. Education became a tool for inculcating immigrants with the language, societal structures, norms, and values deemed necessary for seamless assimilation into Dutch society. This approach reinforced the state’s objectives of creating an economically viable and socially cohesive citizenry²⁵⁴.

The transformation of societal concerns regarding integration into actionable legislation was influenced by the 2004 policy letter ‘Education, integration and citizenship’ from the Dutch Ministry of Education. This document addressed critical issues of integration and ethnic segregation in schools²⁵⁵, underscoring the challenges posed by the country’s evolving ethnic diversity. The government advocated for citizenship education as a tool for promoting integration and active engagement among all Dutch youth in a multicultural society²⁵⁶. Furthermore, the policy advocated for the role of schools and city councils in fostering the socialisation and integration of children from various backgrounds through diverse experiences in sports, cultural events, and different social environments. While the policy introduced a legal framework for citizenship education, it also emphasised the Dutch principle of freedom of education, which confines the government’s role primarily to facilitating the sharing of best practices. The roles of the Ministry and the Inspectorate of Education were defined as evaluating and monitoring, with the introduction of measures such as behavioural codes and anti-bullying protocols as examples of such best practices. The Ministry was to provide guidelines without mandating strict adherence, thus respecting institutional autonomy of schools. In Dutch primary and basic secondary education, ‘citizenship education’ was to become a component of new educational goals, while *Maatschappijleer* (‘Social Studies’) continued as a mandatory subject for upper secondary students. This subject was to provide a platform for integrating structural elements of citizenship education into a historical framework. Moreover, elements of citizenship education were to permeate

254 R. Penninx, *Postwar Immigration and Integration Policies in the Netherlands...*, op. cit., p. 100.

255 The 2004 Ministry policy letter highlighted the pressing issue of ethnic segregation in so called ‘black schools’ – institutions with predominantly minority students – and the negative impact on societal integration (G. Driessen, *Towards citizenship education in the Netherlands*, ITS – Institute of Applied Social Sciences, Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands, Country report prepared for FIERI, July 2008. Available at: <https://www.geetdriessen.nl> (accessed: 23/04.2024), p. 31).

256 *Ibidem*.

examination programs across various disciplines, including history, economy, geography, philosophy, and art. For those in secondary vocational education, the curriculum proposals highlighted the importance of citizenship for normative competencies that encourage autonomous, socially-engaged behaviour based on universally accepted values. Additionally, they stressed the need for cultural competencies essential for participation in diverse societies at both national and European levels²⁵⁷.

The 2006 law on Active Citizenship and Social Integration (*Actief burgerschap en sociale integratie*) marked a further legislative commitment to reinforcing societal unity and inclusively assimilating minority populations. The law provided a legal framework aimed at reinforcing civic engagement and the social integration process in educational institutions. It required schools to: 1) recognize that students are being raised in a society characterised by pluralism; 2) encourage and facilitate the active participation of students in society, fostering a sense of civic responsibility and social cohesion; and 3) ensure that students gain knowledge of and are exposed to diverse cultural backgrounds and the various societal experiences of their peers, promoting mutual understanding and respect. The law stipulated that schools impart knowledge covering four dimensions of citizenship education: political, societal, economic aspects, and what was termed by policymakers as ‘healthy citizenship’, aiming to prepare students for well-rounded participatory roles in society²⁵⁸. The Ministry’s stance was that citizenship education should not be a separate course, but rather an integral element of the overall curriculum. Supporting this perspective, the National Institute for Curriculum Development (SLO) offered a framework that divided citizenship education into three practical areas: 1) Democracy: understanding the democratic constitutional state, political processes, and the foundational values of a democratic society. 2) Participation: Grasping the core values, skills, and attitudes necessary for active engagement in school and wider society. 3) Identity: Exploring and understanding one’s own identity as well as that of others²⁵⁹.

The 2006 regulations for citizenship education in the Netherlands faced criticism for their ambiguous nature. While these regulations mandated primary and secondary schools to develop their own interpretations of what constitutes active citizenship and social cohesion, they failed to provide a clear definition or concrete guidelines. This lack of clarity left schools to integrate these concepts with their religious and educational values independently, resulting in varied interpretations and implementations. Moreover, the regulations were not pre-

257 G. Driessen, op. cit., p. 32.

258 I. de Groot at. al., op. cit., p. 7.

259 G. Driessen, op. cit., p. 35.

scriptive about the specific activities that should be included in citizenship education. Schools often developed citizenship education portfolios filled with varied activities – some aligned with traditional views of citizenship like anti-bullying and self-esteem programs, and others less clearly connected, such as career orientation programs. This diversity in activities led to the incorporation of elements that were not necessarily central to the concept of citizenship as envisioned by the law. Additionally, the regulation's lack of binding requirements allowed schools to fulfil their obligations with minimal effort, for example, by conducting 'a one-day service-learning experience' or merely continuing regular *Maatschappijleer* and history classes without integrating additional activities focused on citizenship education. Similarly, the 2007 regulations for tertiary vocational education were criticised for not setting clear learning standards, requiring only nominal efforts from schools to prepare students for participatory actions²⁶⁰. It was also noted that after the 2006 legislation, citizenship education was not formalised as a distinct subject within the Dutch educational system²⁶¹.

Further criticism of the 2006 citizenship education regulations focused on the perceived illusion of 'neutrality'. Critics argued that despite the government's stance allowing schools to tailor citizenship education to their individual ideologies, there needed to be more transparency and defined constraints to this freedom, accompanied by a set of shared principles. Given that education is inherently non-neutral and reflective of political choices, scholars advocated for a more conscious and thoughtful approach to how these choices are presented in the education system. A study examining Dutch students' experiences with citizenship education revealed that merely teaching about democracy as a political structure is inadequate. Instead, education should promote engagement with democracy as a 'living' political system and lifestyle, encouraging students to actively participate in and contribute to the democratic process. This critique raised concerns that the government's approach could inadvertently lead to passive compliance with existing political practices, instead of fostering active, critical participation that challenges and addresses societal and political inequities²⁶².

The next line of criticism regarding 2006 citizenship education scheme relates to its integration – or lack thereof – into the national curriculum. The National Institute for Curriculum Development (SLO) has noted that while the existing curriculum goals are partially influenced by the original citizenship education law, this legislation has not led to a modification of the national curriculum goals.

260 I. de Groot et al., op. cit., p. 8.

261 G. Driessen, op. cit., p. 38.

262 I. de Groot et al., op. cit., p. 9.

As a result, there is no formal connection between the legal framework for citizenship education and the national curriculum for school subjects related to citizenship education²⁶³.

Another significant concern was the integration of citizenship education into teacher training programs. During the 2000s, there was a general lack of emphasis on citizenship education in teacher training, with the exception of the subject *Maatschappijleer*. Moreover, teachers faced unclear expectations and lacked adequate training in citizenship competencies, leading to a diverse range of teaching strategies that may not achieve the desired behavioural outcomes. A 2008 study across over 150 secondary schools revealed that Dutch secondary education teachers exhibited three distinct citizenship orientations. The majority (53%) favoured a critical-democratic citizenship, prioritising social engagement and individual autonomy, but placing less emphasis on discipline. Meanwhile, 29% of Dutch teachers adopted an adaptive citizenship model, focusing on discipline and social involvement, but less on political engagement and autonomy. A minority of 18% supported an individualised citizenship paradigm, emphasizing personal autonomy, communication skills, and critical thinking. Interestingly, the prevalence of these orientations varied across educational tracks, with individualised citizenship gaining more importance in academic secondary schools, while adaptive citizenship being predominant in pre-vocational schools. These orientations also appeared to reflect broader social class dynamics within educational contexts²⁶⁴.

Over the years, particularly in the 2010s, teacher training programs have increasingly stressed the importance of citizenship education, leading to a rise in the number of teachers trained in this area. Studies indicate that while these programs often focus on the social aspects of citizenship like diversity and solidarity, they less frequently address political elements such as democracy and the rule of law. Despite improvements, there remain significant concerns about the need for enhanced professional development in citizenship education due to considerable variations in teaching practices and approaches among educators. The Ministry of Education expects all educators to integrate citizenship themes into their standard lesson plans, yet there are no specific teacher requirements for citizenship education within tertiary vocational education²⁶⁵. This absence of clear guidelines can lead to teachers essentializing minority cultures as static and exotic, perpetuating stereotypes and marginalisation. Moreover, there is a notable reluctance among teachers to engage in discussions on sensitive topics like

263 Ibidem.

264 H. Leenders, W. Veugelers, & E. de Kat, *Teachers' views on citizenship in secondary education in the Netherlands*. "Cambridge Journal of Education", 2008a, 38(2), pp. 155–170.

265 Ibidem, p. 10.

religion, genocide, race, and discrimination. This aversion to controversial dialogue can create an environment where prejudiced remarks remain unchallenged, contributing to an educational culture that evades rather than confronts the complexities of citizenship.

The concept of ‘active citizenship’, which gained prominence in the 2006 discourse and was further explored by Bron and Thijs²⁶⁶, marks a significant shift in how citizenship is perceived. It stresses an individual’s willingness and ability to actively participate in and contribute to the community. This notion goes beyond mere participation; it calls for an effort to transcend ethnic and cultural boundaries, advocating for a deeper integration into the societal fabric of Dutch culture. Building on this perspective, the process of the culturalization of citizenship²⁶⁷, as discussed in depth by Duyvendak and Tonkens²⁶⁸, presents citizenship as inherently tied to cultural norms. In this framework, culture – including emotions, feelings, norms and values, and symbols and traditions, such as religion – plays a central role in defining what it means to be a citizen, ‘either as an alternative or in addition to political, judicial and social citizenship (...). Especially immigrants are expected to demonstrate feelings of attachment, belonging, connectedness and loyalty to their country of residence²⁶⁹. This conceptualization suggests that active citizenship is not only about engaging with community institutions, but also involves aligning with the dominant cultural narratives. Active citizenship is viewed as a dynamic process that requires transcending one’s original cultural affiliations to embrace and internalise the cultural ethos of the host nation. This resonates with the idea of a *Leitkultur* and highlights a complex layer of citizenship that weaves together legal status with cultural assimilation, redefining the boundaries and expectations of citizenship in a culturally diverse society.

Duyvendak & Tonkens also highlight the contention in academic discourse over the cultural aspects of citizenship, stating, ‘Some authors argue that focusing on culture at best detracts from the real issues of citizenship, which are socio-economic²⁷⁰. They note that critics advocate for a re-emphasis on the social rights central to citizenship, such as access to education, employment, and social security measures. These essential rights, as originally posited by Marshall, are believed to underpin the other privileges citizenship bestows. The problematic

266 J. Bron, A. Thijs, *Leaving it to the schools: Citizenship, diversity and human rights education in the Netherlands*, “Educational Research”, vol. 53, no. 2, 2011, p. 126.

267 W. de Jong, *Decolonizing citizenship...*, op. cit.

268 J.W. Duyvendak, E. Tonkens, *Introduction: The Culturalization of Citizenship*, [in:] *The Culturalization of Citizenship: Belonging and Polarization in a Globalizing World*, (eds.) J.W. Duyvendak, P. Geschiere, E. Tonkens, Palgrave, London 2016, pp. 1–20.

269 J.W. Duyvendak, E. Tonkens, op. cit., p. 3.

270 Ibidem, p. 4.

nature of culturalization of citizenship lies in its imposition of assimilative demands on immigrants, often carrying racial undertones. It insists on acculturation according to the standards set by the prevailing ethnic majority, thereby overshadowing the socio-economic foundations of citizenship.

Citizenship Education after 2021 – Advancing Clarity, Curriculum and Teacher Competence

The revision of Dutch citizenship education legislation initiated in 2017, involved extensive consultations aimed at rethinking the entire school curriculum. This process sparked yet another debate about the government's role in promoting personal development and democratic values in citizenship education. Critics called for transparency in how schools interpret government-prioritised values such as freedom, equality, and solidarity within the framework of citizenship education²⁷¹. Enacted in August 2021, the new law aims to define expectations for citizenship education more clearly. Additionally, the law allows the government to monitor and ensure compliance with these educational standards²⁷². The 2021 update to Dutch citizenship education legislation aims to address the shortcomings of the 2006 regulations, which were criticised for their vagueness and left schools to interpret citizenship education on their own. This often resulted in a disparate array of depoliticised activities, from anti-bullying initiatives to career guidance.

The new legislation clarifies the concept of citizenship education, grounding it in democratic principles, constitutionality, and human rights, and grants the government oversight to ensure adherence to these principles and to combat discriminatory practices. It also calls for a more detailed outline of the goals and substance of citizenship education at the curricular level. In doing so, the 2021 reforms seek to remedy the purportedly neutral stance of the 2006 policy. This approach is intended to foster active democratic engagement and critical thinking. Nevertheless, some scholars have criticised the 2021 legislation, arguing

271 I. De Groot I., W. Veugelers, *Why we need to question the democratic engagement that adolescents in Europe develop*, "Journal of Social Sciences Education", 14 (4), 2015, pp. 27–38. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4119/UNIBI/jsse-v14-i4-1426> (accessed: 19.04.2024).

272 See: Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap [Ministry of Education, Culture and Science]. (2021). Besluit van 23 juni 2021, houdende vaststelling van het tijdstip van inwerkingtreding van de Wet van 23 juni 2021, tot wijziging van een aantal onderwijswetten in verband met verduidelijking van de burgerschapsopdracht aan scholen in het funderend onderwijs [the Act of June 23, 2021, amending several education laws in connection with the clarification of the citizenship mandate for schools in primary education]. Staatsblad van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden. Published on 02–07–2021.

that it favours social cohesion at the expense of integration, with orthodox religious schools at the centre of the debate. Some scholars claim that despite being perceived by some as inward-looking and separatist, these schools have the potential to defend their unique educational approaches, asserting their role in harmonising religious beliefs with democratic values within a pluralistic society²⁷³.

The 2021 regulations addressed the previous lack of integration of citizenship education into the national curriculum, and the absence of formal correlation between the legal requirements of citizenship education and curriculum objectives. As pointed out by de Groot et al., ‘In the Spring of 2022 (...) the government has invited the Dutch curriculum agency (SLO) to integrate the goals set for citizenship education in the curriculum.nu trajectory and the goals of the new citizenship education law in the curricular goals for Civics’²⁷⁴. This invitation from the government marks a significant stride toward embedding citizenship education firmly within the Curriculum.nu project. Citizenship education has been recognized as an essential part of the curriculum development process²⁷⁵.

Another pressing issue in Dutch educational policy concerns teacher training²⁷⁶ and citizenship education. Since 2008, national curricula for teacher training at both Bachelor’s and Master’s levels have been established in order to ensure that graduates possess the necessary didactic competencies, professional knowledge, and skills. These curricula, designed by committees consisting of teacher trainers from various institutes, are validated by national committees that include both academics and practising teachers. However, the extent to which citizenship education is integrated into these training programs is unclear. In 2012, the Dutch Education Council reported that there was limited attention to citizenship education in teacher training, particularly outside the teacher training program for social studies. Retrospective opinions of teachers confirm that they received minimal training in citizenship education, indicating that it has been a relatively minor component of their education²⁷⁷. A review of Dutch

273 I. de Groot et. al., op. cit., p. 11.

274 Ibidem, p. 12.

275 Education Council of the Netherlands, *Advice on Curriculum Innovation [Advies Curriculumvernieuwing]*, The Hague, Education Council of the Netherlands, 2018.

276 Teacher training in the Netherlands is structured through a complex system that offers two main tracks. The first track prepares teachers for primary education, which involves a Bachelor’s degree, potentially followed by a Master’s aimed at primary or special needs education. The second track is for secondary education, requiring a Bachelor’s in a specific subject such as Dutch, Mathematics, or History, followed by a Master’s in the chosen subject area (see: H. Nieuwelink, R. Oostdam, *Time for citizenship in teacher training*, “Journal of Social Science Education”, 20 (3), 2021, pp. 130–146. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.11576/jss-4030> (accessed: 23.04.2024).

277 H. Nieuwelink, R. Oostdam, op. cit., p. 134.

teacher training programs reveals a predominant focus on subject matter and methodology, with the pedagogical aspects of citizenship education receiving far less attention. The importance of fostering an open and secure classroom climate for citizenship education is acknowledged but scarcely elaborated upon in Bachelor programs for primary and secondary education. It indicates a potential gap in teacher awareness and preparedness.

Furthermore, an examination of the knowledge bases within these programs uncovers a significant discrepancy: while they adequately cover the social and civic domains of citizenship education, the political domain is notably overlooked. It is only within History and Social Studies (*Maatschappijleer*) that the political domain, alongside democracy and the rule of law, is comprehensively addressed. In contrast, other disciplines may conflate the concept of citizenship education with social and civic issues or themes of diversity, omitting the political aspects crucial to a holistic understanding of citizenship. Nieuwelink and Oostdam express concern regarding the insufficient emphasis on the political character of citizenship in the Netherlands, stating:

‘We regard this as problematic. Citizenship education encompasses more than just learning to interact with diverse individuals and mutual consideration; it is also about recognizing that political conflicts are intrinsic to society, comprehending the processes of making collective decisions, and possessing an understanding of citizens’ fundamental rights. These are aspects that Dutch adolescents know relatively little about. Both the students and their teachers indicate that their education is lacking in this respect²⁷⁸.

This observation highlights the need for a more balanced approach in teacher training programs, ensuring that all facets of citizenship education – social, civic, and political – are adequately integrated to prepare students for the complexities of navigating their roles as citizens. Understanding that every society inherently embodies conflict points to the importance of the political dimension of citizenship education in creating an informed and engaged citizenry.

Conclusions

Dutch education has seen significant changes in its approach to citizenship education over the years. Initially, in the post-war period, the subject of *Maatschappijleer* was introduced to develop informed citizens and demonstrate the nation’s commitment to democracy. However, by the 1980s, a shift toward a technical-instrumental approach occurred, influenced by global standardisation

278 Ibidem, p. 143.

trends, which impacted teacher autonomy and the nature of democratic engagement in schools. As the century turned, the emphasis shifted from individual responsibility to cultural assimilation, particularly highlighted by the 2006 Active Citizenship and Social Integration law. Despite its intentions to promote civic responsibility and social cohesion, this law was criticised for its ambiguity and lack of actionable guidelines. The most recent 2021 reforms have brought more clarity and specificity to citizenship education, stressing democratic principles and human rights, and aiming to more deeply embed these values in the national curriculum. These reforms also emphasise the need for improved teacher training, focusing on the political dimensions of citizenship to foster a more robust political understanding in students. However, the balance between social cohesion and integration remains a point of contention, especially within religious educational contexts.

The advancement of citizenship education in the Netherlands faces unique challenges, shaped by the constitutional freedom that allows schools to align their educational approaches with distinct ideological beliefs and pedagogical stances. This autonomy is a cornerstone of Dutch national education policy, enabling schools to develop their citizenship education curricula independently. This approach was highlighted in the 'Finding shared values' report by the Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development (SLO) in November 2015. This followed an initiative by the Ministry of Education aiming to provide enhanced guidance to schools in formulating their citizenship education content. A key element of this policy is the involvement of parents and students, ensuring that the values taught in citizenship education are relevant and reflect the community the school serves. Consequently, the Dutch education system avoids imposing a standardised set of values across all schools, instead entrusting individual institutions with the task of identifying and teaching values that are pertinent to their unique contexts. This approach remains mindful of broader societal values at the national, European, and Western levels. Such a decentralised policy promotes a diverse educational ecosystem, where schools are empowered to tailor their citizenship education to adapt to societal changes and meet the specific needs of their communities.

The educational system of the Netherlands, historically celebrated for its embrace of diversity, freedom of choice and religious pluralism, is at a critical juncture. The interplay between traditional autonomy and the evolving demographic structure of the country is more pronounced than ever. Since its establishment in 1848, the system has transitioned from one predominantly influenced by Christianity²⁷⁹ to a dynamic and pluralistic tapestry of beliefs. This shift

279 From the 10th to the 20th century, Christianity predominated religious life in the Netherlands, with Calvinists constituting approximately 60%, and Catholics – 35% of the pop-

has necessitated an educational paradigm that both honours the country's long-standing commitment to education freedom and religious pluralism and tries to effectively respond to the complex realities of a modern, globalised society marked by increased immigration and the accompanying cultural shifts.

The concept of 'culturalized citizenship' has emerged as a significant point of contention, particularly as antiracist activism challenges the notion that citizenship and national identity must adhere to a single cultural norm. Activists argue that this expectation not only imposes undue pressure on immigrants to assimilate into a narrow conceptualization of national identity, but also risks marginalising individuals who maintain distinct cultural identities. They call for a redefinition of citizenship that embraces cultural diversity, ensuring that all citizens are granted equal rights and social recognition, regardless of their cultural heritage. Duyvendak and Tonkens highlight that the intersection of state, culture, and citizenship is a contested terrain, especially in the era of globalization and mass migration that disrupt traditional contours of nationhood²⁸⁰. They suggest that while the goal of a cosmopolitan citizenship that transcends national boundaries is commendable, it requires the presence of a global governing body to safeguard the rights of all citizens. Until such a framework is established, universal human rights remain as an essential tool for critiquing national policies that, under the guise of protecting 'national tradition and culture' inhibit the full participation of minorities²⁸¹. This global perspective on citizenship and rights needs to be aligned with the local need to maintain an educational system that not only provides equitable access to citizenship standards, but also values diverse cultures within Dutch national borders.

The educational system of the Netherlands epitomises the ongoing challenge of striking a balance between ensuring equal access to a unified standard of citizenship and preserving the freedom of choice that enables diverse pedagogical practices. This delicate balancing act navigates the ideals of equality and freedom. Central to this effort is the process of 'decolonizing citizenship' – a critical endeavour that involves recognising and integrating the values of various social groups into a cohesive framework of human rights and democratic citizenship. In this context, the Netherlands serves as a social and political 'crucible' for examining how a nation can protect individual freedoms and uphold free educational choices while simultaneously promoting a cohesive, equitable, and inclusive society.

ulation by the late 19th century (J. W. Skillen, S.W. Carlson-Thies, *Religion and Political Development in Nineteenth-Century Holland*, "Publius", 12 (3), 1982, pp. 43–64, Oxford University Press).

280 J.W. Duyvendak, E. Tonkens, op. cit., p. 6.

281 Ibidem.

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Chapter 3. Canada (Ontario)

Introduction: Socio-Political Context in the Past and Today

The essence of Canadian multiculturalism policy is well captured in Andrew Griffith's words, who stated: "Canada is known for its inclusive citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism policies that have been largely successful in integrating millions of new Canadians over the decades. These policies have reflected Canada's history, identity and values as they evolved and continue to evolve"²⁸².

To understand the complexity of the evolution of Canadian multiculturalism policy, it is necessary to present the history of changes in ethnic and cultural structure.

The first inhabitants of the areas that today constitute the Canadian state were the ancestors of the current native population, who reached North America from Asia starting at least from the thirteenth millennium BC, most likely through the land isthmus in the area of today's Bering Strait²⁸³. These first representatives were Inuit and Indians who became owners of the lands they inhabited, although they did not attach importance to property rights, which was consistent with their beliefs.

The next wave of settlers was the French, who initially, in the years 1604–1605, settled first in Acadia (in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick), and from 1608, on the shores of the St. Lawrence River and created a colony owned by the King of France – known as New France. The patterns of French culture brought by immigrants from the 16th and 17th centuries, adapted to the conditions prevailing in America and modified in the historical process, constitute the cultural heritage of modern Quebec.

282 A. Griffith, *Multiculturalism in Canada: evidence and anecdote*, Anar Press, 2015, p. 6.

283 Also known as Beringia, located between Alaska and Russia, the Bering Strait is the only marine gateway between the icy Arctic and the Pacific Ocean. The strait is only 55 miles wide at its narrowest point, available at: <https://www.nps.gov/bela/learn/beringia.htm> (accessed: 15.04.2024).

The next wave of settlers were the British, who, as a result of their successes in the colonial wars in the mid-18th century, began to take over territories in New France. British colonisers introduced and consolidated British cultural patterns in almost all spheres, from politics to everyday life. These events led to the division of the eastern part of Canada, which still exists today. When the British arrived, the vast majority of the French-speaking population of Lower Canada (later Eastern Canada after 1841, and Quebec from 1867), with the support of the Roman Catholic Church, successfully resisted the influence of British culture. They cultivated their own language and customs, remaining clearly isolated and creating a kind of island amidst the Anglo-Saxon surroundings.

At the turn of the 20th century, immigrants from other European countries were allowed entry into Canada. Due to the need to develop the prairies and the decline in the number of immigrants from the USA and Western Europe, the authorities initiated an action to accept immigrants from Eastern and Central Europe. In terms of percentage, the influx peaked in 1912 and 1913, when annual arrivals exceeded 5% of the total population. They mainly consisted of Ukrainians, Jews, Germans, Poles, Russians, Hungarians, Slovaks, Czechs, Lithuanians and Belarusians. As Anna Reczyńska writes: “Due to the difference in culture, the use of languages difficult to understand for the inhabitants of Canada, and the clothing (especially sheepskin coats), they were all treated as one group and called Galicians (Galicians) or ‘people in sheep’s skins’”²⁸⁴. The proportion of the population born outside the country dropped during the Great Depression and the Second World War (Canada refused to accept even groups of war refugees), but it began to rise in the early 1950s. After World War II, the Canadian authorities became interested in groups of displaced persons (migrants from Central and East Europe who had been forced to move from their homes because of the warfare), in order to control them and encourage them to become professionally active. The gradual overcoming of prejudices and the demand on the labour market led to a change in immigration policy. The sources of immigration have also shifted toward locations such as Asia, the Caribbean, and South and Central America. As a result of these changes, which caused the alienation of increasingly numerous and culturally different ethnic communities, it was also necessary to change Canada’s social policies, which became the cultural mosaic that we observe today.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the proportion of people with British, French, and/or Canadian ethnic origins had dropped to 46%. The term “Canadian”, originally “Canadien”, dates back to the 17th century when the French

284 A. Reczyńska, *Historyczne uwarunkowania kultury kanadyjskiej*, [in:] *Państwo- naród- tożsamość w dyskursach kulturowych Kanady*, (eds.) M. Buchholtz, E. Sojka, Universitas, Kraków 2010, p. 21.

settlers used it to distinguish themselves from others and Catholics who came to New France with the right to settle in seigniorage. After the takeover of the French colonies in the mid-18th century, the British adopted this name, introduced its English version, “Canadian”, and applied it to all Canadians²⁸⁵. The Canadian ethnic origin was first introduced in the 1996 Census.

Contemporary Canada is a federal state consisting of 10 provinces and three territories, a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary-cabinet system of government. The constitution comprises the Constitutional Act of 1982, which incorporates the Constitutional Act of 1867 (formerly the British North America Act), and the common law norms. The head of state is the British Monarch (currently, since September 9, 2022, Charles III), represented by the Governor General of Canada (since July 26, 2021, Mary Simon), formally appointed by the British Monarch in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister of Canada (from November 4, 2015 Justin Trudeau). The Governor is bound by the decisions of the King’s Privy Council of Canada, an institution of symbolic importance²⁸⁶.

A two-chamber parliament exercises legislative power: the Upper House (Senate of Canada) consists of 105 members appointed by the governor (typically at the request of the Prime Minister) for an indefinite period (they hold office until the age of 75), the House of Commons (House of Commons of Canada) consists of 338 deputies (their number is verified every 10 years, based on the current number of inhabitants), elected in general elections (in majority elections, in single-member districts) for a 5-year term. At the Prime Minister’s request, the Governor-General may at any time shorten the terms of office of members of the House of Commons members and order new elections. The last elections were held on September 20, 2021. They were won by the Liberal Party of Canada (LPC), receiving 160 seats, which failed to obtain the majority (170 seats) needed to exercise independent power. The second-place Conservative Party (Conservative Party of Canada- CPC) won 119 seats, followed by Bloc Québécois with 32 seats, New Democratic Party with 25, Green Party with 2²⁸⁷.

Executive power is exercised by the government headed by the Prime Minister, accountable to the House of Commons. The prime minister, appointed by the governor, selects ministers from among members of parliament representing

285 M. Kijewska- Trembecka, *Współczesne wieloetniczne społeczeństwo Kanady*, Księgarnia Akademicka, Kraków 2013, p. 173, available at: <https://ruj.uj.edu.pl/server/api/core/bitstreams/d0d246f9-fceb-4be6-aaf7-021f433c3dfa/content> (accessed: 22.03.2024).

286 The official website of the Government of Canada, available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en.html> (accessed: 18.04.2024).

287 Canadian Election Results by Party, available at: <http://www.sfu.ca/~aheard/elections/1867-present.html> (accessed: 12.03.2024).

their party. Customarily, all provinces are represented in the cabinet²⁸⁸. The last parliamentary elections were won by the Liberal Party, which once again had the opportunity to form a government headed for the third time by Justin Trudeau, who has held this position since November 4, 2015. The government comprises 38 ministers, with gender parity maintained (19 women and 19 men).

The judicial power at the federal level consists of: the Federal Supreme Court (which serves as a constitutional court – the Supreme Court of Canada), the Federal Court of Appeal, the Tax Court of Canada and the Court Martial Appeal Court²⁸⁹.

As John Berry stated in the introduction to his article: “Diversity has always been a hallmark of the population and society of Canada”²⁹⁰. He also mentioned that Canada was a culturally diverse region before the arrival of European settlers, with 50 distinct Aboriginal cultures and more than a dozen distinct language groups in the Aboriginal population²⁹¹. In addition, when we look at the immigration rate, Canada ranks eighth in the world in terms of the top destination countries for international migrants²⁹².

It is worth mentioning that although there are a lot of countries around the world which are diverse in their social structure:

“(...) contemporary Canada is marked by a number of points of differentiation not necessarily seen in the same combination in other polities. These include the division between an indigenous population and a settler population, the division between European groups (French and British origin or French speakers and English speakers), a racialized division between “white” and “non-white”, as well as a division between immigrants and native-born”²⁹³.

This diversity is not only evident in statistical data but also in the communities and relationships that Canadian citizens create every day.

288 Parliament of Canada, available at: <https://learn.parl.ca/understanding-comprendre/en/canada-system-of-government/the-branches-of-government/> (accessed: 13.03.2024).

289 Department of Justice Canada, available at: <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/index.html> (accessed: 17.03.2024).

290 J. W. Berry, *Research on multiculturalism in Canada*, International Journal of Intercultural Relations, vol. 37, issue 6, November 2013, p. 663, available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0147176713001077?via%3Dihub> (accessed: 22.02.2024).

291 Ibidem.

292 M. Mcauliffe, A. Triandafyllidou (eds.), *World Migration Report 2022*, International Organization for Migration (IOM), Geneva 2021, p. 25, available at: <https://publications.iom.int/books/world-migration-report-2022> (accessed: 22.02.2024).

293 Y. Abu-Laban, *Recognition, redistribution and solidarity: the case of multicultural Canada*, RECODE- online working paper series, September 2013, p. 3, available at: https://www.recode.info/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Final-RECODE_29-Yasmeen-Abu-Laban_Final_fin2.pdf (accessed: 22.02.2024).

According to the latest census of 2021 (previous censuses were conducted in 1996, 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016), there are 36,991,981 people living in Canada, of which 1,807,250 million (or 5.0%) are indigenous people and 8,361,505 are immigrants. More than 450 ethnic or cultural origins were reported in the latest Census. The top origins reported by Canada's population, either alone or in combination with other origins, were "Canadian" (5.7 million people), "English" (5.3 million), "Irish" (4.4 million), "Scottish" (4.4 million) and "French" (4.0 million). The level of importance placed on one's ethnic or cultural origin varies. For some, it is an essential aspect of their lives, while for others, it is less important²⁹⁴.

According to data from the 2022 Canadian Social Survey, immigrants (79.5%) are significantly more likely than non-immigrants (47.6%) to place importance on their ethnic or cultural origins²⁹⁵. This fact raises a question in public opinion as a growing number of Canadians are questioning how many immigrants are arriving in the country, as opposed to who they are and where they are coming from, which has been the primary focus of public debate for much of the country's history²⁹⁶. From the Focus Canada Report on public opinion about immigration and refugees, we can read that: "Many Canadians say they value the presence of immigrants in their local community and see benefits resulting from the multicultural diversity they bring, as well as their contribution to the economy and jobs"²⁹⁷.

It is worth emphasising that the indigenous population increased by 9.4% compared to the previous census in 2016. According to the Constitution Act, the indigenous people consist of three groups: the so-called First Nations, often referred to as Indians in Europe), the Inuit (i. e. inhabitants of the northern areas located at the Arctic Circle, often called Eskimos) and the Metis (descendants of white people and Indians). Representatives of the First Nations are the most numerous in this minority (1,048,405, which is 58% of those classified as indigenous people); in second place are the Métis (624,220–34.5% of the indigenous people), and followed by the Inuit (70,545, representing 3.9% of the population

294 Statistics Canada, *Census of Population 2021*, Canada 2022, available at: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/index-eng.cfm> (accessed: 18.03.2024).

295 Statistics Canada, *Canadian Social Survey*, Canada 2022, available at: <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/en/survey/household/5354> (accessed: 18.03.2024).

296 Environics Institute & Century Initiative, *A Focus Canada Report. Canadian Public Opinion about Immigration and Refugees*, fall 2023, p. 2, available at: https://www.environicsinstitute.org/docs/default-source/focus-canada-fall-2023/focus-canada-fall-2023--canadian-public-opinion-about-immigration-refugees--final-report.pdf?sfvrsn=75312743_2 (accessed: 19.03.2024).

297 Ibidem.

indigenous). 1.6% of respondents reported multiple Indigenous identities, and 1,9% were not included elsewhere²⁹⁸.

Over multiple decades, census data have revealed that the Indigenous population has grown at a pace far surpassing that of the non-Indigenous population. There are two reasons for this. The first, referred to as “natural growth”, relates to higher birth rates and increasing lifespans among the Indigenous community. The second has been termed “response mobility”, which refers to people who once responded to the Indigenous identity questions one way on the census questionnaire but now respond differently. Over time, respondents who had previously not identified as Indigenous have become more likely to do so. This shift may be related to personal reflection, social factors or external factors such as changes to legislation or court rulings²⁹⁹.

Ontario had the largest Indigenous population of all provinces and territories in 2021, at 406,590 people, accounting for 2.9% of people in the province. British Columbia had the next largest Indigenous population, at 290,210, accounting for 5.9% of people in the province, followed by Alberta (284,470 people, or 6.8%) and Manitoba (237,190 people, or 18.1%)³⁰⁰.

While more than half (55.5%) of all First Nations people lived in Western Canada, Ontario had the most significant number of First Nations people provincially (251,030), constituting nearly one-quarter (23.9%) of the First Nations population in Canada³⁰¹.

It must be emphasised that terms Eskimo or Indian should not be used to refer to representatives of indigenous nations in the 21st century because: “(...) in Canada, they are considered offensive and harmful. Today, this is mainly said by people who are either uneducated or insensitive, outside the pale of cultural norms. Importantly, it was assumed that only those who identified themselves in this way could say so”³⁰².

Canada has two official languages: English and French. Canadian bilingualism is a right established in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Official Languages Act. The Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages supervises their implementation. Both languages hold equal status in federal courts, Parliament and other federal institutions. With sufficient demand,

298 The Canadian Encyclopedia, *Indigenous People in Canada*, available at: <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/aboriginal-people> (accessed: 17.03.2024).

299 Statistics Canada, *Indigenous population continues to grow and is much younger than the non-Indigenous population, although the pace of growth has slowed*, Canada 21.09.2022, available at: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220921/dq220921a-eng.htm> (accessed: 15.03.2024).

300 Ibidem.

301 Ibidem.

302 J. Gierak-Onoszko, *27 śmierci Toby’ego Obeda*, Wydawnictwo Dowody na Istnienie, Warszawa 2019, p. 309.

residents can receive all government-related services in English or French. Official linguistic minorities have the right to their own education in all provinces and territories. The status of official languages must always be confirmed in legal regulations issued by the provinces. A province may or may not recognize both languages as official.

Although 85% of French-speaking Canadians live in Quebec, significant Francophone populations also inhabit Ontario and southern Manitoba, while Acadians (descendants of former French colonists from North America, where they founded the colony of Acadia) reside in the northern regions of New Brunswick. The largest French population outside Quebec lives in Ontario. Quebec's French Language Charter³⁰³ states that French is the official language there, and New Brunswick is the only province where official bilingualism is included in the constitution³⁰⁴. Other provinces have no official language(s), but French is used alongside English in education, the judiciary, and other government institutions. Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec allow the use of both English and French in their provincial legislatures, and their laws are enacted in both languages. In Ontario, French holds elements of official language status, but it is not a language that is fully equivalent to English. In the Northwest Territories, indigenous languages hold official status, and in Nunavut, the majority language – and one of the territory's three official languages – is Inuktitut. Indigenous people can speak an Indigenous language well enough to converse. While the number of people with an Indigenous mother tongue has been in decline, there has been growth in the number of Indigenous second-language speakers³⁰⁵.

In Canada, the right to religious freedom is guaranteed in Article 2 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms³⁰⁶. Religious diversity among Canadians is considerable.

In 2021, over 19.3 million people reported a Christian religion, representing just over half of the Canadian population (53.3%). However, this proportion has declined from 67.3% in 2011 and 77.1% in 2001³⁰⁷.

303 *Charter of The French Language*, available at: <https://www.legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/document/cs/c-11> (accessed: 25.04.2024).

304 *Official Language Act*, New Brunswick 2002, available at: https://laws.gnb.ca/en/showfulldoc/cs/O-0.5/20210503?_gl=1*ny5i4k*_ga*NzIyNTcyOTUwLjE3MTQwNTczMDM.*_ga_F531P4D0XX*MTcxNDA1NzMwMi4xLjAuMTcxNDA1NzMwMi4wLjAuMA (accessed: 25.04.2024).

305 Statistics Canada, *Indigenous population...*, op.cit.

306 *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, available at: <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/rfc-dlc/ccrf-ccdl/resources-ressources.html#copy> (accessed: 07.02.2024).

307 Statistics Canada, *Ethnocultural and religion diversity*, Canada 2022, available at: <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/en/census/census-engagement/community-supporter/ethnocultural-and-religious-diversity> (accessed: 29.03.2024).

Approximately 12.6 million people, or more than one-third of Canada's population, reported having no religious affiliation. This proportion has more than doubled in 20 years, rising from 16.5% in 2001 to 34.6% in 2021³⁰⁸.

While small, the proportion of Canada's population reporting being Muslim, Hindu or Sikh has more than doubled in 20 years. From 2001 to 2021, these shares rose from 2.0% to 4.9% for Muslims, from 1.0% to 2.3% for Hindus and from 0.9% to 2.1% for Sikhs.³⁰⁹

At the same time, it must be said that Canada is not a secular state in the French sense. The secular nature of the state has not been legally or officially declared. On the contrary, in the preamble to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms we read that Canada is founded on principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the primacy of law. Canada is a multicultural but also multireligious country. Walking the streets of cities, one can meet people of all skin colours, and temples of different denominations are adjacent to each other. However, the Canadian model of religion-state relations is transparent. Every individual has the right to exercise their freedom of belief and religion and express it in public space, while elements that constitute the state's structure must remain religiously neutral.

Ontario is the most populous and economically vibrant region of Canada. Within its borders lies the capital of Canada, Ottawa, the largest city in Canada, Toronto, as well as the largest agglomeration known as Golden Horseshoe (a strip of the western and northwestern shores of Lake Ontario. It stretches from the city of Niagara Falls to Oshawa. The region owes its name to its characteristic shape, resembling a horseshoe). The Golden Horseshoe is a highly urbanised and heavily industrialised area with approximately 7.83 million inhabitants, representing 55% of Ontario's population and 21% of Canada's total population³¹⁰. Three of the cities in this region – Toronto, Mississauga and Hamilton – rank among the ten largest in Canada.

Each Canadian province has its own legislative body (a single-chamber parliament elected by universal suffrage for a 5-year term), executive power (government headed by the prime minister, accountable to the local parliament) and judicial power (regional, district and supreme courts). Each province also has a lieutenant governor, the king's representative – analogous to the office of the Governor General of Canada, appointed on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, although in recent years, there has been a custom of consulting these appointments with provincial governments.

308 Ibidem.

309 Ibidem.

310 Canada Visa, *About Ontario*, available at: <https://www.canadavisa.com/about-ontario.html> (accessed: 12.03.2024).

The Premier of Ontario is Doug Ford, appointed by Lieutenant Governor Edith Dumont. Ford was re-elected after the June 2, 2022 elections in which his Progressive Conservative party won 83 of the 124 parliamentary seats, forming a majority government for the second time³¹¹.

Meanderings of the Concept of Multicultural Society

The concept of Canada as a “multicultural society” can be interpreted in different ways: descriptively (as a sociological fact), prescriptively (as ideology) or politically (as policy). As a sociological fact, multiculturalism refers to the presence of people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. Ideologically, multiculturalism consists of a relatively coherent set of ideas and ideals about celebrating Canada’s cultural diversity. At the policy level, multiculturalism refers to the management of diversity through formal initiatives in the federal, provincial, territorial and municipal domains³¹².

In this part, I’ll examine the evolution of multiculturalism in Canada, from the earliest days as a “mosaic” nation to today, where there is a striving for a “melting pot” approach³¹³.

Multiculturalism as a public policy at the federal level developed in several stages:

1. The incipient stage (pre-1971)
2. The formative period (1971–1981)
3. Institutionalisation (1982 to present)

The Incipient Stage (pre-1971)

As Will Kymlicka stated:

“Historically, ethnic relations have been defined in illiberal and undemocratic ways – including relations of conqueror and conquered, colonizer and colonized, settler and indigenous, racialized and unmarked, normalized and deviant, orthodox and heretic, civilized and backwards, ally and enemy, master and slave. The task for all liberal

311 Elections Ontario, available at: <https://results.elections.on.ca/en/data-explorer?fromYear=1867&toYear=2024&candidateNames=DOUG%20FORD&levelOfDetail=candidate> (accessed: 20.03.2024).

312 L. Brosseau, M. Dewing, *Canadian Multiculturalism*, Library of Parliament, p. 1, available at: https://lop.parl.ca/sites/PublicWebsite/default/en_CA/ResearchPublications/200920E#a2-4-5 (accessed: 13.03.2024).

313 M. Bumgardner, *The evolution of multiculturalism in Canada*, available at: <https://www.multiculturalcanada.ca/2023/05/16/multiculturalism-in-canada/> (accessed: 12.03.2024).

democracies has been to turn this catalogue of uncivil relations into relationships of liberal-democratic citizenship, both in terms of the vertical relationship between the members of minorities and the state and the horizontal relationships among the members of different groups”³¹⁴.

The same situation happened in Canada’s case.

Before 1971, there was a gradual movement toward acceptance of ethnic diversity as legitimate and integral to Canadian society. During colonial times, the nation-building process of the symbolic and cultural sense was oriented toward the replication of the British type of society in Canada. However, the introduction of The Canadian Citizenship Act in 1947, waves of immigrants from Europe after World War II, growing assertiveness of Canada’s Indigenous peoples, the rise of Québécois nationalism and increasing resentment among some ethnic minorities regarding their place in society forced the authorities to change their perspectives on heterogeneity. They started to appreciate the benefits of ethnic/linguistic and religious diversity and, instead of assimilation, thought about integration³¹⁵.

The formative period (1971–1981)

In the 1960’s, the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism was established to deal with the tension between French and English-speaking parts of Canada. In 1969, the Commission published Book Four of its report, which addressed the contribution of non-Indigenous, non-French and non-English ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada. The Commission recommended the “integration” (not assimilation) of ethnic groups into Canadian society, emphasising the importance of granting them full citizenship rights and equal participation in Canada’s institutional structure. These recommendations resulted in the introduction of the Multiculturalism Policy by Pierre Eliot Trudeau in 1971. The basic assumption of the new policy was to build the country’s unity by using the value of the richness of cultures represented by the inhabitants of Canada.

314 W. Kymlicka, *Neoliberal multiculturalism*, [in:] *Social Resilience in the Neoliberal Era*, (eds.) P. A. Hall and M. Lamont, Cambridge University Press, United Kingdom 2012, p. 103, available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/286836153_Neoliberal_Multiculturalism (accessed: 20.03.2024).

315 L. Brosseau, M. Dewing, *Canadian Multiculturalism*, op. cit., p. 3.

The key objectives of the Multiculturalism Policy were as follows:

- to assist cultural groups to retain and foster their identity;
- to assist cultural groups in overcoming barriers hindering their full participation in Canadian society (thus, the multiculturalism policy advocated the full involvement and equal participation of ethnic minorities in mainstream institutions without denying them the right to identify with selected elements of their cultural past if they so choose);
- to promote creative exchanges among all Canadian cultural groups;
- to assist immigrants in acquiring at least one of the two official languages³¹⁶.

As Will Kymlicka underlined in his publication, multiculturalism in Canada in its early stages was a mix of nationalism and social liberalism,

“(…) which created space for minorities to contest disadvantage and to renegotiate the terms of belonging while reassuring state officials that it is still “Canada” to all citizens belong and to which all citizens wish to contribute. Put another way, multiculturalism’s mix of nationalism and social liberalism can be seen as a process of citizenization”³¹⁷.

The term “citizenization” comes from Tully³¹⁸ (2001), and it can be understood as a willingness to negotiate as equals the terms of belonging to reach consent. Kymlicka added to this definition that: “As long as the goal is to replace coercion and paternalism with democratic consent and to replace hierarchy with non-domination, then we have citizenization”³¹⁹.

Institutionalisation (1982 to present)

In the 1980s, the advent of neoliberalism marked a change in multiculturalism policy. The Neoliberals opposed, on principle, the idea of state support for ethnic projects and opposed most of the reforms that followed in multiculturalism’s trail, such as the employment equity laws that minorities demanded in the name of multiculturalism. In short, neoliberals viewed multiculturalism as embodying the sort of welfare state liberalism they opposed³²⁰.

With the adoption of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (the Charter) in 1982, the multicultural heritage of Canadians was recognized in the Constitution. Section 27 of the Charter states: “This Charter shall be interpreted

316 Ibidem.

317 W. Kymlicka, *Neoliberal multiculturalism*, op.cit., p. 103.

318 J. Tully, *Introduction*, [in:] *Multinational Democracies*, (eds) A. Gagnon & J.Tully, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK 2001.

319 W. Kymlicka, *Neoliberal multiculturalism*, op. cit. p. 103.

320 Ibidem, p. 107.

in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians³²¹.

As Anna Reczyńska notes in her article, the vision of a multicultural society was considered to be a way to accelerate assimilation processes, although too much state interference in the sphere of ethnic relations reinforced ethnic ghettos and led to racial segregation. In the 1980s, the Anglo-Saxon part of Canadian society treated multiculturalism policy as an experiment and with indifference or reluctance, seeing its programs as privileging new immigrant groups. Additionally, there was also a widespread opinion that multiculturalism was only a way of resolving conflicts resulting from Quebec's emancipatory aspirations. The French-speaking population of Quebec was firmly against the policy of multiculturalism, believing that it relegated Francophones to the position of one of Canada's minorities. Supporters of multiculturalism and its policies comprised members of ethnic communities, especially their leaders, and part of the political elite³²².

A new multiculturalism policy with a clearer sense of purpose and direction came into effect in 1988 when Parliament adopted the Canadian Multiculturalism Act. Canada was the first country in the world to pass a national multiculturalism law. To this day, the Act sets out the legal framework for Canada's multiculturalism policy.

The Act acknowledges multiculturalism as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society and plays an integral role in the federal government's decision-making process. Directed toward preserving and enhancing multiculturalism in Canada, the Act seeks to assist in conserving culture and language, reduce discrimination, enhance cultural awareness and understanding, and promote culturally sensitive institutional change at the federal level³²³.

Where early multicultural policies concentrated on cultural preservation and intercultural sharing through the promotion of ethnic presses and festivals, the rejuvenated multiculturalism policy from the '90s (1991- the creation of the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship) emphasised cross-cultural understanding and the attainment of social and economic integration through institutional change, affirmative action to equalise opportunity, and the removal of discriminatory barriers.

In 1993, the federal government announced that the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada would be split into two main components: the multiculturalism programs would be merged with the new Department of

321 *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, op.cit.

322 A. Reczyńska, *Historyczne uwarunkowania kultury kanadyjskiej*, op.cit., p. 24.

323 L. Brosseau, M. Dewing, *Canadian Multiculturalism*, op. cit., p. 5.

Canadian Heritage, and the citizenship programs would be amalgamated with the new Department of Citizenship and Immigration.

In 1997, the federal government announced a new policy that focused on three objectives: social justice (building a fair and equitable society); civic participation (ensuring that Canadians of all origins participate in the shaping of our communities and country); and identity (fostering a society that recognizes, respects and reflects a diversity of cultures so that people of all backgrounds feel a sense of belonging to Canada).

The new policy prioritised proposals that:

- assisted in the development of strategies to facilitate the full and active participation of ethnic, racial, religious and cultural communities in Canada;
- supported collective community initiatives and responses to ethnic, racial, religious and cultural conflict and hate-motivated activities;
- improved the ability of public institutions to respond to ethnic, racial, religious and cultural diversity;
- encouraged and assisted in the development of inclusive policies, programs and practices within federal departments and agencies;
- increased public awareness, understanding and dialogue with respect to multiculturalism, racism, and cultural diversity in Canada³²⁴.

Matt James, in his chapter about multiculturalism in Canada in the late 90s and the beginning of 2000, argues that this was a time of “(...) neoliberal heritage redress which follows neoliberalized multiculturalism in building new interest intermediation processes that exclude critical voices and perspectives”³²⁵. He argues that:

“(...) the policy seeks partially to supplant multiculturalism discourse with a new system for recognising group contributions. As we have seen, this system turns experiences of historical injustice into a kind of company-store currency, which groups are then expected to barter in return for grants and forms of acknowledgement whose acceptance requires, in turn, that they forsake more ambitiously reparative discourses and claims”³²⁶.

In 2002, the government announced that Canadian Multiculturalism Day would be held every year on 27 June³²⁷. These days serve to recognise, appreciate and honour the multicultural fabric that makes up Canada. The federal government

324 Ibidem.

325 M. James, *Neoliberal Heritage Redress*, [in:] *Reconciling Canada: critical perspectives on the culture of redress*, 17.12.2013, p. 28, available at: <https://www.uvic.ca/socialsciences/political-science/assets/docs/faculty/Neoliberal%20Heritage%20Redress.pdf>, (accessed: 22.02.2024).

326 Ibidem.

327 L. Brosseau, M. Dewing, *Canadian Multiculturalism*, op. cit. p. 7.

underlines that multiculturalism is an essential part of what it means to be Canadian. Diversity is one of Canada's greatest strengths, and the participation of Canadians of all backgrounds in the country's civic life is of tremendous value. Those who celebrate that day have the opportunity to celebrate the cultural diversity that enriches Canadians collectively and reaffirm their commitment to equity, inclusion, and mutual respect³²⁸.

In 2008, responsibility for multiculturalism was transferred from the Department of Canadian Heritage to the Department of Citizenship and Immigration under the mandate of the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2018). In November 2015, it was moved to the Department of Canadian Heritage (Canadian Heritage 2018) and, following an election in October 2019, falls under the purview of the Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth (from the 2023 Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disabilities).

During the year 2000, there was a neoliberal time of multicultural policy, and it is important how citizens perceived the problems concerning immigration, minority rights, and linguistic, religious and ethnic diversity. A literature review of public opinion research on Canadian attitudes towards multiculturalism and immigration was conducted by Stuart Soroka and Sarah Robertson between 2006 and 2009. In their review, it was found that:

“Canadians’ attitudes about diversity, immigration and minority rights are largely, though not entirely, positive; and those attitudes are accompanied by a sense that a degree of difference should be combined with a degree of integration. Multiculturalism is viewed as an integral and largely positive aspect of the Canadian state, but Canadians – including visible minorities and recent immigrants – also see some value in shared values and traditions”³²⁹.

There is a fascinating study titled the Multiculturalism Policy Index conducted by two professors, Keith Banting and Will Kymlicka, at Queen's University in Kingston, Canada. According to the information on the website:

“The Multiculturalism Policy Index is a scholarly research project that monitors the evolution of multiculturalism policies across the Western democracies. (...) the project is designed to provide information about multiculturalism policies in a standardized format that aids comparative research and contributes to the understanding of state-minority relations. There are three separate indices covering three types of minorities: one relating to immigrant groups, one relating to historic national minorities, and one

328 Canadian Multiculturalism Day, available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/celebrate-canada/multiculturalism-day.html> (accessed: 12.03.2024).

329 S. Soroka, S. Robertson, *Literature review of public opinion research on Canadian attitudes towards multiculturalism and immigration, 2006–2009*, Citizenship and Immigration Canada Report 2010, p. 2, available at: <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/ircc/migration/ircc/english/pdf/research-stats/2012-por-multi-imm-eng.pdf> (accessed: 22.02.2024).

relating to Indigenous peoples. For each of these groups, the Index identifies a range of policies that are characteristic or emblematic of the “multicultural turn” over the past forty years. The Index lists eight such policies for immigrant groups (such as multicultural education); six such policies for national minorities (such as official language status); and nine such policies for Indigenous peoples (such as land claims)³³⁰.

The total score for each group indicates whether the listed policies are active or not. The MCP Index measures the presence or absence of a range of multiculturalism policies (MCPs) at four points in time: 1980, 2000, 2010 and 2020, across 21 Western democracies (also in Canada). On the website, there is information available about overall scores and information about each country. The results of multicultural policies for Canada in 2020 are as follows:

1. Score 7 for immigrant groups
2. Score 6 for national minorities
3. Score 8.5 for Indigenous people.

The scores for Canada over the decades show that Canadian multiculturalism policy is dynamic and evolving under the influence of the changing political and social reality, which causes it to adapt to new realities and needs. Reczyńska writes:

“The system creating the Canadian mosaic is supported by a relatively coherent system of multicultural ideology that shows the advantages and values of a pluralistic society. The functioning of multiculturalism in the political sphere is based on gradually introduced guarantees and legal provisions, as well as on federal and local programs addressed both to all Canadian residents and to specific groups – not only ethnic but also social and professional³³¹.”

As Katharyne Mitchell suggests, there is a shift in multiculturalism, understood as an educational philosophy, which in the 21st century:

“has begun to move to a more strategic form of utilizing culture for economic purposes, and away from a sense of individual fulfilment and of the necessity of forming bonds of social and national cohesion. Although multiculturalism has always been strongly linked with capitalism, it was once also accompanied by the spirit of the ethical self – the necessity to work with and through differences and to find harmonious solutions to problems in a democratic process. These national narratives are now in the process of shifting away from multiculturalism and towards a sense of individual patriotism and strategic entrepreneurialism³³².”

330 Multiculturalism Policy Index, available at: <https://www.queensu.ca/mcp/about> (accessed: 20.03.2024).

331 A. Reczyńska, *Historyczne uwarunkowania kultury kanadyjskiej*, op. cit., p. 265.

332 K. Mitchell, *Educating the national citizen in neoliberal times: from the multicultural self to the strategic cosmopolitan*, 2003, p. 399, available at: <https://depts.washington.edu/rchild/TIBG%2003.pdf> (accessed: 20.03.2024).

There is other evidence (for example, from data provided by Statistics Canada or Citizenship and Immigration Canada) on how Canada deals with multiculturalism. In an overall view, multiculturalism is part of Canada's identity, but there are some issues concerning the status of some minority groups that undermine the Canadian social fabric. Andrew Griffith, in his book, presented the strengths and weaknesses of Canadian multicultural society:

1. Greater and more varied diversity- there are more than 250 ethnicities and an ever-larger visible minority.
2. Changing urban mix – diversity continues to expand outward from the largest cities and their suburbs to more medium-sized cities.
3. Persistent economic differences persist – especially between visible minorities and those of Canadian or European origin in terms of unemployment rates or medium-income.
4. Strong educational performance, especially educational outcomes for most visible minority groups, are significantly stronger than non-visible minority groups in terms of University diplomas.
5. Continued discrimination – statistics still show hate crimes (against Blacks and Jews) and perceived discrimination and racial intolerance.
6. Improved representation in public services – visible minorities have gained their own representation in healthcare, social services and education.
7. Ethnic enclaves at the riding level- there are a lot of provinces with a mix of communities which constitute more than 50% visible minorities.
8. Declining naturalisation – the Canadian model of immigration leading to citizenship is at risk due to declining naturalisation rates, reflecting policy and program changes that have made citizenship “harder to get and easier to lose”.
9. Political under-representation – visible minorities and women remain underrepresented in federal and provincial political representatives.
10. Public sector representation reasonably strong – public service employment of visible minorities is roughly in line with the labour market availability for the federal government³³³.

Despite numerous evidence of an upbeat assessment of multiculturalism policy development in Canada, European and Canadian literature increasingly includes statements by those who criticise this policy. Criticism can be found for example, in Karen Pashby's doctoral thesis, which follows the opinion of Y. Jiwani:

“Canada is perceived as a leader in the international human rights arena. It is considered an egalitarian nation, motivated by a desire for justice for minorities and dis-

333 A. Griffith, *op. cit.*, p. 2–4.

advantaged people. Canada is a signatory to various international agreements, conventions and agreements protecting the rights of indigenous peoples and marginalized groups, including women and children. But the rhetoric is empty... As a colonial and colonized nation, Canada presents a public face that is part of its own mythology -... that boasts a multicultural complexion and a multiracial workforce, a nation-building an image of a peaceful kingdom amid the chaos and confusion that characterizes the rest of the world”³³⁴.

Polish scholars Anna Ślis and Marek Szczepański also stated in their article that:

“Canadian contemporary times show that multiculturalism has not remained constant and has become a wonderful panacea for the problems with multiethnic society. Coexistence within one state organism, strongly diversified culturally, carries a danger of cultural (ethnic) isolation, antagonisms and conflicts. The other socialization in a multicultural social environment teaches openness, tolerance, understanding, and respect for differences. The politics of multiculturalism, with its pros and cons, arouses many emotions, both positive and negative. Arouses admiration, but also sharp criticism. It constitutes two opposing attitudes: supporters and opponents. But despite this, no better one has invented forms of coexistence for the social reality of immigrant origin and ethnic diversity”³³⁵.

Ultimately, Canadian multiculturalism can also be looked at with a pinch of salt, as done by Vaughn Roste and Peret W. Wilson, who comment on the appropriateness of introducing this term into national policy as follows:

“Canadians did not coin the term ‘multicultural’ as an act of creativity, but out of necessity. Multicultural official policy means that the nation is focused on a cultural mosaic resembling a patchwork quilt, while Americans aim for a melting pot. Canadians are practical people, so they figured the crazy melting pot idea wouldn’t work in a country where 50% of the land never completely thaws. A patchwork quilt is different because it is a much more pragmatic idea when cold outside”³³⁶.

334 K. Pashby, *Related and conflated: a theoretical and discursive framing of multiculturalism and global citizenship education in the Canadian context*, 2013, p. 5–6, available at: https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/35921/3/Pashby_Karen_201306_PhD_thesis.pdf (accessed: 20.03.2024).

335 Ślis A., Szczepański M.S., *Gettoizacja czy tolerancja, czyli spór o wielokulturowość*, “Kultura i Polityka”, *Zeszyty Naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Europejskiej im. Ks. Józefa Tischnera*, Kraków 2013, nr 13, s. 104, available at: http://bazhum.muzhp.pl/media//files/Kultura_i_Polityka_zeszyty_naukowe_Wyższej_Szkoły_Europejskiej_im_ks_Jozefa_Tischnera_w_Krakowie/Kultura_i_Polityka_zeszyty_naukowe_Wyższej_Szkoły_Europejskiej_im_ks_Jozefa_Tischnera_w_Krakowie-r2013-t-n13/Kultura_i_Polityka_zeszyty_naukowe_Wyższej_Szkoły_Europejskiej_im_ks_Jozefa_Tischnera_w_Krakowie-r2013-t-n13-s97-114/Kultura_i_Polityka_zeszyty_naukowe_Wyższej_Szkoły_Europejskiej_im_ks_Jozefa_Tischnera_w_Krakowie-r2013-t-n13-s97-114.pdf (accessed: 20.03.2024).

336 V. Roste and P.W. Wilson, *Przewodnik ksenofoba- Kanadyjczycy*, Adamantan, Warszawa 2017, pp. 33–34.

There are opponents and supporters of multicultural policy in Canada; their opinions could be summarised in a quotation:

“(…) some commentators have expressed the fear that the multiculturalism policy is promoting too much diversity at the expense of unity. Critics say the policy is divisive because it emphasizes what is different rather than the values that are Canadian. It is felt that Canadian culture and symbols are being discarded to accommodate other cultures. On the other hand, defenders of Canada’s approach to multiculturalism argue that it encourages integration by telling immigrants they do not have to choose between preserving their cultural heritage and participating in Canadian society. Rather, they can do both”³³⁷.

An exciting study was conducted on how Canadian citizens feel about current multicultural policy and the conditions under which citizens are more or less inclined to support it. As Stolle, Harell, Soroka and Behnke stated in their article where they showed the results of different research done in recent years:

“Support for multiculturalism, although relatively high, is not independent of the desire for integration and assimilation. While values of assimilation and support for multiculturalism are negatively related, the median Canadian is moderately assimilationist and moderately in support of multicultural policy (results not shown). Thus, we cannot characterize Canadians as people who unconditionally support multicultural policies. Their support is embedded in the understanding that these policies integrate and, to a degree, assimilate minority groups”³³⁸.

Additionally, the literature review of public opinion research on Canadian attitudes towards multiculturalism and immigration from 2006 to 2009 by Soroka and Robertson showed:

“Overall, there is broad support for multiculturalism and immigration, and that support has not decreased in recent years; indeed, it may even have increased slightly. This broad level of support for immigration and multiculturalism is accompanied by majority support for a certain degree of integration”³³⁹.

From this literature review, we can also draw a conclusion that: “Multiculturalism is viewed as an integral and largely positive aspect of the Canadian state, but Canadians – including visible minorities and recent immigrants – see some value

337 L. Brosseau, M. Dewing, op.cit., p. 11.

338 D.Stolle, A. Harell, S. Soroka, J. Behnke, *Religious Symbols, Multiculturalism and Policy Attitudes*, Canadian Journal of Political Science, Vol. 49, No. 2, p. 347, available at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24810786> (accessed: 14. 02. 2024).

339 S. Soroka, S. Robertson, *A literature review of public opinion research on Canadian attitudes towards multiculturalism and immigration (2006–2009)*, Research and Evaluation, Canada 2010, p. 41, available at: <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/ircc/migration/ircc/english/pdf/research-stats/2012-por-multi-imm-eng.pdf> (accessed: 20. 03. 2024).

in shared values and traditions as well”³⁴⁰. There are numerous publications which support that thesis, for example:

“According to the Focus Canada surveys conducted by the Environics Institute for Survey Research, the percentage of Canadians who see multiculturalism as a symbol of Canadian identity increased from 37% in 1997 to 54% in 2015. At the same time, the percentage of Canadians who feel that immigration levels are too high dropped from 61% in 1977 to 37% in 2016”³⁴¹.

In Takanori Sumino’s research on national identity and collective threat, and their joint contribution to the formation of multicultural ideology in Canada, the results have shown that:

“(1) ethnic national identity is positively, and civic national identity is negatively, associated with collective threat; (2) the direct effect of ethnic national identity on multicultural attitudes disappears when collective threat is taken into account; and (3) the relationship between ethnic/civic national identity and multicultural attitudes is significantly mediated by collective threat”³⁴².

Policy makers can use these results to think and exercise the shift from an ethnic to a civic (or ethno-culturally thinner) conception of nationhood which in the end reduces the levels of out-group threat and thereby indirectly generates positive multicultural ideology³⁴³.

Ontario, as one of the few provinces, has an official multicultural policy, and the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration is responsible for promoting social inclusion, civic and community engagement and recognition. Although Ontario inaugurated an official multicultural policy in 1977 that promoted the cultural activities of the various ethnic groups, formal legislation establishing the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture (now the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism³⁴⁴) came into force only in 1982.

340 Ibidem, p. 2.

341 L. Brosseau, M. Dewing, op.cit. p. 10.

342 T. Sumino, *National identity and public attitudes toward multiculturalism in Canada: Testing the indirect effect via perceived collective threat*, “Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science”, 2017, 49(3), p. 183, available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/318326485_National_Identity_and_Public_Attitudes_Toward_Multiculturalism_in_Canada_Testing_the_Indirect_Effect_via_Perceived_Collective_Threat (accessed: 24.03.2024).

343 Ibidem.

344 The names and dates for ministries responsible for multicultural policy: Ministry of Citizenship and Culture (1982–1987); Ministry of Citizenship (1987–1995); Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation (1995–2001); Ministry of Citizenship (2001–2003); Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (2003–2014); Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade (2014–2016); Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (2016–2018) – it was dissolved in 2018 and its functions were taken over by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services; in 2021 the ministry was reintroduced as the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism. The current minister is Michael Ford.

In February 2016, the Government of Ontario announced the establishment of an Anti-Racism Directorate to address systemic racism in government policies, decisions, and programs.

On 7 March 2017, the Government of Ontario published *A Better Way Forward: Ontario's 3-Year Anti-Racism Strategic Plan*, an action plan outlining the government's strategy to eliminate systemic racism. The plan included:

- developing a disaggregated race data collection framework;
- introducing a new Ontario Black Youth Action Plan;
- developing an anti-racism impact assessment framework;
- introducing anti-racism legislation that would ensure future sustainability and accountability of the province's anti-racism work by providing a framework for government and organizations to identify and combat systemic racism; implementing targeted public education and awareness initiatives on racism in all its forms, including Islamophobia and antisemitism.

On 1 June 2017, the *Anti-Racism Act, 2017* was enacted. It provides for the following:

- retaining the Anti-Racism Directorate;
- maintaining and regularly reviewing an anti-racism strategy;
- reviewing the anti-racism strategy at least every five years³⁴⁵.

Now, on the website of the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism, we can read that the main tasks of the ministry are to:

- Lead anti-racism and anti-hate initiatives.
- Promote equitable economic growth and opportunity for all Ontarians.
- Celebrate the Ontario spirit and foster inclusive, vibrant communities through volunteerism across the province and recognizing the contributions and achievements of Ontarians³⁴⁶.

Multicultural Education – the Case of Residential Schools

Multiculturalism in Canada has also been integrated into the school curriculum by adopting multicultural education programs through the Multiculturalism Directorate, established in 1972.

According to Will Kymlicka and Keith Banting, historically, Saskatchewan set Canada's first multiculturalism education policy at the provincial level in 1975,

345 L. Brosseau, M. Dewing, *Canadian...* op. cit., p. 15.

346 Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism, available at: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-citizenship-and-multiculturalism> (accessed: 16.03.2024).

with Alberta, Manitoba, and Nova Scotia also endorsing multicultural education policies. Ontario and British Columbia were also proactive in developing multicultural education policies at the time³⁴⁷.

On the federal level, The Council of Ministers of Education of Canada in 2008 adopted a policy, which was recognised in a 2004 report, stating that

“integrating immigrant children into the existing education systems of the provinces and territories involves establishing policies embodying the principles of diversity, equity, and multicultural education as part of the daily classroom and school environment, as well as adapting the curriculum and providing teacher supports that address students’ real needs, especially for language learning”³⁴⁸.

On the regional level, The Western and Northern Canadian Protocol (WNCP, which is a cooperative group of Canadian provinces and territories: Alberta, Manitoba, Yukon Territory, Northern Territories Nunavut, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia that developed common curriculum frameworks) in 2002 stated in its Common Curriculum Framework for Social Studies, the importance of recognizing Canada’s cultural diversity and including diverse cultural perspectives in the school curriculum³⁴⁹.

On the provincial level in 1993, the Ontario Government recognized the existence of racism in schools in the province, as well as the fact that curricula and Eurocentric practice contributed, at least partly, to the educational difficulties of pupils from minority racial backgrounds, so The Ontario Ministry of Education and Training adopted policy guidelines related to antiracism and ethnocultural equity in school boards. Among the requirements is the provision that the school curriculum reflects a racially and culturally diverse society and is aligned with antiracism policy objectives³⁵⁰.

There is no possibility to write about multicultural education without mentioning the education of indigenous people. As Abdeljalil Akkari and Myriam Radhouane stated, referring to schooling for FNMI (First Nations, Metis, Inuits):

“This situation by itself sums up the ambiguity of Canadian multiculturalism which, on the one hand, may pride itself on being in the forefront of the international scene in

347 Multiculturalism Policy Index, available at: <https://www.queensu.ca/mcp/immigrant-minorities/resultsbycountry-im/canada-im> (accessed: 15.04.2024).

348 The Tobin Associate, *Quality education for all young people: challenges, trends and priorities*, The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada 2004, p. 32, available at: http://cmec.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/66/47_ICE_report.en.pdf (accessed: 19.04.2024).

349 Multiculturalism Policy Index, <https://www.queensu.ca/mcp/immigrant-minorities/resultsbycountry-im/canada-im> (accessed: 15.04.2024).

350 A. Akkari, M. Radhouane, *Multicultural education in Canada*, [in:] *Intercultural approaches to education. From theory to practice*, Springer 2022, p. 85, available at: https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-70825-2_6 (accessed: 23.03.2024).

considering cultural diversity, but which has not completely restored the battered historical legacy with its own indigenous people. The schooling of this latter group was an experiment bringing together the school, colonization, racism and ethnocentrism”³⁵¹.

Since the beginning of Canadian statehood, the federal government subjected indigenous people to forced acculturation in residential schools run by religious congregations of all churches: Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, United Church of Canada and Methodist (system operated from 1880 until 1996). The whole truth about the brutal acculturation policy of indigenous peoples, especially the activities of residential schools, was revealed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC), operating since 2008, which completed its investigation in 2015 and presented a report containing 94 recommendations to the Canadian government to improve the situation of indigenous peoples. The recommendations include a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and children and enhancing indigenous people’s access to schools and health services.

In 2015, the 94 recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission included those strictly concerned with the education of indigenous peoples (points 6–12 and 62–65)³⁵². The recommendations concerned actions that the federal government must take towards the current generation of children and youth, including the need to equalise differences in the level of education and employment between representatives of indigenous and non-indigenous people; equalise the differences in funding for schools on reserves and those located off reserves; ensuring that the language of indigenous peoples is recognized as a subject for which points (credits) are awarded; introducing programs that take into account cultural heritage into education; access of parents and local communities to the management and control of schools; introduction of pre-school education for children from indigenous families. The recommendations also concerned the actions to be taken by the government towards the generation of Survivors – participants of boarding schools, which was to be a form of compensation for the harm suffered, including providing appropriate financial resources for the establishment of post-secondary schools educating future teachers who would take into account the legacy in their practices. cultural culture of indigenous peoples and teaching methods different from those recognized in European countries, including the history of indigenous peoples and their participation in Canadian history, including information about residential

351 Ibidem, p. 81–82.

352 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Calls to Action*, 2015, p. 2–3 and p. 7–8, available at: https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf (accessed: 26.03.2024).

schools, in educational curricula; allocating public funds to establish religious schools where knowledge about spiritual practices and beliefs of indigenous people will be transferred; creation of a joint commission whose activities would focus on supporting the process of reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous people.

Recently, a large number of publications on the education of indigenous people have been published in Canada which indicate not only the devastating impact of colonialism and government educational policy on education next generations of this population (mainly in boarding schools), but also on the consequences of these actions in the everyday life of Survivors and the problems they experience today (unemployment, alcoholism, suicide). These publications are also intended to stimulate the reader to consider the educational practices of indigenous peoples, for whom education is a lifelong experience taking place in many different contexts. The authors of the publications, often from indigenous peoples themselves, encourage teachers to also consider new ways of learning in their daily activities, which include not only intellectual but also tactile, emotional and spiritual forms of knowledge that are so important to representatives of indigenous peoples³⁵³.

In 2015, there was a publication titled: “A Knock on the Door: The Essential History of Residential Schools from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada”, prepared by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC), with Phil Fontaine (Foreword) and Aimée Craft (Afterword). This book gathers material from the several reports the TRC has produced to present the essential history and legacy of residential schools in a concise and accessible package that includes new materials to help inform and contextualise the journey to reconciliation that Canadians are now embarking upon³⁵⁴.

There are a number of publications presenting the personal biographies of former residential school students. One of them is in a book written by Fred Sasakamoose, who was taken from his home at the age of seven and endured the horrors of a residential school for a decade before becoming the NHL’s First Treaty Indigenous Player. This book titled “Call Me Indian” sheds piercing light on Canadian history and Indigenous politics and recounts Fred’s remarkable

353 C. Czech-Włodarczyk, *Ludność rdzenna w kanadyjskim systemie edukacji – próba pogodzenia z przeszłością, aktualna sytuacja i planowane działania*, “Edukacja Międzykulturowa”, 2022, nr 1 (16), p. 84, available at: <https://czasopisma.marszalek.com.pl/image/s/pliki/em/16/em1605.pdf> (accessed: 20.03.2024).

354 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *A Knock on the Door: The Essential History of Residential Schools from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, University of Manitoba Press, Canada 2015, available at: <https://uofmpress.ca/books/a-knock-on-the-door> (accessed: 21.03.2024).

journey to reclaim pride in an identity and a heritage previously used against him³⁵⁵.

Until the publication of the TRC report, Canada considered itself a model of tolerance and respect for human rights. There was even talk of an “angel complex” in a country tormented by constant praise. This explains the violent reaction to the painful truth. Throughout the country, monuments and memorial sites associated with people who introduced forced assimilation of natives began to be vandalised. At least 12 churches burned down. In the capital of Alberta, Edmonton, the monument of John Paul II was destroyed, and increasingly harsh words were used³⁵⁶.

In some provinces and cities the truth about residential schools and the recent discoveries of mass graves of residential school students (the largest in 2021 in Kamloops, Grouard 2022, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation 2023) raised the question about the purpose of celebrating Canada Day.

Canada Day is a public holiday celebrated in Canada on July 1 to commemorate the establishment of the Canadian Confederation in 1867, which comprised four colonies: Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. As Mathew Hayday stated:

“The first of July is thus not necessarily an obvious rallying point for all Canadians – but then, so few things are in a country marked more by slow evolution and compromise than violent change or revolution. By the mid-1950s, both Empire Day (23 May) and Victoria Day (24 May) had declined in importance to Canadians, as had the empire and monarch they honoured. Parades for St-Jean-Baptiste Day (24 June), honouring French Canada’s patron saint, drew huge crowds in Montreal and Ottawa in the early 1950s, but held little appeal for English speakers. Thus, in 1958 federal officials selected the holiday of Dominion Day as a component of its public policy agenda to foster certain conceptions of Canadian identity. In subsequent years, politicians considered and tested a succession of other possible names (Canada’s Birthday, Canada Week) before renaming the holiday ‘Canada Day’ in 1982”³⁵⁷.

It is essentially analogous to the American Thanksgiving, which was established to commemorate the first harvest festival. Today we are aware that the meeting of pilgrims with the indigenous inhabitants of the continent was not always peaceful, but often a history full of conflict and violence. Celebrating the be-

355 F. Saskamoose, *Call me Indian*, foreword by Bryan Trottier, Penguin Random House, Canada 2021.

356 J. Bielecki, *Kanada raj utracony*, “Rzeczpospolita”, 01.07.2021, available at: <https://www.rp.pl/spoleczenstwo/art8544221-kanada-raj-utracony> (accessed: 04.03.2024).

357 M. Hayday, *Fireworks, Folk-dancing, and Fostering a National Identity: The Politics of Canada Day*, “Canadian Historical Review”, vol. 91, issue 2, 2010, p. 289, available at: <https://www.utpjournals.press/doi/abs/10.3138/chr.91.2.287?role=tab&journalCode=chr> (accessed: 20.03.2024).

gining of the annihilation of the people who were the first in these areas stopped being seen as a good idea. Several cities started to cancel customary commemorations and instead held events honouring indigenous heritage and remembering the victims of the residential school system³⁵⁸.

The change in the Canadian policy toward Indigenous people shows that no country can renounce its history, and the memories of past events will echo in the present as long as human memory stores them and passes them on to subsequent generations in the form of material and intangible traces of cultural heritage. As Yasmeen Abu-Laban stated, “The Canadian case also shows that claims for recognition, redistribution and solidarity are part and parcel of the expression of diversity politics. This may be seen to be a feature of the “complex diversity” that characterises Canadian liberal democracy today and was set in place in its settler-colonial foundation”³⁵⁹.

Trends in Citizenship Education in Canada/Ontario

As Katharyne Mitchell explains: “Canada’s public system of education developed mainly between 1840 and 1870 and was part of a deliberate strategy by political liberals to forge a new political nationality”³⁶⁰. In Karen Pashby’s PhD thesis, we can find an explanation that:

“The overall mission of public education in Canada until the early 1900s was the installation of Canadian patriotism and national identity so that schools were a homogenizing force used to create good Canadian citizens in an image of British loyalists. Nation-building required citizens, and therefore, students who spoke the national language and knew Canada’s literature, history, and geography needed to internalize the national values. Therefore, the main focus was teaching the English language and British ways to those not of British origins (although the French held some special language and religious rights). This assimilation approach was most strongly targeted at the First Nations and Inuit peoples, who were governed through relations with the federal government, which created a system of residential schools. However, there were distinct local and regional pluralism and diversity management contexts. Indeed, there was never a monolithic diversity and citizenship education approach across Canada despite the strength of dominant assimilationist beliefs and policies”³⁶¹.

358 <https://www.f5.pl/spoleczenstwo/dzien-kanady-zostanie-odwolany-kanadyjskie-swieto-nie-podleglosci-wiaze-sie-z-ludobojstwem-rdzennych-mieszkancow> (accessed: 20.04.2024).

359 Y. Abu-Laban, *Recognition, redistribution and solidarity: the case of multicultural Canada*, op.cit., p. 10.

360 K. Mitchell, *Educating the national citizen in neoliberal times: from the multicultural self to the strategic cosmopolitan*, op.cit., p. 393.

361 K. Pashby, *Related and conflated: a theoretical and discursive framing of multiculturalism and global citizenship education in the Canadian context*, op.cit., p. 7–8.

It is very interesting to observe how the concept of a “good citizen” is included in the educational policy, especially in citizenship education. Ken Osborne emphasises in his article that the concept of citizenship is usually presented in the school curriculum in the following way:

“The image of a good citizen is equated to a good person, woman or man, who helps others, respects the rights of others, obeys the law, is a patriot and the like... (but) conscious citizenship requires something more. Requires the ability and skills to enter the role of an active participant in social processes; a participant with a clearly defined moral attitude, making conscious decisions and voting in accordance with his or her own political beliefs.... A democratic society requires its members to be both good people and good citizens”³⁶².

In other research on the concept of citizenship and the notion of a good citizen, Cristobal Villalobos, Maria Jesus Morel, and Ernesto Trevino have noticed that in a global context,

“(...) the idea of citizenship and the characteristics of a good citizen have undergone important transformations. On the one hand, the increase in risks associated with climate change has created tensions in the discussion of citizenship at the national level, introducing the focus on global citizenship and responsible consumption. Secondly, the evidence of growing social inequalities has drawn attention to processes such as global migration and gender inequalities, highlighting the need to expand the notion of good citizenship to incorporate aspects related to solidarity and social fraternity. Finally, the increase in political and religious intolerance between and within countries has brought into question the role of citizenship in social cohesion, showing how active citizenship can be important for the defence of human rights, democracy, and social tolerance while playing, for example, a central role in post-conflict contexts”³⁶³.

In a qualitative study conducted in two Regina, Saskatchewan high schools, Jennifer Tupper and Michael Cappello invited students to create and explain visual images depicting their perceptions of good citizenship. The vast majority of participants, from various backgrounds, reproduced mainstream citizenship notions such as national pride, official multiculturalism discourse, and caring for the environment, family and neighbours. Thus, these young people largely un-

362 K. Osborne, *Political and citizenship education: teaching for civic engagement*, “Education Canada” 2004, vol. 45, nr 1, s. 13.

363 C. Villalobos, M.J. Morel, E. Trevino, *A comparative approach to nations of good citizenship, in Good citizenship for the next generation. A global perspective using IEA ICCS 2016 data*, [in:] *IEA Research for Education*, [eds] E. Trevino, D. Carrasco, E. Claes, K. J. Kennedy, Springer 2021, p. 53, available at: https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-75746-5_4 (accessed: 20.04.2024).

derstood citizenship in individual rather than social or political terms, and apparently assumed that democracy and social justice had been already realised³⁶⁴.

Kathy Bickmore, who conducted the review of research on citizenship education and its consequences in Canada up to 2014, noted that:

“Similarly, high school students in Ontario (Llewellyn et al., 2010; Llewellyn & Westheimer, 2009) and New Brunswick (Chareka & Sears, 2005, 2006) studies equated good citizenship with individual good behaviour, for instance, volunteering in community clean-up or assisting the elderly. In Chareka and Sears’ study, students articulated the accepted view that voting was important citizenship behaviour, but many said they did not actually expect to vote themselves. Overall, students in these research projects didn’t seem to have any clear understanding of political engagement or its value, nor of what skills would enable such democratic citizenship”³⁶⁵.

In the same article by Kathy Bickmore we can read that:

“(…) research shows that Canadian citizenship education about intercultural diversity and equity issues is increasingly inclusive and justice-oriented in policy pronouncements, but still practised and understood in much less inclusive or thoughtful terms by teachers and students in actual schools”³⁶⁶.

Moreover, in analysing the curricula, policies, and textbooks, she was trying to answer the question of how democratic Canadian citizenship education is and she came to the conclusion that there is:

“(…) a paradox of peace-building citizenship: multiculturalism in education cannot succeed in building support for just and mutually respectful inter-group relationships without naming and affirming difference while naming and resisting inequities. Well-intended denial or papering over of specific social differences and social remedies in multicultural citizenship education evidently has been ineffective at improving inter-citizen relations”³⁶⁷.

Canada, as a bilingual country in which the indigenous population increasingly demands respect for their rights and in which immigrants constitute the majority of society, has a highly complicated situation in terms of choosing the content and forms of implementing topics in the field of citizenship education. Cultural and linguistic diversity leads to a situation of growing tension between sup-

364 J. A. Tupper, M. P. Cappello, *(Re)creating citizenship: Saskatchewan high school students’ understandings of the ‘good’ citizen*, “Journal of Curriculum Studies”, vol.44, issue 1, 2012, p. 40, available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00220272.2011.618951> (accessed: 20.03.2024).

365 K. Bickmore, *Citizenship Education in Canada: ‘Democratic’ Engagement with Differences, Conflicts, and Equity Issues?* “Citizenship Teaching and Learning”, 9(3), 2014, p. 260, available at: <https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/108005/3/Bickmore2014CitizenshipEdCANADA-postprint.pdf> (accessed: 20.03.2024).

366 Ibidem.

367 Ibidem.

porters and opponents of implementing the slogans of pluralism and multiculturalism on the one hand and national identity and social cohesion on the other. It seems that citizenship education is the ideal subject for Canadian teachers to do both. Citizenship education shouldn't be only about political issues, and schools shouldn't limit themselves to providing information on citizenship issues. Instead, they should teach citizenship because, in such a multicultural society, the role of citizenship education is to facilitate mutual acceptance, understanding, and inclusion of diverse citizenry.

A new report from CIVIX, published in 2023, finds citizenship education faces severe systemic barriers across the country³⁶⁸. *Civics on the Sidelines* concludes that while citizenship education is a priority on paper – it is well-represented across provincial and territorial curricula – in practice, there is a systemic failure when it comes to supporting teachers in developing the skills of democratic citizenship among students. Among the essential explanations for this are:

- Insufficient teacher-training: three-quarters (75%) of survey respondents stated that their teacher training did not cover civics and citizenship, and nearly three-quarters (72%) felt that, sometimes, teachers assigned to teach civics are unqualified to do so.
- Low on a list of school priorities: nearly two-thirds of respondents indicated that civic education is not a priority at their school compared to other subjects, and 63% believe this is due to an increased focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).
- Lack of integration: effective citizenship involves a set of skills that cut across subjects, yet civic education tends to be siloed, typically in Social Studies. Teachers at all levels overwhelmingly support a more integrated approach, with 90% agreeing that civics should be taught across the curriculum. Currently, only 36% even 'somewhat agree' that it is integrated in a cross-curricular way at their school³⁶⁹.

Interesting results from a survey done by Abacus Data reveal the impact of civics education that children receive in schools on citizens today³⁷⁰. Results proved that a third of Canadian adults (sample 1919 participants) don't recall learning anything about civics in school. And the results concerning several key aspects of civic education are also relatively poor. Only a third recall learning about current

368 CIVIX. *Civics of the Sidelines: A National Survey of Canadian Educators on Citizenship Education*, December 2023, available at: <https://civix.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/CIVIX-Civics-on-the-Sidelines.pdf> (accessed: 24.03.2024).

369 Ibidem.

370 O. Kiskchuk, *Canadians Lack Basics of Civic Education and It's Impacting Our Democracy*, Abacus Data, 22.01.2024, available at: <https://abacusdata.ca/canadians-lack-basics-of-civic-education/> (accessed: 29.03.2024).

events (39%), how institutions and governments work (38%), and the roles and responsibilities of being a citizen (37%). Only 1 in 10 Canadians say they were taught how to discuss controversial issues. Those who did not learn how institutions and governments work are far less likely to vote as adults. Similarly, Canadians who did not learn civic engagement skills in school are much less likely to enjoy discussing social issues with their friends and family³⁷¹.

The evolution and nature of citizenship education in Canada showed that there has been a shift from valuing young citizens' participation in public deliberation to reflecting on inequities, especially regarding gender and race³⁷². In all provinces of Canada, the governments strengthen the notion of citizenship education in their school systems, focusing on the development of a critical narrative and respect for curricular diversity.

The history of public education in Ontario has been extremely turbulent, complex, and confusing. It reflected the influence of the cultures of the people who originally inhabited these territories, those who came here during decolonization and the immigrants who began to settle here in the 20th and 21st centuries. The field of education has been the site of struggles for power and control over this public institution of socialisation. Changes in the education system have been influenced, in particular by demographic shifts, economic changes and evolving religious beliefs. The legal basis of the education system in Ontario is the Education Act and other related legal regulations issued on their basis. The Ministry of Education, headed by the Minister of Education, is responsible for issuing legal acts, which contain regulations regarding the duties and rights of the Minister of Education, school boards, officials controlling the operation of boards, principals, teachers, students and parents. Ontario has both a public education system and a separate Catholic education system. To be able to study in the Catholic education system, one must be baptised and attend religious classes. Compulsory schooling in Ontario is established from the age of 6 to 18.

The Education Act opens with the following text:

“A strong public education system is the foundation of a prosperous, caring and civil society...The purpose of education is to provide students with the opportunity to realize their potential and develop into highly skilled, knowledgeable, caring citizens who contribute to their society...All partners in the education sector, including the Minister, the Ministry and the boards, have a role to play in enhancing student ach-

371 Ibidem.

372 A. H. Botler, J.F. Cardin, *Crossed Perspective about Citizenship Education in Brazil and Canada: Social Inequity and Participation in Public Debate*, “Creative Education”, 13, 2022, p. 3930, available at: <https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2022.1312251> (accessed: 27.03.2024).

ievement and well-being, closing gaps in student achievement and maintaining confidence in the province's publicly funded education systems³⁷³.

Publicly funded education is divided into three stages: early childhood education for children from birth to age 6; elementary school for students from kindergarten to grade 8; and secondary school for students from grade 9 to 12.

There are four types of school boards in Ontario. Under section 93 of the Constitution, Roman Catholics have the right to a publicly funded separate denominational school system, and French-speaking families have the right to attend French-language schools. Students can attend English Public, English Catholic, French Public, or French Catholic schools depending on their language, religious background or personal choice³⁷⁴.

In Ontario, the basic document, which contains the teaching objectives and educational content for secondary schools is considered to be the curriculum. The Ontario curriculum outlines the knowledge and skills students need for success in any pathway they choose. Each grade or course builds on the learning in the previous one and progresses alongside students' developmental growth³⁷⁵.

The specific objectives of the curriculum are defined in two types of documents: curriculum guidelines and course profiles. The first describes particular objectives and teaching content intended for implementing one subject, e.g. history, throughout the entire educational cycle, i. e. in grades 9 to 12. In turn, the second document contains detailed objectives and teaching content intended for the implementation of a specific period in history, implementation in a specific class, e.g. the course profiles include particular objectives, detailed content, auxiliary materials, additional materials for the course, methods of verifying students' knowledge and assessment³⁷⁶.

It is essential to describe the specificity of the school system in Canada, which includes progressing through individual educational stages only after obtaining the appropriate number of points – credits. To earn the Ontario Secondary School Diploma, students must earn a total of thirty credits (including eighteen credits in required subjects and twelve in elective subjects) and pass two non-credit

373 *The Ontario Education Act*, Canada 1990, available at: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90e02> (accessed: 19.01.2024).

374 People for education, *How the education system works in Ontario*, available at: <https://peopleforreducation.ca/public-education-in-ontario/> (accessed: 20.03.2024).

375 Ontario Ministry of Education, *The Ontario Curriculum Review and Revision Guide*, available at: <https://www.dcp.edu.gov.on.ca/en/curriculum-review/what-is> (accessed: 26.03.2024).

376 C.Czech-Włodarczyk, *Neoliberalizm a edukacja obywatelska. Studium porównawcze na przykładzie publicznych szkół średnich w Polsce i Kanadzie*, Wydawnictwo UAM, Poznań 2012, p. 90–92.

requirements: forty hours of volunteer work and the OSSLT (Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test).

Ontario is the only province in Canada that offers a dedicated course in civics education. Every other province has embedded these lessons in social studies classes such as history, sociology, or just general social studies. The course is mandatory for completion by all Grade 10 students and accounts for one-half of the credit; the other half is dedicated to career development.

For the first time, citizenship education was introduced in Ontario in 1999. The conservative and populist government introduced a compulsory 55-hour course entitled “Profile for Civics,” which spans six weeks in Grade 10. The course is divided into three units: Democracy – Issues and Ideas (15 hours), The Canadian Context (25 hours) and Global Perspectives (15 hours). The curriculum guidelines stress the historical and institutional approach, emphasising knowledge of government procedures. The course is also designed to teach Canadian civic virtues, especially tolerance of diversity and commitment to the democratic process³⁷⁷. Later, there were three updates to the curriculum introduced by the Liberal governments in 2005, 2013, and 2018.

The latest curriculum policy, which represents the revised and updated curriculum expectations for the compulsory Grade 10 Civics and Citizenship course (CHV2O), is outlined in *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9 and 10: Canadian and World Studies, 2018*³⁷⁸. Starting September 2022, the Grade 10 Civics and Citizenship course has been implemented in all Ontario secondary schools and is based on the expectations outlined in this curriculum policy.

The course has three strands:

Strand A: Political inquiry and skill development

A.1. Political Inquiry

A.2. Development Transferable Skills

Strand B: Civic Awareness

B.1. Civic Issues, Democratic Values

B.2. Canadian and Indigenous Governance Systems

B.3. Rights and Responsibilities

Strand C: Civic Engagement and Action

C.1. Civic Contributions, Inclusions and Service

C.2. Engaged Citizenship and Creating Change Through Action³⁷⁹.

377 H. Milner, *Civics, Ontario style*, available at: <https://inroadsjournal.ca/civics-ontario-style/> (accessed: 23.03.2024).

378 Ontario Ministry of Education, *The Ontario Curriculum, Canadian and World Studies, Grades 9 and 10*, Ontario 2018, available at: <https://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/canworld910curr2018.pdf#page=12> (accessed: 24.03.2024).

379 Ontario Ministry of Education, Curriculum and Resources, *Expectation by strands, Civics and Citizenship, grade 10*, available at: <https://www.dcp.edu.gov.on.ca/en/curriculum/canadian-and-world-studies/courses/chv2o/strands> (accessed: 29.03.2024).

Instruction and learning related to the expectations in Strand A are to be interwoven with instruction and learning related to expectations from the other two strands. Strand A must not be seen as independent of the other strands. Student achievement of the expectations in Strand A is to be assessed and evaluated *throughout* the course³⁸⁰.

Transferable skills are the skills and attributes that students need in order to thrive in the modern world. Based on international research, information provided by employers, and its work with jurisdictions across Canada, the Ontario Ministry of Education has defined seven important categories of transferable skills – sometimes referred to as “competencies” – that will help students navigate the world of work and meet with success in the future:

1. critical thinking and problem solving
2. innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship
3. self-directed learning
4. collaboration
5. communication
6. global citizenship and sustainability
7. digital literacy³⁸¹.

These seven broad categories of skills, necessary in today’s rapidly changing world, can be seen as a framework encompassing the wide range of discrete transferable skills that students acquire over time. Developing transferable skills essentially means “learning for transfer” – that is, taking what is learned in one situation and applying it to other, new situations. Students in Ontario schools “learn for transfer” across all subjects and disciplines of the Ontario curriculum, from Kindergarten to Grade 12³⁸².

Four main training goals define the nature of the citizenship education promoted in this programme:

- 1) to encourage the student to actively participate in the common good;
- 2) to develop their own identity “as a member of various communities” in a world with diverse identities;
- 3) to develop values and attitudes favourable to living together in harmony;
- 4) to develop an understanding of social and power structures³⁸³.

The criticism of civics in Ontario could focus on a few factors: the length of the course, as students are only given half of a semester to absorb the intended

380 Ibidem.

381 Ontario Ministry of Education, Curriculum and Resources, *Transferable skills*, available at: <https://www.dcp.edu.gov.on.ca/en/transferable-skills/introduction> (accessed: 20.03.2024).

382 Ibidem.

383 A. H. Botler, J. F. Cardin, op. cit., p. 3924.



Figure 1. Charter for citizenship education in Ontario CWS2018 programme. Source: “The Citizenship Education Framework”, Canadian and World Studies: Geography, History, Civics (Politics), Grades 9 and 10 revised, The Ontario Curriculum, Ontario 2018, p. 10.

message, as well as the introduction of the civics curriculum in Grade 10, which is too far removed from the age (16-year-olds) that the students will become eligible to vote (at the age of 18)³⁸⁴.

The researchers found that when the Progressive Conservative party returned to power in the 2018 Ontario election (they were reelected in the most recent election in 2022), they began to consider revising Canadian and World Studies, grades 9 & 10. As Jess Butler and Peter Milley stressed:

384 E. Kozak, *From classroom to polling station; a cross-Canada analysis of high school civics curricula*, MA Major Research Papers, 2021, 8, p. 12–13, available at: https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1008&context=politicalscience_maresearchpapers (accessed: 29.03.2024).

“This government takes a populist tone similar to the PC government of the late 1990s, and it will be interesting to see what, if any, further changes they make to the curriculum. They will almost certainly seek to remove the emphasis on diversity and inclusion that the Liberal government gradually incorporated. They have already cancelled curriculum writing sessions intended to continue revising CWS 9 & 10 in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. However, it is less certain that they will seek to restore other aspects of the curriculum that the Liberal government removed, particularly emphasising civic action in the public realm. While the PCs are unlikely to share the Liberals’ ethical concerns about the complexity of civic action in a pluralistic public sphere, they may have other reasons to keep these elements out”³⁸⁵.

In the article, Butler and Milley suggest that also that the new revised version of curriculum reflected:

“(…) a genuine ideological concern of the PC government, but that the emphasis on the formation of citizens as socio-political actors was more likely a politically motivated response to a perceived public desire for a balance between economic and civic preparation. Now that the elements of civic action and public participation have already been removed, the PCs may find it unnecessary to restore them and may instead follow a more ideological path toward citizenship as primarily, if not exclusively, economic formation”³⁸⁶.

The same arguments are raised by Taciana de Lira e Silva, who, after the analysis of CWS 2018, stressed that:

“The analysis of the Ontario curriculum document led me to conclude that the curriculum aims to prepare students to become promoters of the common good and to act in the name of others as knowledgeable outsiders. That is, it seems to encourage individuals who theoretically understand someone else’s problems to act, instead of bringing the insiders (i. e., those who experience the problem) into the action”³⁸⁷.

Citizenship education in the 21st century should consist in equipping students: firstly, with knowledge about their rights and obligations and, secondly, with knowledge of how to use these rights effectively. Only this combination means that, having such knowledge, a citizen is perceived as a “good”, “responsible” and “effective” member of the state body. Civic education in Canada should educate citizens who are more tolerant, open to other people with different cultural roots,

385 J. K. Butler, P. Milley, *Reframing Citizenship Education: The Shifting Portrayal of Citizenship in Curriculum Policy in the Province of Ontario, 1999–2018*, “Education Policy Analysis Archives”, vol. 28, nr 83, 18 May 2020, p. 25–26, available at: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1255623.pdf> (accessed: 20.04.2024).

386 Ibidem.

387 T. de Lira e Silva, *Critical Cosmopolitan Citizenship Education and the Ontario Curriculum*, “ACTES DU SJPD-JPDS PROCEEDINGS”, 2018, vol. 2, p. 88, available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331576743_Critical_Cosmopolitan_Citizenship_Education_and_the_Ontario_Curriculum (accessed: 20.03.2024).

and citizens willing to cooperate peacefully within one state body. These goals are difficult to achieve in the course of a few weeks of classes, which are conducted in Ontario schools for 15-year-old students, by teachers who are not properly prepared for this and do not have appropriate teaching aids in the form of e.g. textbooks. We can hear/read about all these problems with conducting civic education in Ontario in a radio interview given by two teachers/educators, researchers and popularizers of civic education. In their opinion, civic education organised and conducted in this way as before can only lead to greater apathy or confusion about our political system:

“Trends show that students are more likely to become disengaged from their learning in one of two scenarios. They are bored or they are just frustrated. If they are bored, they turn to other sources of information for their political understanding. They have to navigate a lot of misinformation that comes along with social media sites and fake news sites and all the content that goes with that. On the flip side, struggling learners who may not benefit from a class that is structured and project-heavy may become apathetic towards the whole political system in general. They leave it not really caring or feeling the need or desire to become involved with the simple step of just going to the polls and voting”³⁸⁸.

Conclusions

The main goal of civic education in multicultural democratic societies should be the formation of responsible citizens who will advocate for equal treatment of people, regardless of their faith, beliefs or judgments. Students should become visibly involved in the lives of the communities in which they live, bearing in mind the values that are inherent in a democratic state and the principles of sustainable community development. During civic education, teachers should develop students’ model of ethical behaviour and care not only for themselves but also for other members of their immediate community. Responsibility, respect and concern for others should determine 21st-century citizenship.

The debate on citizenship education in Canada is saturated with simple slogans and dogmas that have little to do with a reflective and critical civic attitude. There are many voices calling for alternative solutions in this debate (multicultural citizenship education, cosmopolitan citizenship education, intercultural citizenship education or global citizenship education in a multicultural context), but those adhering to the cult of developing mechanical obedience of citizens to the state and the law predominate the strongest. The discourse in the field of civic

388 *Civics education in the new normal*, Beyond the Headlines, 20.04.2023, available at: <https://www.beyondtheheadlines.net/episodes/civics-education> (accessed: 20.04.2024).

education in Canada, as Alan Sears and Andrew Hughes noticed back in 2006, is permeated with such attitudes as creating the impression of a constant crisis of values, saturation with simple slogans, creating the appearance of dichotomy and continuous conflict of values, simplifying and underestimating the seriousness of some problems and solutions implemented without prior deep reflection, demonising and inciting opposition to emerging alternative solutions³⁸⁹. Since then, researchers and politicians have constantly repeated these mantras, which we can characterise as a cult for traditional teaching methods and developing civic attitudes. In fact, this is a form of indoctrination of young people, which is supposed to lead to the education of submissive citizens who obediently perform the functions and tasks entrusted to them.

To summarise the discussion about citizenship, multiculturalism, education and needed reforms, I employed the metaphor that Luz Alison Molina Giron used in her PhD thesis:

“Citizenship is like the glue that binds the citizens to the country, to the state, and to other citizens; it is what gives meaning to the multiple ways and levels on which a person views him/herself, as a citizen, participating in the public sphere. Citizenship, therefore, goes beyond mere legal status. Multiculturalism, on the other hand, is a social reality, a government policy, and an idealized societal goal. At the centre of the debate is the need to reconcile, on the one hand, the recognition of multiple and distinct group and individual identities with, on the other, the need for a common, shared national identity that creates bonds capable of uniting citizens into a single undivided political community. The most important thing nowadays in Canada’s educational policy is continuous reforms in citizenship education, which aim to prepare students to be citizens of a multicultural, pluralistic, democratic society. Any efforts to educate for good citizenship are informed and shaped by fundamental notions of citizenship and multiculturalism”³⁹⁰.

Canadians have been and remain committed to the goals that they have set for themselves through the policy of multiculturalism over 50 years ago. For them, multiculturalism isn’t just a concept that a federal bureaucrat invented in 1971 but a policy which has led to greater understanding between different groups in the country. Experts, researchers, and philosophers will continue to debate the successes and challenges of government policy of multiculturalism, but the truth is that Canadians view this policy as an essential symbol of what they aspire to as citizens in a diverse, democratic and liberal society.

389 A. M. Sears, A. S. Hughes, *Citizenship: education or indoctrination?*, “Citizenship Teaching and Learning” 2006, vol. 2, nr 1, available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/286930369_Citizenship_Education_or_Indoctrination (accessed: 20.03.2024).

390 L.A. Molina Giron, *Educating Good Citizens: A Case Study of Citizenship Education in Four Multicultural High School Classrooms in Ontario*, Ottawa, Canada 2012, available at: <https://ruor.uottawa.ca/items/764146c6-44a5-4597-a5c2-f91cb9192bca> (accessed:20.04.2024).

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Chapter 4. Singapore

A Small Country in a Big World. Introduction

Singapore is a small city-state with an area of just over 700 square kilometers and a population of approximately 5.5 million people. It was a British colony and now is an immigrant country with a multi-ethnic society of Chinese, Malay, Indian, and Eurasian background. In historical times, its location in the heart of Southeast Asia bestowed Singapore with a specific role as a link between the East and the West, and it can be said that this role is still maintained.

Because of its size, the country is often referred to in the media as ‘Little red dot’, and because of its potency, it has always been present in the elite group of Asian tigers. It is an example of fantastic economic expansion coupled with harmonious social development. It has traveled from the third world to the first in record time within the life of a single generation, arriving at one of the highest economic growth rates in the world. It is an example of such rapid changes on the way to success that, according to experts, cannot have possibly occurred in the face of existing adversities. This process has been built on foundations that combined a strong state with the principle of economic freedom.

‘The pursuit of economic growth has primacy, as it is seen as the means of achieving all other objectives – creating jobs, raising incomes, improving living standards, providing financial security, and giving the state the resources for public spending and redistribution’³⁹¹.

Singapore is an example of an extremely successful transformation of a small country into a big world³⁹². It responds extremely effectively to the constantly increasing competitiveness in the global knowledge-based economy. Investments in human capital are understood as investments in education and they

391 W.L.T. Ho, *Refreshing the Singapore System: Recalibrating Socio-Economic Policy for the 21st Century*, World Scientific 2021, p. 55.

392 J. Naisbitt, *Global Paradox: The Bigger the World Economy, The More Powerful Its Smallest Players*, William Morrow, New York 1994, p. 254.

constitute an inherent feature of the government policy³⁹³. Its society has always been the only resource of this country in which the government invests, and which then pays off in the improved quality of life standards. As a small country with limited natural resources, it has always appreciated human resources, if only because they were the only natural resources it had at its disposal. Its citizens attached great importance to education and showed readiness to invest in it.

On the surface, it may seem that the sole purpose of Singapore's education system in its pursuit of economic progress has been for students to climb the ladder of their high academic achievements. However, the Singapore government has also pinpointed the value of more sustainable development. It is evolving from a mere preparation for the workforce in the direction of a more profound focus on the nurturing of its citizens and society as a whole. Within this context, *Character and Citizenship Education* (CCE) comes to the forefront of education, as it provides an integrated approach to cultivating students' values, character, social-emotional well-being, and citizenship dispositions³⁹⁴.

Citizenship Education in the Phases of Educational Policy

Since independence in 1965, the People's Action Party (PAP) has been the country's ruling party and has consistently been the dominant political force. Although there are also legal opposition parties, they have little influence on the state's governing. Singapore practices the Westminster style of government, with the Prime Minister as the head of the executive branch. While the Cabinet has a central role in the political decision-making process, the Prime Minister 'performs the greatest single role in policy adoption in the Singapore system'³⁹⁵. 'Despite the constitutionally guaranteed freedom of speech and assembly, there are serious restrictions on citizens' political activity. The ruling elite consistently emphasises the need for social cohesion, harmony, and stability to ensure Singapore's independence and survival. Hence, since the 1960s, the country's policy has clearly focused on education as a means of achieving its goals. Because the development of human capital is closely linked to the progress of Singaporean

393 When Singapore gained independence in 1959, most of its two million citizens were illiterate and/or unskilled, which was the result of the education system in force in the colonial era being dedicated primarily to the wealthy minority (before gaining independence, Singapore had been part of the British Empire), cf: OECD, *Lessons from PISA for the United States, Strong Performers and Successful Reformers in Education*, OECD Publishing 2011, p. 161.

394 O.S. Tan, *Strengthening Character and Citizenship Education*, "Singteach", 86, 2023, p. 3. Available at: https://singteach.nie.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/SingTeach_Issue-86.pdf (accessed: 10.02.2024).

395 K.L. Ho, *Citizen Participation and Policy Making in Singapore: Conditions and Predicaments*, "Asian Survey" 40 (3), 2000, pp. 436–455.

society, the country's requirements shape educational policies and practices. Minister Ng Eng Hen put it clearly: '[...] we could not compete on size, so we had to use science and technology to enhance our strengths and thus expand our reach'³⁹⁶. This explains the investment in education, which aligns with the approach that supports Singapore's economy, which starts in schools³⁹⁷. The adopted logic is consistent with the vision of the state created since the beginning of independence, which was proclaimed by the first Prime Minister. Lee Kuan Yew assumed that the survival of a nation depends on the resourcefulness of its human capital and investment in education³⁹⁸.

The education sector is centralised, and schools are subject to the guidelines and policies of the Ministry of Education (MOE). MOE exercises control over the most important elements of the education system, i. e., it decides on the structure of the education system, as well as on curricula, pedagogy, and assessment. It coordinates activities aimed at determining students' mastery of the most important knowledge and determines young citizens' preferred values and attitudes. MOE curriculum officers are responsible for determining the curriculum content. Although MOE increasingly invites research workers and teachers to cooperate in curriculum development, the final decision still rests with the ministry's employees³⁹⁹. Hence, political leaders also have a direct influence on citizenship education.

It is worth emphasizing that various civic and citizenship education programmes have always been a national issue in Singapore. The government has promoted them in order to integrate ethnic groups and develop human resources⁴⁰⁰. Being a multi-ethnic and multilingual country, since the very beginning, Singapore has responded to this characteristic of its society through its education system. Hence, multiculturalism and the promotion of social cohesion, as well as the value of education and civic attitudes, have always been

396 N.H. Ng, *Opening Speech by Dr Ng Eng Hen, Minister of Education at the 2nd World Conference on Research Integrity*, Pan Pacific Hotel, Singapore, 22 July 2010, pp. 1–2. Available at: http://news.ntu.edu.sg/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?URL=http://news.ntu.edu.sg/news/Pages/Speeches2010_Jul22.aspx&Guid=1fb26e74-c5f8-410a-bcf4-6499189f2204&Category=Speeches (accessed: 10.05.2021).

397 See: K.C. Ho, Y. Ge, *Education and Human Capital Management in a World City: The Case of Singapore*, "Asia Pacific Journal of Education", 31 (3), 2011, pp. 263–276.

398 K.Y. Lee, *Language Problems in Schools: Speech at the Opening of Seminar on Education and Nation-Building Held at the Singapore Conference Hall and Trade Union House*, Shenton Way, 27 December 1966, [in:] *The Papers of Lee Kuan Yew: Speeches, Interviews and Dialogues*, vol. 3, 1965–1966, Gale Asia, Singapore 2012.

399 L. C. Ho, *Sorting citizens: Differentiated Citizenship Education in Singapore*. "Journal of Curriculum Studies", 44, 2012, pp. 403–428.

400 M. Ikeda, *Citizenship Education in Singapore: Implementation of Character and Citizenship Education and Revised National Education*, [in:] *Citizenship Education in the ASEAN Community*, (ed.) T. Hirata, Springer, Singapore 2023, pp. 203–214.

important. Even before independence in 1959, 'MOE published a syllabus for Ethics that aimed to inculcate ethical values and lay the foundation to nurture students into self-respecting individuals and good citizens'⁴⁰¹. As Loh Wee Cheng further notes, 'After Singapore's independence, Civics replaced Ethics in 1967 as a compulsory subject. As a young nation, it was apt for us to focus on patriotism and civic consciousness then'⁴⁰². Values education was intended to help students become responsible members of their families and communities, as well as better citizens.

The programmes of the Ministry of Education are aimed at three main goals: (1) cultivating a sense of belonging and emotional rootedness in Singapore, (2) developing national cohesion, especially given the multi-racial and multi-religious nature of the society, (3) cultivating the instinct for survival as a nation and increasing students' faith into the future of the nation⁴⁰³. These goals can be clearly seen in MOE's messages about the nation: 'Singapore is our homeland; this is where we belong'; 'We must preserve racial and religious harmony'; 'We must uphold meritocracy and incorruptibility'; 'No one owes Singapore a living'; 'We must defend Singapore ourselves'; and 'We have confidence in our future'⁴⁰⁴. Over the decades, since our nation-building years, various programmes and initiatives have been implemented, which contributed to the development of students' character and citizenship dispositions, as well as their life skills:

- Ethics (1959)
- Civics (1967)
- Education for Living (1973, interdisciplinary subject)
- Review of the Moral Education (1978)
- Good Citizens (Primary) (1981)
- Being and Becoming (Secondary) (1981)
- Religious Knowledge (1984)
- Social Studies (Primary) (1981)
- Civics and Moral Education (1995)
- National Education (1997)

401 L. W. Cheng, *Character and Citizenship Education in Singapore*, "Singteach", 86, 2023, National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, p. 10. Available at: https://singteach.nie.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/SingTeach_Issue-86.pdf (accessed: 10. 02. 2024).

402 Ibidem.

403 Ministry of Education, National Education, Singapore 2013. Available at: <https://eresource.s.nlb.gov.sg/webarchives/details/www.ne.edu.sg.html> (accessed: 10.02. 2022).

404 Ministry of Education, National Education Review 2016–2017 Singapore 2018. Available at: <https://www.moe.gov.sg/-/media/files/programmes/ne-reviewcollateral.ashx?la=en&hash=E41B0A9C3045DDDD6542D60E6A2E63D50F1B64D05> (accessed: 10. 02. 2022).

- Social Studies (Upper Secondary) (2001)
- Character and Citizenship Education (2010/2011)⁴⁰⁵.

Undoubtedly, gaining independence reinforced the already strong importance of the concept of citizenship in the country's educational policy. These programmes contributed to the development of students' character, civic dispositions, and life skills. Although the emphasis of the implemented government programmes has changed over the decades, the main goals have remained unchanged. As Loh Wee Cheng emphasises, the questions asked at the threshold of independence remain equally important and relevant: How do we equip our students with solid values, knowledge, and life skills? How do we develop good character in our students and prepare them to be citizens rooted in Singapore who play an active role in improving the lives of others?⁴⁰⁶

Until the 1990s, civic education programmes emphasised Confucian ethics and Asian values as well as norms of good civic behaviour, being of key importance to the strengthening of the young state. Throughout Singapore's short statehood, changes and modifications in the approach to civic education have been introduced to respond more strongly to the changing political and economic circumstances facing the nation⁴⁰⁷. Initially, particular 'truths' considered essential to Singapore's survival were paramount in education, but over time, the context of being a 'developmental state' became predominant. In this vein, *Character and Citizenship Education (CCE)*, introduced to primary and secondary schools in 2014, became more student-centred and adopted effective approaches. While the curriculum has evolved and transformed over the decades, the main goals of CCE remain the same. It has been a key to the holistic development of Singaporean students' values, character, social-emotional well-being and citizenship dispositions⁴⁰⁸. The introduction of the ASEAN context⁴⁰⁹, used to emphasise the need for Singapore's national integration and its successful economic development, became a new aspect.

405 L. Zhang, *Singapore*, [in:] *Civic Education Models. The Law Library of Congress*, (eds.) The Law Library of Congress, Global Legal Research Directorate, Washington, D.C. 2020, p. 128. Available at: <https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/service/l1/l1glrd/2020714996/2020714996.pdf> (accessed: 10.02.2023); W. O. Lee, *Education for Future-Oriented Citizenship: Implications for the Education of 21st Century Competencies*, "Asia Pac. J. of Educ.", 32 (4), 2012, pp. 498–517.

406 L. W. Cheng, *Character and Citizenship Education in Singapore*, op. cit.

407 J. B.-Y. Sim, *Social Studies and Citizenship for Participation in Singapore: How one State Seeks to Influence its Citizens*, "Oxford Review of Education", 37 (6), 2011, pp. 743–761.

408 L. W. Cheng, *Character and Citizenship Education in Singapore*, op. cit.

409 Association of South-East Asian Nations – ASEAN – political and economic organization. The members are (in order of accession): the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand (founding countries), Brunei (since January 8, 1984), Vietnam (since July 28, 1995), Laos and Myanmar (since July 23, 1997), Cambodia since April 30, 1999).

In the process of transforming the country, Singapore has overcome certain tensions at various stages. As Li-Ching Ho notes, they resulted from the emphasis on two contradictory principles of ‘rootedness’: on the one hand, to ensure the cohesion of the nation, and on the other hand, to introduce ‘global life’ requiring young people to prepare to survive in the constantly evolving, interdependent and globalised world of the 21st century⁴¹⁰. The government’s initiatives to overcome the tensions between national distinctiveness, internationalisation and globalisation have been visible in the light of the changing political and economic circumstances of being a ‘developmental state’. Balancing these tensions has now resulted in an approach known as ‘cosmopolitan nationalism’⁴¹¹, which at the school level expresses schools’ efforts to “promote internationalisation and a global view” and, at the same time, to respond to locally defined markets and national educational policy agendas⁴¹².

Jason Tan describes it similarly: ‘on the one hand, schools and universities are constantly being urged to better prepare students for the challenges of the knowledge-based economy.(...) On the other hand, there are also attempts in the school system to shore up national identity and to preserve ‘desirable’ cultural traits and behaviours as a bulwark against the perceived undesirable effects of globalisation on young people’⁴¹³. Another tension concerns ethnic inequality, which in Singapore is not only related to wealth but also to education levels. The existing educational gap at lower levels is perpetuated at higher levels by over-representing ethnic Chinese in schools that enjoy social recognition and then in local universities. Tan points out that ‘there is evidence that four decades of common socialisation in a national school system have still not managed to eradicate racial prejudice among school students’⁴¹⁴. He also notes that ‘in a

410 L. C. Ho, *Global Multicultural Citizenship Education: a Singapore Experience*, “The Social Studies”, 100 (6), 2009, p. 289.

411 K. Nielsen, *Cosmopolitan Nationalism*, “The Monist”, 82 (3), 1999, pp. 446–468; C. Maxwell, M. Yemini, L. Engel, et al., *Cosmopolitan Nationalism in the Cases of South Korea, Israel and the U.S.*, “British Journal of Sociology of Education”, 41(6), 2020, pp. 845–858; M. Yemini, L. Engel, M. Lee, C. Maxwell, *Cosmopolitan Nationalism and Global Citizenship Rhetoric: Analysis of Policies and Curricula in South Korea, Israel and the United States*, [in:] *World Yearbook of Education 2022*, Routledge, Oxfordshire 2022, pp. 219–234; M. Yemini, C. Maxwell, E. Wright, L. Engel, M. Lee, *Cosmopolitan Nationalism as an Analytical Lens: Four Articulations in Education Policy*, *Policy Futures in Education* 2023, online April 11, <https://doi.org/10.1177/147821032311686> (accessed: 15.01.2024).

412 S. Hameed, B. Lingard, S. Creagh, *Global Citizenship Education Practices in Singapore and Australia: Tensions between Educational and Market Rationales*, “Research in Comparative & International Education”, 18 (3), 2023, p. 467.

413 J. Tan, *Values Education Amid Globalization and Change. The Case of National Education in Singapore*, [in:] *World Yearbook of Education 2011 Curriculum in Today’s World: Configuring Knowledge, Identities, Work and Politics* (pp. 79–93), (eds) L. Yates, M. Grumet, Routledge, New York 2011, p. 86.

414 *Ibidem.*, p. 87.

sense, the Singapore government has never pretended that ethno-religious tensions have been swept away as a result of various educational policy initiatives (including civic and moral education) and other economic and social policies'. Unfortunately, it is hard not to notice that 'in fact, certain government pronouncements may have served (unintentionally) to make the task of forging social cohesion more problematic'⁴¹⁵. The government's handling of the resulting tensions is evident in its promotion of national identity, in multicultural understanding as well as in global perspectives⁴¹⁶. Lynn Davies describes this as Singapore's articulation of a distinct national and 'racial' identity, but also as an attempt to apply a 'global approach + civic education', which, as he goes on to say, bestows civic education with a less parochial character and a more global appeal⁴¹⁷.

Table 1. Evolution of citizenship education in Singapore

Citizenship Education Initiatives	Year	Phases of Singapore's Education	Characteristics
Ethics	1959	Survival-Driven	The two decades since independence were characterised by social cohesion and nationbuilding
Moral Education and Civics Training	1966		
Education for Living (interdisciplinary)	1974	Efficiency-Driven	The late 1970s and 1980s were focused on improving the system, with the introduction of standardised curriculum and industry-relevant skills
Review of Moral Education	1978		
Good Citizens (Primary)	1981		
Being and Becoming (Secondary)	1981		
Social Studies (Primary)	1981		
Religious Knowledge	1984		

415 Ibidem., p. 89.

416 L.-C. Ho, *Global multicultural citizenship education*, op. cit.

417 L. Davies, *Global citizenship: abstraction or framework for action?*, "Educational Review", 58 (1), 2006 p. 14.

Table 1 (Continued)

Citizenship Education Initiatives	Year	Phases of Singapore's Education	Characteristics
Civics and Moral Education	1995	Ability-Based, Aspiration-Driven	With Singapore transitioning into a knowledge-based economy in the late 1990s, there was a shift in focus to developing a broader range of skills, e.g., critical thinking and creativity, and providing for a wider variety of students' interests and aptitudes
National Education	1997		
Social Studies (Upper Secondary)	2001		
Character and Citizenship Education (introduced to primary and secondary students in 2014, and pre-university students in 2016)	2011–2019	Student-Centric, Values-Driven	The aim was to equip students with values, character and competencies to meet the challenges of the future
Values in Action	2012		
Values in Practice	2016		
Character and Citizenship Education	2020 – onwards	Learn for Life	In 2020, the Ministry of Education launched a refreshed Character and Citizenship Education syllabus (CCE2021)

Supplemented by: S. G. Thaiyalan, *Citizenship Imaginations. An Exploration of Young Singaporeans' Active Citizenship*, Victoria University of Wellington 2020, p. 44 and Singteach 2023, 86, p. 6. Available at: https://singteach.nie.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/SingTeach_Issue-86.pdf (accessed: 15.01.2024).

It is only possible to view citizenship education through the various phases of Singapore's education policy development by taking into account the broader social, political and historical context in which it is embedded and interconnected. It is important to understand character education and social emotional learning in the perspective of a accompanying academic rigour. Hence, the goal of educational reforms in Singapore has always been to strike a delicate balance between preparing students for academic success and instilling them with essential life skills and values⁴¹⁸. The needs of the country dictated changes

418 O. S Tan, *The Crucial Role of Character and Citizenship Education in Singapore*, "Singteach", 86, 2023, p. 5. Available at: https://singteach.nie.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/SingTeach_Issue-86.pdf (accessed: 10.01.2024).

in the adopted visions of citizens, which were included in the constant restructuring of the education system as well as in updated teaching programmes against the background of the main phases of the development of educational policy. An analysis of the main directions of government programmes for reforming the education system and the role assigned to civic education in the country’s development shows how over the years, since gaining autonomy and independence, Singapore has modified the understanding of citizenship and civic education in response to the emerging needs of the country and the challenges it has had to face. Various civic education programmes launched in Singapore have constituted an axis on which other demands have been supported. Hence, the analysis of changes in civic education corresponds to changes typical of individual reform phases⁴¹⁹.

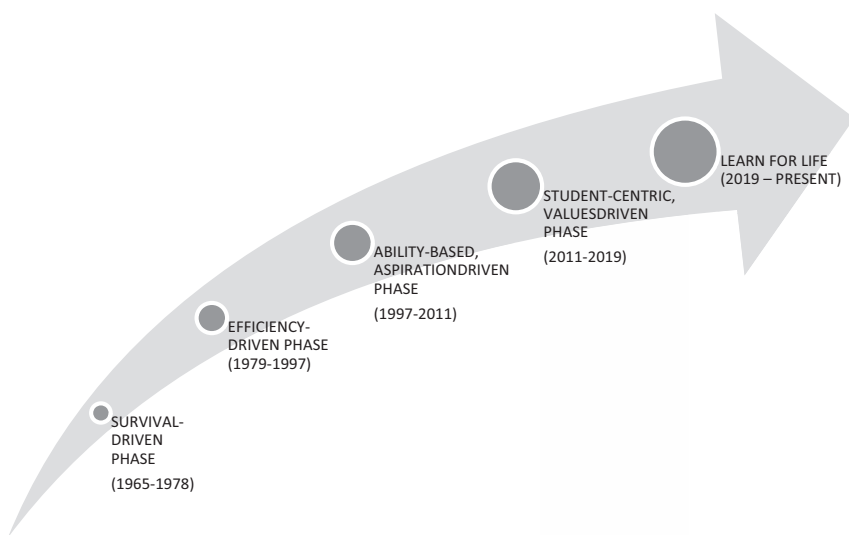


Figure 2. Civic Education in the phases of educational reforms. D. Kwek, K. J. Ho, H.M. Wong, *Singapore’s Educational Reforms Toward Holistic Outcomes (Un)intended Consequences of Policy Layering*, Brookings, Washington, DC 2023.

419 D. Kwek, K. J. Ho, H.M. Wong, *Singapore’s Educational Reforms Toward Holistic Outcomes (Un)intended Consequences of Policy Layering*, Brookings, Washington, DC 2023, p. 5.

Survival-Driven Phase (1965–1978)

As Singapore began to develop its own economy in the 1950s and 1960s, it adopted a strategy of ‘survival education’⁴²⁰, the aim of which was to educate the workforce for the needs of the adopted industrialisation programme, as well as to reduce unemployment. Education was not only an economic necessity but it was also intended to help integrate the new nation⁴²¹. Gracie Lee points out that the first notable mention of values education appeared in the *White Paper on Educational Policy* of 1956⁴²², in which the government announced its intention to implement civics education in all schools in order to build a ‘common Malayan loyalty’ and provide facilities for religious or ethical instruction⁴²³. For the government of that time, moral and religious education was not only aimed at community integration, but it was also meant to reduce juvenile delinquency and keep young people away from communism and other subversive influences⁴²⁴.

Already in these early years, language policy was assigned an important role. Bilingualism in primary schools or trilingualism⁴²⁵ in secondary schools was an intentional step towards integrating society and establishing a coherent identity⁴²⁶, as well as to achieve functional goals, including business ones⁴²⁷. English was important for the development of trade and industry, as well as for maintaining relations with other Commonwealth countries, while other languages ensured the maintenance of the ‘Asian core’ with its sense of identity, values, and culture⁴²⁸. From the very beginning, developing language competencies played an important role in promoting specific values, i. e., it was supposed to enable access to both Eastern and Western cultures in order to develop a global view.

420 I. Nowosad, *Singapur: azjatycki tygrys edukacyjnych przemian. Fenomen makropolityki edukacyjnej*, Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls, Kraków 2022.

421 Ministry of Education, *Progress in Education in Singapore: A Brief Review of Education in Singapore from 1959 to 1965*, Ministry of Education, Singapore 1966.

422 Legislative Assembly of Singapore, *White Paper on Education Policy*. Legislative Assembly, Singapore 1956, (Call no. RCLOS 370.95951 SIN), p. 6.

423 G. Lee, *Values education in Singapore*, in: *Singapore Infopedia*, Singapore 2018. Available at: <https://www.nlb.gov.sg/main/article-detail?cmsuid=99663443-930d-418e-b010-4718d0ad7543> (accessed: 10.03.2022).

424 *Ethics to Be Taught in Colony Schools*, Singapore Standard, 2 February 1956; *Moral Ethics Bid in Colony Schools*, Singapore Standard, 22 February 1956; *Religion for Schools Begins in '58*, Singapore Free Press, 9 August 1957, cf: Ibidem.

425 Four official languages were included: English, Chinese, Malay and Tamil, with English being the language of instruction in all state schools.

426 S. K. Chew, *Report of the All-Party Committee of the Singapore Legislative Assembly on Chinese Education*, U.S. Government Printing Office, Singapore 1956, pp. 47–50.

427 Y.H. Gwee, T.R. Doraisamy (eds.), *150 Years of Education in Singapore*, TTC Publications Board, Teachers' Training College, Singapore 1969.

428 W.-O. Lee, *Future-oriented citizenship: A Possible Citizenship Model Starting from the Case of Singapore*. “Citizenship Teaching & Learning”, 10 (1), 2015, pp. 95–108.

Singapore's independence reinforced the importance of civic education. In 1966, the education ministry launched a comprehensive programme of moral education and civic training for primary and secondary schools⁴²⁹. At the lower secondary level, Ethics was replaced by Civics in 1967⁴³⁰, which was a more comprehensive programme of moral and civic education. Its content included such issues as constitution, legislation and international relations. The development of values such as patriotism, loyalty and civic awareness was also emphasised. The aim was to instill noble character, arouse a sense of social and civic responsibility, as well as love for one's country and its people⁴³¹. This topic was discussed in the context of individual people, family, school, community, nation and the world⁴³². Further modifications were introduced in 1973 with *Education for Living* (EFL), an interdisciplinary programme for primary schools that was intended to integrate social studies, history and geography. EFL was also meant to "enable pupils to obtain a better understanding of how Singapore developed and of its geographical environment"⁴³³. The goals of the Civics and EFL programmes responded to the situation in the early years of Singapore's independence and focused mainly on developing a sense of national identity.

Efficiency-Driven Phase (1979–1997)

Since 1979, Singapore's economy has been developing⁴³⁴. Soon, changes were needed in educational programmes in order to ensure further development and to initiate a shift in the political line from quantitative to qualitative development⁴³⁵. A new direction was adopted on the basis of a thorough diagnosis

429 G. Lee, *Values education in Singapore*, [in:] *Singapore*, op. cit.

430 J. B.-Y. Sim, M. Print, *Citizenship Education and Social Studies in Singapore: A National Agenda*. "International Journal of Citizenship and Teacher Education", 1 (1), 2005, p. 62.

431 J. O. A. Chew, *Civics and Moral Education in Singapore: Lessons for Citizenship Education?*, "Journal of Moral Education", 27 (4), 1998, pp. 505–524; S. Gopinathan, *Being and Becoming: Education for Values in Singapore*, [in:] *The Revival of Values Education in Asia and the West* (pp. 131–145), (eds.) W. K. Cummings, S. Gopinathan & Y. Tomoda, Pergamon, Oxford 1988.

432 *Call for Views on Civics Lessons*, "Straits Times" 30 March 1967, 6; Ministry of Education, *Primary and Secondary Schools Civic Syllabus and Programme of Training*, Government Printing Office, Singapore 1969.

433 T. C. Ong, *Report on Moral Education*, Ministry of Education, Singapore 1979, p. 3.

434 K. S. Goh, K. K. Chow, K. H. Kang, W. M. Lau, S. G. Lim, P. Y. Low, H. K. Wee, *Report on the Ministry of Education*, 1978, Singapore: Ministry of Education, 1979; M. Chiang, *From Economic Debacle to Economic Miracle: The History and Development of Technical Education in Singapore*, Times Edition, Singapore 1998; K.S. Goh, K.K. Chow, K.H. Kang, W.M. Lau, S.G. Lim, P.Y. Low, H.K. Wee, *Report on the Ministry of Education*, 1978, Ministry of Education, Singapore 1979.

435 M. Chiang, *From Economic Debacle to Economic Miracle*, op. cit.

presented in the Goh report, which was created under the supervision of the then Deputy Prime Minister Goh Keng Swee⁴³⁶. Education introduced greater diversity in the educational paths for students with different academic abilities, each of which was closely linked to the PSLE exam⁴³⁷ result. However, the desired rapid industrialisation brought about the adoption of Western science and technology (including the English language), which left political leaders with fears that younger Singaporeans were becoming too westernised in their emphasis on individuality over collective spirit⁴³⁸.

Apart from the Goh report, the Report on Moral Education of 1979 prepared by Ong Teng Cheong, Acting Minister of Culture, who was tasked to form a team to evaluate the existing moral education programmes, was also an important impulse for changes in the area of civic education⁴³⁹. It is worth adding that both reports noted insufficient critical thinking skills and procedural values, which are widely considered to be crucial in civic education in a democratic state⁴⁴⁰. Hence, both the Goh and the Ong Reports focused on changing the concept of an ideal citizen. It was also believed that it would be reasonable to use the native language instead of English when transmitting values of Asian cultures and when explaining Asian cultural traditions. 'Although highly contestable, the official position was that language was relevant to the teaching of moral and civic values. It was believed that Asian values, such as closeness in family ties, filial duties and loyalty were thought to be more effectively conveyed and understood in mother tongues⁴⁴¹. In this case, the native language was supposed to be a counterweight to the influence of Western values⁴⁴².

Citizenship education was defined as essential in terms of dichotomous Asian versus Western values. Greater emphasis on instilling Asian concepts and moral values was considered important. 'Education for Living and Civics were ineffective, because the content coverage was too wide, the presentation too dull and the language level too difficult for students in the English stream to understand. They proposed that these courses be replaced with a single programme called *Moral Education*, which would focus on personal behaviour, social re-

436 See: K.S. Goh, K.K. Chow, K.H. Kang, W.M. Lau, S.G. Lim, P.Y. Low, H.K. Wee, *Report on the Ministry of Education*, op. cit.

437 J. Tan, S. Gopinathan, *Education Reform in Singapore: Towards Greater Creativity and Innovation?*, "NIRA Review", 2000, 7 (3), pp. 5–10.

438 J. B.-Y. Sim, M. Print, *Citizenship Education and Social Studies*, op., cit.

439 T. C. Ong and Moral Education Committee, *Report on Moral Education 1979*, Singapore National Printers, Singapore 1979.

440 J. B.-Y. Sim, M. Print, *Citizenship Education and Social Studies*, op., cit., p. 62.

441 Ibidem, p. 62.

442 S. Gopinathan, *Education*, [in:] E. Chew, & E. Lee (Eds.), *A history of Singapore*, University Press Oxford, Singapore 1991.

sponsibility, and loyalty to the country⁴⁴³. As a result, two new citizenship education programmes, *Being and Becoming* and *Good Citizen* replaced *Civics* and *EFL* respectively. A new approach in the *Being and Becoming* programme was the use of a deliberative approach which encouraged students to deliberate and reflect on value issues, then debate and arrive at their own judgments⁴⁴⁴. At the primary level, the *Good Citizens* programme remained teacher-centred. It is worth noting the accompanying conflicts, which were not only rooted in didactic approaches but also in the key question: should individuals choose and pursue their own vision of a good life?

The introduction of *Religious Knowledge* and *Confucian Ethics* in 1984 was an expression of concern for the strengthening of moral values. Both were instituted as compulsory and examinable subjects at the secondary level. However, at the end of the decade, both courses were withdrawn due to concerns about potential social conflicts and security concerns in the country⁴⁴⁵. In the first decade of the 1990s, MOE implemented a new moral education programme called *Civics and Moral Education* (CME), initially intended for upper secondary students, but also extended to replace *Good Citizen* at the primary level. CME was intended to fill the gap left by *Religious Knowledge*, and as such, it focused on five values: placing society before self; upholding the family as a basic building block of society; respecting the rights of individuals and offering community support; resolving issues through consensus, not conflict; and racial and religious harmony⁴⁴⁶. The subject emphasised moral and political socialisation and, like *Good Citizen*, it was compulsory and not subject to examination until it was replaced by the *National Education* programme in 1997.

It is worth adding that considerations around desired values in Singapore went beyond the aspect of formal education and featured in the country's policy. The new ideology of resurgent Asia, which was contained in the concept of Asian values, was proclaimed by the Prime Minister of Singapore Lee Kuan Yew (1959–1990) and was loudly disseminated internationally⁴⁴⁷. Asian values are of ideological and socio-technical character, which makes it possible to interpret them through the prism of a certain proposal for the society in building 'public mor-

443 G. Lee, *Values education in Singapore*, [in:] *Singapore*, op. cit.

444 J. B.-Y. Sim, M. Print, *Citizenship Education and Social Studies*, op., cit., pp. 62–63.

445 J. Tan, *The rise and fall of religious knowledge in Singapore secondary schools*, "Journal of Curriculum Studies", 29 (5), 1997, pp. 603–624.

446 *Younger Pupils Will Be Taught New Civics Course*, "Sunday Times", 24 February 1991, p. 13; M. Nirmala, *Students Learn Civic and Moral Values through Active Role in New School Programme*, "Sunday Times", 9 February 1992, p. 12; G. Lee, *Values education in Singapore*, op. cit.

447 S. Tay, *Human Rights, Culture, and the Singapore Example*, "McGill Law Journal", 41 (4), 1996, p. 41.

ality' of the modern era, different from the Western proposal⁴⁴⁸. They were an attempt to define values as common foundations of cultural identity in a community that was very ethnically and religiously diverse and different in political and economic terms. Government representatives clearly emphasised: 'In 1991, we formally and collectively decided on a set of commonly shared values that constitute the very essence of what makes us Singaporeans, and have shaped Singapore to be the country that the world knows today. We live out these 5 shared values, act on them, and honour them – we place society above self, uphold family as a basic building block of the society, provide community support and respect for individuals, seek consensus instead of conflict, and appreciate racial and religious harmony'⁴⁴⁹. On the forum of Asian countries, an attempt to codify the ideology of Asian values was developed in the *Bangkok Declaration*, which was signed by the leaders of Asian countries in 1993. The Declaration constitutes the official, pan-Asian position of the countries of this region⁴⁵⁰. The position supports the specificity of Asian values, points to intercultural differences as an important argument against a single, targeted and most valuable political and economic model, as well as questions the universality of the concept of human rights based on Western individualism⁴⁵¹.

Ability-Based, Aspiration-Driven Phase (1997–2011)

Further changes were introduced in 1997, which inaugurated a new direction in the education policy under the slogan 'Thinking Schools, Learning Nations'⁴⁵². In Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong's vision, skills were to constitute a foundation of the education system. Gopinathan describes this period as Singapore's 'big bang' of educational reforms, which overhauled the entire education system – from

448 K.B. Teik, *The Values(s) of a Miracle: Malaysian and Singaporean Elite Constructions of Asia*, "Asian Studies Review", 23 (2), 1999, pp. 181–192.

449 Citizens Workgroup for Singapore, *Citizenship Journey Report 2020*. Available at: https://www.mccy.gov.sg/-/media/MCCY-corp/Sectors/Citizens_Workgroup_for_Singapore_Citizenship_Journey_Report_22122020.pdf (accessed: 10.02.2024).

450 T. Chong, *Asian Values and Confucian Ethics: Malay Singaporeans' Dilemma*, "Journal of Contemporary Asia", 32 (3), 2002, pp. 394–406.

451 M. Stepień, *Deklaracja Bangkocka – azjatycki głos w sprawie praw człowieka*, "Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska. Sectio K, Politologia", 17 (1), 2010, p. 25.

452 C.T. Goh, *Shaping Our Future: Thinking Schools, Learning Nation*: Speech by Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong at the Opening of the 7th International Conference on Thinking, Singapore, 1997. Available at: <http://www.moe.gov.sg/speeches/1997/020697.htm> (accessed: 20.02.2018).

pre-school education to university admissions criteria⁴⁵³. It was a time when a series of initiatives were launched to modernise the education system to better respond to the challenges of the 21st century. Under the new policy, greater emphasis is placed on national education, creative thinking, collaborative learning, as well as IT skills⁴⁵⁴. Critical thinking and information technology skills were intended to help young Singaporeans develop the global knowledge economy of the future.

The adopted direction also, in this case, revealed a connection between education and the future vision of the country. It was intended to provide students with a basic set of life skills and attitudes that the country needed in order to remain competitive⁴⁵⁵. Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong reminded Singaporeans that they are a young nation, which means that its culture is not deep and its sense of identity is not strong enough⁴⁵⁶. The National Education (NE) governmental programme introduced in May 1997 was in line with the new educational demands and added another dimension to education about values. 'NE approached citizenship education with a youth deficit model; the impetus was young Singaporeans' lack of knowledge and apparent disinterest in Singapore's recent history and nation-building issues, suggesting that young people took peace and prosperity for granted'⁴⁵⁷. The focus was on instilling 'the instinct for survival' in young people, meant to reproduce a survivalist and nationalist discourse by instilling in the young 'the core values of our Singapore's way of life'⁴⁵⁸.

National education was not a separate subject, but constituted a basis of the school curriculum. The idea was to provide civic education outside the classroom. The government explained that promoting a better understanding between different ethnic groups and religions is achieved by integrating this content into the formal curriculum through subjects such as *Civics and Moral Education* (1992), as well as *Social Studies*, both of which were compulsory subjects at both primary and secondary levels. It is worth distinguishing that '*Social Studies* in-

453 S. Gopinathan, *Globalisation, the State and Education Policy in Singapore*, [in:] Challenges Facing the Singapore Education System Today, (eds.) J. Tan, S. Gopinathan, W.K. Ho, Pearson Prentice Hall, Singapore 2001, p. 11.

454 L. Sharpe, S. Gopinathan, *After Effectiveness: New Directions in the Singapore School System?*, "Journal of Education Policy", 17 (2), 2002, pp. 151–166.

455 L. Low, M.H. Toh, T.W. Soon. *Economics of Education and Manpower Development Issues and Policies in Singapore*, McGraw Hill, Singapore 1991.

456 *I Curriculum Change Pays off for School*, "The Straits Times" 2004, December 16.

457 J.B.-Y. Sim, L.-T Chow, *The Development of Civic Participation Among Youth in Singapore*, [in:] *The Palgrave Handbook of Citizenship and Education*, (759–777) (eds.) A. Peterson, G. Stahl, H. Soong, Palgrave Macmillan, Cham 2020, p. 768.

458 L.H. Lee, Speech by BG (NS) Lee Hsien Long, Deputy Prime Minister, at the launch of national education at Television Corporation of Singapore (TCS) TV theatre on Friday, 17 May 1997. Available at: <http://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/data/pdfdoc/1997051607/lhl19970517s.pdf> (accessed: 10.12.2020).

tegrated the disciplines of history and geography with some basic economics and sociology about Singapore⁴⁵⁹. The integrated knowledge was intended to instill in students a deeper understanding of the values that define Singapore society, but also to help them cultivate concern for the society and the world in which they live, as well as to demonstrate empathy in everyday relationships with other members of the community. It was intended to serve the development of active citizenship, understood as the formation of conscious, interested, and participatory citizens who are guided in their lives by the values set by the government⁴⁶⁰.

The implementation of NE goals, also outside the classroom through learning experiences such as Co-Curricular Activities (CCA), as well as through various enrichment programmes, was an important aspect as well⁴⁶¹. An important role was assigned to the daily celebration of flag-raising, anthem-singing, pledge-taking rituals in schools, or visits to key state institutions, but also commemoration of four state events: Total Defence Day, International Friendship Day, Racial Harmony Day and National Day⁴⁶².

An integral part of NE was children's and adolescents' participation in the Community Involvement Program (CIP). 'Launched in 1997, the CIP involved a mandatory programme for all students from primary school to preuniversity, making it compulsory for students to fulfill a minimum of 6 hours of community service as part of their graduation requirements. The type of volunteer work varied according to age group'⁴⁶³, researchers point out that the dominant theme

459 Ministry of Education. Social Studies Teaching and Learning Syllabus – Primary, 2022. Available at: <https://www.moe.gov.sg/-/media/filles/primary/2020%2Dsocial%2Dstudie%2Dprimary.ashx?la=en&hash=1C4D8BA74B72E3ABFB91D409460572A4067C2DEF> (accessed: 20.02.2020).

460 Ministry of Education. National Education, 2022. Available at: <https://www.moe.gov.sg/education-in-sg/our-programmes/nationaleducation> (accessed: 20.02.2020).

461 *Remaking Singapore Committee, Changing Mindsets, Deepening Relationships*, Singapore: The Committee, 2003, p. 2.

462 Total Defence Day is held on 15 February each year to commemorate the fall of Singapore to the Japanese in 1942, and serves to remind students of their roles in defending Singapore. International Friendship Day is celebrated in schools on the third Friday of Term Two, which is a day dedicated to the understanding of Singapore's relations with its neighbours and aims to nurture in students the spirit of friendship and collaboration among different people. Racial Harmony Day is commemorated on 21 July each year to remind students the nation's success as a harmonious society built on cultural diversity. National Day on 9 August each year celebrates Singapore's independence from Malaysia and its emergence as a sovereign nation. See: National Education and National Security Education in Singapore and the United States (Fact Sheet), Research Office Legislative Council Secretariat FS07/2022, <https://www.legco.gov.hk/research-publications/english/2022fs07-national-education-and-national-security-education-in-singapore-and-the-united-states-20221018-e.pdf> (accessed: 10.02.2024).

463 J.B.-Y. Sim, L.-T. Chow, *The Development of Civic Participation*, pp. 768–769.

in the organisation of these classes was helping others ‘in personal life’ and contributing to ‘local communities’, as well as focusing on developing good civic attitudes, skills, values and practices in the category of ‘social service’. However, this placed the active participation that was emphasised by NE at a level that reproduces the existing status quo instead of engagement in the transformation of the existing structures⁴⁶⁴.

NE’s goals were aimed at developing national cohesion by fostering students’ sense of Singaporean identity, describing Singapore’s journey as a nation, helping students understand Singapore’s unique challenges and vulnerabilities, and instilling core values, such as meritocracy and racial harmony⁴⁶⁵. The Ministry formulated this in four key points:

1. Fostering a sense of identity, pride and self-respect in being Singaporean;
2. Relating the Singapore story: how Singapore succeeded against the odds to become a nation;
3. Understanding Singapore’s unique challenges, constraints and vulnerabilities, which make us different from other countries;
4. Instilling the core values of our way of life and the will to prevail, to ensure continued success and well-being⁴⁶⁶.

Disciplinary strategies, understood as controlled social participation while demonstrating charitable and morally upright behaviour was a characteristic feature of NE implementation. Another preferred solution was to differentiate NE programmes justified by meritocratic principles. The differentiation of the programmes resulted from assigning students to one of three different tracks at the secondary school level based on their academic performance. Each path implemented different citizenship programmes that prepared to fulfill different civic roles⁴⁶⁷. The elite track educated ‘cosmopolitan leaders’ (10–15% of the cohort), students within the mainstream academic track (70%) are ‘globally oriented but locally rooted midlevel executives and workers’ and students in the vocational track (13–15%) are ‘local “heartlander” followers’⁴⁶⁸.

In the formal curriculum, the subject of *Social Studies* was introduced at the upper secondary school level in 2001, taking less than five years from conceptualisation through writing of instructional materials to the final im-

464 See: E.F. Isin, *Theorizing acts of citizenship*, [in:] *Acts of Citizenship* (pp. 15–43), (eds.) E. F. Isin, G. M. Nielsan, Zed Books Ltd, London 2008, p. 38.

465 G. Lee, *Values education in Singapore*, op. cit.

466 MOE, National Education, 2003. Available at: <http://www1.moe.edu.sg/ne/> (accessed: 20.03.2022).

467 L.-C. Ho, *Meritocracy, tracking, and elitism: Differentiated citizenship education in the United States and Singapore*, “The Social Studies”, 105 (1), 2014, pp. 29–35.

468 *Ibidem.*, p. 31.

plementation in all schools⁴⁶⁹. It was conceived as the primary teaching tool for NE at the high school level. Jasmine Sim and Murray Print emphasise that *Social Studies* can be seen as a direct response to young Singaporeans' lack of knowledge and interest in their country's recent history and the issues key to her survival. The importance of the introduced subject is emphasised by its compulsory nature for all secondary school students and examinable at the national examinations, i. e. the GCE 'O' and 'N' Levels. However, a critical analysis carried out by researchers shows that it may be more about attempts by the governing elites to maintain power in increasingly challenged contexts (by such forces as globalisation), than a genuine concern for better educating young people⁴⁷⁰.

Student-Centric, Values-Driven Phase (2011–2019)

The changes introduced in the last decade, including educational policy, orient Singapore's policy onto the needs of:

- ongoing globalisation;
- economic growth and importance of Asia, but also the emerging markets;
- unstable economic development, which results from the connection of the Singapore economy and finances with global development;
- increasing pressure on limited resources in Singapore;
- the growing aspirations of Singaporeans;
- demographic changes, especially the aging of the population.

The Ministry of Education recognises that in an era of intense and pervasive change, Singaporean students will constitute a new generation based on knowledge and skills to first manage their learning and then to keep pace with the changing social, technological and economic demands⁴⁷¹. These strongly emphasised needs were addressed by the education system. Thus, in its education policy, the Singapore government has increasingly referred to the concept of 'active citizenship', which has been particularly noticeable since the introduction of the 'Student-Centric, Values-Driven Phase' in 2011.

Important guidelines were adopted based on the diagnosis performed in 2009 on primary schools by the Primary Education Review and Implementation Committee (PERI)³⁶⁵, as well as the assessment of secondary schools performed in 2010 by the Committee for Secondary Education Review and Implementation

469 J. B.-Y. Sim, M. Print, *Citizenship Education and Social Studies*, op., cit., p. 64.

470 Ibidem., p. 65.

471 Ministry of Education, 21st Century Competencies, <https://www.moe.gov.sg/education-in-sg/21st-century-competencies> (accessed: 20.01.2020).

Committee (SERI)⁴⁷². The prepared reports contain specific recommendations for changes. The Ministry of Education undertook work to identify core values and competencies constituting a basis for holistic education of children in Singapore schools, in the areas of moral, intellectual, physical, social and aesthetic sensitivity⁴⁷³. Holistic Child Development continued a strategy that had begun with the TSLN and TLLM programmes, which were intended to move away from the social fixation on academic performance. The Ministry of Education planned that by 2024, streaming in all secondary schools will be replaced by Full Subject-Based Banding (FSBB) to support students' differing abilities and interests in specific subjects. The adoption of the assumptions of holistic education was related to students' overall development beyond cognitive abilities and academic performance onto other areas of growth, such as physical, social-emotional and artistic achievements⁴⁷⁴.

Based on an in-depth diagnosis and evaluation of education, a *Curriculum 2015* project and a *21CC* competency model were created, which set a new direction for the policy adopted by MOE, as well as for all other educational and curricular initiatives. In this case, CCE is central to the *Framework for 21st Century Competencies and Student Outcomes*. 'It emphasises the interconnectedness of the core values, social and emotional competencies and civic literacy, global awareness and cross-cultural skills that are critical for students' character and citizenship development'⁴⁷⁵.

472 Ministry of Education, *Report of the Secondary Education Review and Implementation*, SERI Committee, MOE, Singapore 2010.

473 C. L. Poon, K. W. L. Lam, M. Chan, M. Chng, D. Kwek, S. Tan, *Preparing Students for the Twenty-First Century: A Snapshot of Singapore's Approach* [in:] *Educating for the 21st Century: Perspectives, Policies and Practices from around the World*, (eds.) S. Choo, D. Sawch, A. Villanueva, R. Vinz, Springer, Singapore 2017, pp. 225–241.

474 D. Kwek, J. Ho, H.M. Wong, *Singapore's Educational Reforms Toward Holistic Outcomes. (Un)Intended Consequences of Policy Layering*, The Brookings Institution, Washington 2022, p. 6.

475 Student Development Curriculum Division (MOE), 2014 syllabus: character and citizenship education: primary, Ministry of Education, Singapore 2014.

Table 2. Vision, Mission and CCE Learning Outcomes

<p>Vision: To develop citizens of good character, ready to lead and serve</p>
<p>Mission: To inculcate values and equip students with social emotional competencies and skills to be good individuals and useful citizens</p>
<p>CCE Learning Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve personal well-being and effectiveness. – Apply moral reasoning, display responsibility in decision-making, and demonstrate integrity to stand by moral principles and shared values. – Develop social awareness and demonstrate interpersonal skills to build and maintain positive relationships. – Demonstrate resilience in the face of individual, community and national challenges, and develop the ability to turn challenges to opportunities. – Appreciate our national identity, develop a sense of belonging to Singapore, and demonstrate commitment to the well-being, security and defence of the nation. – Demonstrate socio-cultural sensitivity and promote social cohesion and harmony in Singapore as a multi-cultural society. – Demonstrate care for others and contribute actively towards improving the lives of others to build a bright future for ourselves and to progress together as one nation. – Demonstrate the ability to reflect on and respond to community, national and global issues, and to make informed and responsible decisions as a citizen.

Cf: Ministry of Education. Character and Citizenship Education, from: <https://www.gelalangmethodistpri.moe.edu.sg/curriculum/character-n-citizenship-education-cce-1/> (accessed: 10/03/2024).

It is worth noting that what was highlighted has been a consolidating foundation from the very beginning of the independent state, i. e. the need to root education in values. It was already present in the first phase of the reforms and developed and emphasised in the subsequent stages. Education Minister Ng Eng Hen appealed that ‘without a moral and ethical compass, all learning will become useless. We need to rebalance content, skills and personality development to achieve a more holistic education’⁴⁷⁶.

⁴⁷⁶ E.H. Ng, *Celebrating the Singapore Spirit*: Speech by Dr Ng Eng Hen, Minister for Education and Second Minister for Defence, at the 2008 National Day Observance Ceremony, 8 August 2008. Available at: <https://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/data/pdfdoc/20080808995.pdf> (accessed: 20.01.2020).

Table 3. Core Values of the framework of 21st Century Competencies

Core Values	MOE explanation
Respect	Our students demonstrate respect when they believe in their own self-worth and the intrinsic worth of people.
Responsibility	Our students are responsible when they recognise they have a duty to themselves, their families, community, nation and the world, and fulfill their responsibilities with love and commitment.
Resilience	Our students are resilient when they demonstrate emotional strength and persevere in the face of challenges. They show courage, optimism, adaptability and resourcefulness.
Integrity	Our students demonstrate integrity when they uphold ethical principles and have the moral courage to stand up for what is right.
Care	Our students are caring when they act with kindness and compassion, and contribute to the betterment of the community and the world.
Harmony	Our students uphold harmony when they promote social cohesion and appreciate the unity and diversity of a multicultural society.

Ministry of Education, 21st Century Competencies, Singapore 2023. Available at: <https://www.moe.gov.sg/education-in-sg/21st-century-competencies> (accessed: 20.02.2024).

The initiated direction was confirmed by the next Minister of Education, Heng Swee Keat, who in 2011 announced that the various strands of values education, such as *Civics and Moral Education*, *National Education* and co-curricular activities, would be streamlined and offered as an integrated programme called *Character and Citizenship*⁴⁷⁷.

The new *Character and Citizenship Education* (CCE) programme shifts attention in the direction of a holistic approach to students beyond narrowly understood programmes or subjects. The change also involved shifting the focus from the country onto individuals, giving them, as Minister for Education Ng Chee Meng put it, time, space and the opportunity to discover and nurture their talents, strengthen their character and develop a love of lifelong learning⁴⁷⁸. The CCE’s syllabus aims for students to ‘learn to be responsible to family and community; and understand their roles in shaping the future of our nation’, as well as ‘to inculcate values and build competencies in our students to develop them to be

477 S. K. Heng, Opening Address by mr Heng Swee Keat, Minister for Education, at the Ministry of Education (MOE), Work Plan Seminar on Tuesday, 22 September 2011, 10 a.m. at Ngee Ann Polytechnic Convention Centre, 2011. Available at: [https://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/data/pdfdoc/20110929001/wps_opening_address_\(media\)\(checked\).pdf](https://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/data/pdfdoc/20110929001/wps_opening_address_(media)(checked).pdf) (accessed: 10.04.2021).

478 C. M. Ng, 2016, cf. D. Kwek, J. Ho, H.M. Wong, *Singapore’s Educational Reforms Toward Holistic Outcomes*, op. cit.

good individuals and useful citizens⁴⁷⁹. It also highlights the interconnectedness of core values, social and emotional competences and citizenship skills, global awareness and intercultural skills, which are key to the development of students' character and citizenship. The new CCE curriculum shifts focus from programmes towards a common purpose. The desired outcomes of CCE are aligned to the Key Stage Outcomes (KSOs) and Desired Outcomes of Education (DOE). The implementation of the assumptions adopted in 2011 is a way to prepare young Singaporeans to meet the challenges of the changing global world. From the formal side, the *Character and Citizenship* programme was introduced at the primary and secondary levels in 2014, as well as at the tertiary level in 2016. It should be added the *Character and Citizenship Education* is supplemented by other programmes that inculcate values through community involvement, such as *Values in Action* (2012), which succeeded the Community Involvement Programme, as well as *Values in Practice* (2016)⁴⁸⁰. Figure 3 below summarises the key CCE 2014 components⁴⁸¹.

The essence of the structure of CCE programmes can be found in three overarching 'big ideas': identity, relationships, and choices, which are core concepts of the syllabus. They are interconnected and impact one another. Pupils need to know who they are in order to relate positively with others. The relationships they forge shape their identity and influence the choices they make. The ability to make good choices impacts on their understanding of their own identity and the relationships they form⁴⁸². The 3 Big Ideas express the six core values, i.e. respect, responsibility, harmony, resilience, care, and integrity (see table 2, 3), which, when put together, anchor the development of competences. They constitute a basis for character, shape beliefs, attitudes and actions, and thus create the core of 21st century competences. The theoretical justification for the adopted approach can be found in Child Development Theories, together with their Applications for the CCE Syllabus, such as: *Theory of Cognitive Development* from Jean Piaget; *Theory of Moral Development* from Lawrence Kohlberg; *Cognitive Constructivist Theory* from Jean Piaget and John Dewey; *Theory of Psychosocial Development* from Erik Erikson; *Sociocultural Theory of*

479 Ministry of Education. *Character and Citizenship Education 2014. Secondary*. Ministry of Education, Singapore, Student Development Curriculum Division. Singapore: Ministry of Education, Singapore 2012, p. 1.

480 G. Lee, *Values education in Singapore*, [in:] Singapore Infopedia 2018. Available at: <https://www.nlb.gov.sg/main/article-detail?cmsuid=99663443-930d-418e-b010-4718d0ad7543> (accessed: 10.02.2024).

481 Ministry of Education. *Character and Citizenship Education. Secondary* (Implementation starting from 2014). Ministry of Education, Singapore, Student Development Curriculum Division. Singapore: Ministry of Education, Singapore 2012, p. 1.

482 <https://www.geylangmethodistpri.moe.edu.sg/curriculum/character-n-citizenship-education-cce-1/> (accessed: 10.03.2024).

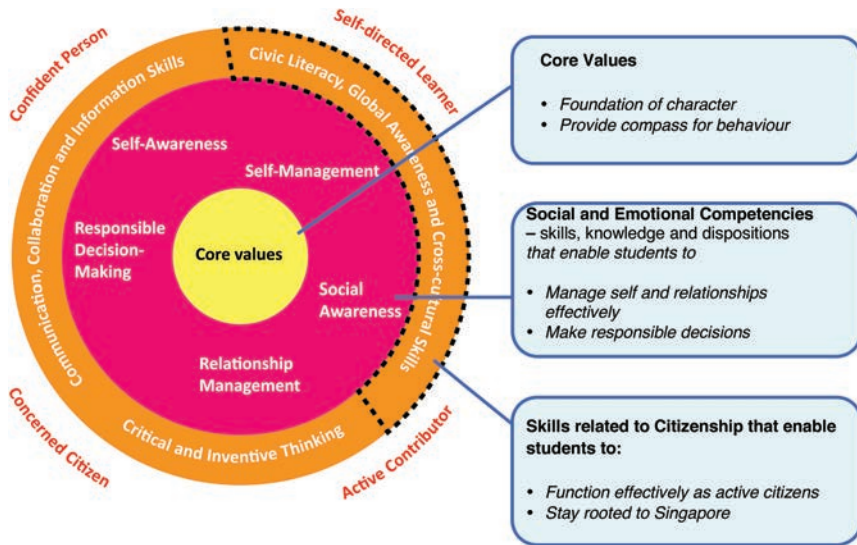


Figure 3. Framework for 21st Century Competencies and Student Outcomes. Cf: Ministry of Education. Character and Citizenship Education. Secondary (Implementation starting from 2014). Ministry of Education, Singapore, Student Development Curriculum Division. Singapore: Ministry of Education, Singapore 2012, p. 1.

Cognitive Development from Lev Vygotsky⁴⁸³. The CCE curriculum is delivered through such approaches as *Story Telling Approach*, *Consideration Approach* and *Modified Values Clarification Approach*. The aim is to facilitate the learning of skills and internalisation of values through action and reflection, because learners learn best when they are actively engaged.

The CCE syllabus introduces the guiding principles for teaching and learning. Students learn values through three overarching ideas, namely: Identity, Relationships and Choices in six domains, starting with self and extending to the family, school, community, nation and the world (The Table 4). The CCE syllabus assumes that all school teachers are CCE teachers. It imposes on them the obligation to be role models and create opportunities to shape students’ core values, develop their confidence and self-worth, as well as the “the spirit of resilience, care and compassion for others”⁴⁸⁴. This is particularly developed in the first domain: *Being who I am and Becoming who I can be (Self)*, especially at the primary level. There is a focus on values in this domain, like the responsibility to care for one’s life and well-being or to make decisions, as well as Respect for Self,

483 Ministry of Education, *Character and Citizenship Education. Secondary*, op. cit., pp. 35–41.

484 Ministry of Education, *Character and Citizenship Education, Syllabus, Primary*, from: <https://www.gcedclearinghouse.org/sites/default/files/resources/2014-character-citizenship-education-eng.pdf> (accessed: 21. 12. 2023).

understood as ‘resilience demonstrated through having emotional strength, self-efficacy and belief in one’s competences, self-discipline, courage and perseverance to face changes and challenges, as well as self-motivation to achieve goals’⁴⁸⁵.

Table 4. The Core Values, the 3 Big Ideas and the Expanding Domains in the CCE syllabus

Core Values	3 Big Ideas	Domains
Respect Responsibility Resilience Integrity Care Harmony	Identity Relationships Choices	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Self</u> Being who I am and becoming who I can be</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Family</u> Strengthening family ties</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>School</u> Fostering healthy friendships and team spirit</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Community</u> Understanding our community and building an inclusive society</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Nation</u> Developing a sense of national identity and nation building</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>World</u> Being an active citizen in a globalised world</p>

Cf: Ministry of Education. Character and Citizenship Education, from: <https://www.gelangmethodistpri.moe.edu.sg/curriculum/character-n-citizenship-education-cce-1/> (accessed: 10.03.2024).

The second domain: *Strengthening Family Ties*, draws attention to understanding the importance of family relationships in life, especially in the Asian context, as well as building positive, respectful relationships. A key approach here is to link the school and family environments in the development of core values. Hence, textbooks for the primary level assume the so-called ‘family time’, which suggests activities for parents to bond with their children. This approach is reinforced by the provision of CCE lessons and the publication of textbooks in the official Mother Tongue Languages (MTL)⁴⁸⁶.

The third domain, *Fostering Healthy Friendships and Team Spirit (school)*, contributes to building proper peer relationships and the ability to work in a team and care for others. ‘Consequently, students are taught how to be respectful, responsible in making their own decisions and how to live in harmony with other students. They know how to make new friends, communicate with their peers and participate in school events’⁴⁸⁷.

485 A. Suwalska, I. Nowosad, *The varied dimensions of Character and Citizenship Education in the Prism of Values in Grades 1–2 in Primary Education in Singapore*, “Studia z Teorii Wychowania”, XIV 4 (45), 2023, p. 283.

486 Ministry of Education, *Character and Citizenship Education. Secondary*, op. cit.

487 A. Suwalska, I. Nowosad, *The varied dimensions of Character*, op. cit., p. 284.

The fourth domain, *Understanding Our Community and Building an Inclusive Society*, enables students to understand the richness of cultural events in Singapore and to live their lives in harmony with other cultures and nationalities. Their respect not only for other races and religions, but also for different views is important and helps students appreciate diversity⁴⁸⁸.

The fifth domain, *Developing a Sense of National Identity and Nation Building*, teaches students about Singapore's heritage. They learn about the conditions that shaped the history of the city-state and the importance of community not only in surviving and overcoming threats, but also in Singapore's success.

The sixth domain, *Being an Active Citizen in a Globalised World*, draws attention to global processes and Singapore-world relations, with particular emphasis on the East Asian region.

The authors of the CCE emphasise that curriculum is delivered through such approaches as the *Story Telling Approach*, the *Consideration Approach* and the *Modified Values Clarification Approach*. Their aim is to facilitate the learning of skills and to internalise values through action and reflection as learners learn best when they are actively engaged⁴⁸⁹. At the primary level, a module on sexual education⁴⁹⁰ is an important supplement. At the secondary level, educational and career counseling⁴⁹¹, sexual education and Cyber Wellness⁴⁹² are provided.

Learn for Life (2020–present)

Already in 2015, the value of learning took the form of a movement in education policy labelled as *SkillsFuture*, which promoted lifelong learning and encouraged the deepening of skills acquired in school education during adult life. These initiatives became pillars for the fifth phase of Singapore's education policy recognised by the name: *Learn for Life*. As experts emphasise, 'With the changing landscape of social media and demographics, it is timely to re-think and reset education. In Singapore, where her people have thrived on pragmatism and balancing the best of East and West, education has entered a new phase of

488 Ibidem.

489 Ministry of Education. *Character and Citizenship Education. Secondary*, op. cit.

490 MOE, *Sexuality Education: Scope and teaching approach*, Last Updated: 07 February 2023. Available at: <https://www.moe.gov.sg/education-in-sg/our-programmes/sexuality-education/scope-and-teaching-approach> (accessed: 10.02.2024).

491 MOE, 2014 Education and Career Guidance (Secondary) Syllabus, <https://perma.cc/9H5F-2GJH> (accessed: 10.02.2024).

492 MOE, Cyber Wellness (Secondary) Syllabus 2014, <https://perma.cc/Y7H3-AYJN> (accessed: 10.02.2024).

Values-driven and Student-centric development’, explains Oon Seng Tan. ‘The primary aim of education is to develop the individual through building character virtues that recognise self-awareness of disposition, interests and aptitudes as well as nurturing the virtues of care, respect, harmony and plurality⁴⁹³. Hence, in the next developmental stage of the education system, we continue to move away from excessive emphasis on academic achievements towards preparing to connect, collaborate, create, and to be resilient in the changing circumstances. The goal is to prepare students for life, not for the next exam. To this end, three new policies were introduced to improve students’ well-being: (1) schools were encouraged to develop programmes that focused on physical, mental and social health; (2) since 2005, the Socio-emotional Learning (SEL) framework was developed and has been a mandatory element of the national curriculum, (3) teaching within the *Character and Citizenship Education* (CCE) curriculum, which included education and career guidance, sex education, cyberwellness, mental health, family education and national education⁴⁹⁴.

In terms of citizenship education, in 2020 the Ministry of Education launched a refreshed Curriculum for *Character and Citizenship Education* (CCE2021), with the aim of ‘anchoring our students on a solid foundation of moral values, good character and resilience’ as well as ‘encouraging them to take a more active role as citizens of Singapore⁴⁹⁵. It was a response to the need to prepare the new generation to quickly and continuously respond to the emerging new challenges of a mobile and changing society. This generated the need to empower people with the 21st century competencies, which they need not only to survive and thrive in an uncertain and unpredictable world, but also to participate in its creation⁴⁹⁶. In the face of increasing globalisation, Singapore has consistently wanted to prepare itself to be an active player. Therefore, modifying the CCE to better prepare its citizens for the future turned out to be an urgent issue to resolve⁴⁹⁷. This made

493 O. S. Tan, *The Big Idea. The Crucial Role of Character and Citizenship Education in Singapore*, “Singteach”, 86, 2023, p. 5, https://singteach.nie.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/SingTeach_Issue-86.pdf (accessed: 10.02.2024).

494 D. Kwek, K. J. Ho, H.M. Wong, *Singapore’s Educational Reforms Toward Holistic Outcomes*, op. cit., p. 6–7.

495 MOE 2020, para. 3, Cf: S. Choo, *Teachers’ Perspectives in Values Education*, “SingTeach”, 86, 2023, p. 6–7.

496 J. P-L Tan, I. Caleon, H. L. Ng, C. L. Pooh, & E. Koh, *Collective creativity competencies and collaborative problem-solving outcomes: Insights from the dialogic interactions of Singapore student teams*, [in:] *Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills. Educational Assessment in an Information Age*, (Eds.) E. Care, P. Griffin & M. Wilson, (pp. 95–118). Springer, Cham 2018; J. P.-L. Tan, E. Koh, M. Chan, P. Costes-Onishi, & D. Hung. *Advancing 21st Century Competencies in Singapore*, Center for Global Education, Singapore 2017.

497 W.O. Lee, *Future-oriented Citizenship: A Possible Citizenship Model Starting from the Case of Singapore*, “Citizenship Teaching & Learning”, 10 (1), 2015, pp. 95–108, doi: 10.1386/ctl.10.1.95_1.

character education, civic education and values education even more important than before.

In 2021, MOE enhanced the *Character and Citizenship Education (CCE2021)* programme and rebuilt the Framework for *21st Century Competencies (21CC)* with a clear focus on achieving outcomes⁴⁹⁸ (Figure 4). The aim was to increase clarity on how core values are linked to the social-emotional competencies, and how they are internalised and lived⁴⁹⁹.

Invariably, the central place is occupied by the 3 *Big Ideas*: identity, relationships and choices, which express the six core values of respect, responsibility, harmony, resilience, care, and integrity (see: tables 2, 3). They are core concepts of the syllabus and anchor the development of such social-emotional competencies as self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship management and responsible decision-making. It can be assumed that in the current interpretation of the importance of developing character strengths and values, students' understanding of their sense of purpose has been strengthened. 'It is about discovering how one's values, strengths, talents, and interests can be meaningfully applied so that one feels a sense of personal significance within one's sphere of influence and beyond. (...) With a sense of purpose, an individual is more likely to live out the core values that make up the foundation of his/her character, and meaningfully apply the social-emotional competencies learnt'⁵⁰⁰. In classroom practice, helping students find a sense of purpose involves teaching these fundamentals and applying them to the following CCE Curriculum Content Areas⁵⁰¹:

- 1) National Education (NE). NE in CCE aims to be empowering and aspirational, allowing for individual sense-making, so as to nurture engaged citizens, who are socially aware, adept at critical thinking, and informed about local, regional, and global issues.
- 2) Sexuality Education (SEd). SEd enables our students to understand the physiological, social, and emotional changes they experience as they mature, develop healthy and rewarding relationships including those with members of the opposite sex, and make wise, informed and responsible decisions on sexuality matters.
- 3) Mental Health (MH). Mental health is about having a balance in various aspects of life, and learning values and social-emotional competencies to cope with life's situations, relate to others and contribute to the community. A

498 Singapore Framework for 21CC and Student Outcomes. Harvard University, Explore SEL. Available at: <http://exploresel.gse.harvard.edu/frameworks/56> (accessed: 20.03.2024).

499 MOE, *Character & Citizenship Education (CCE) Syllabus Secondary, Student Development Curriculum Division*. Ministry of Education, Singapore 2020, p. 6.

500 Ibidem, p. 10.

501 Ibidem., pp. 12–13.

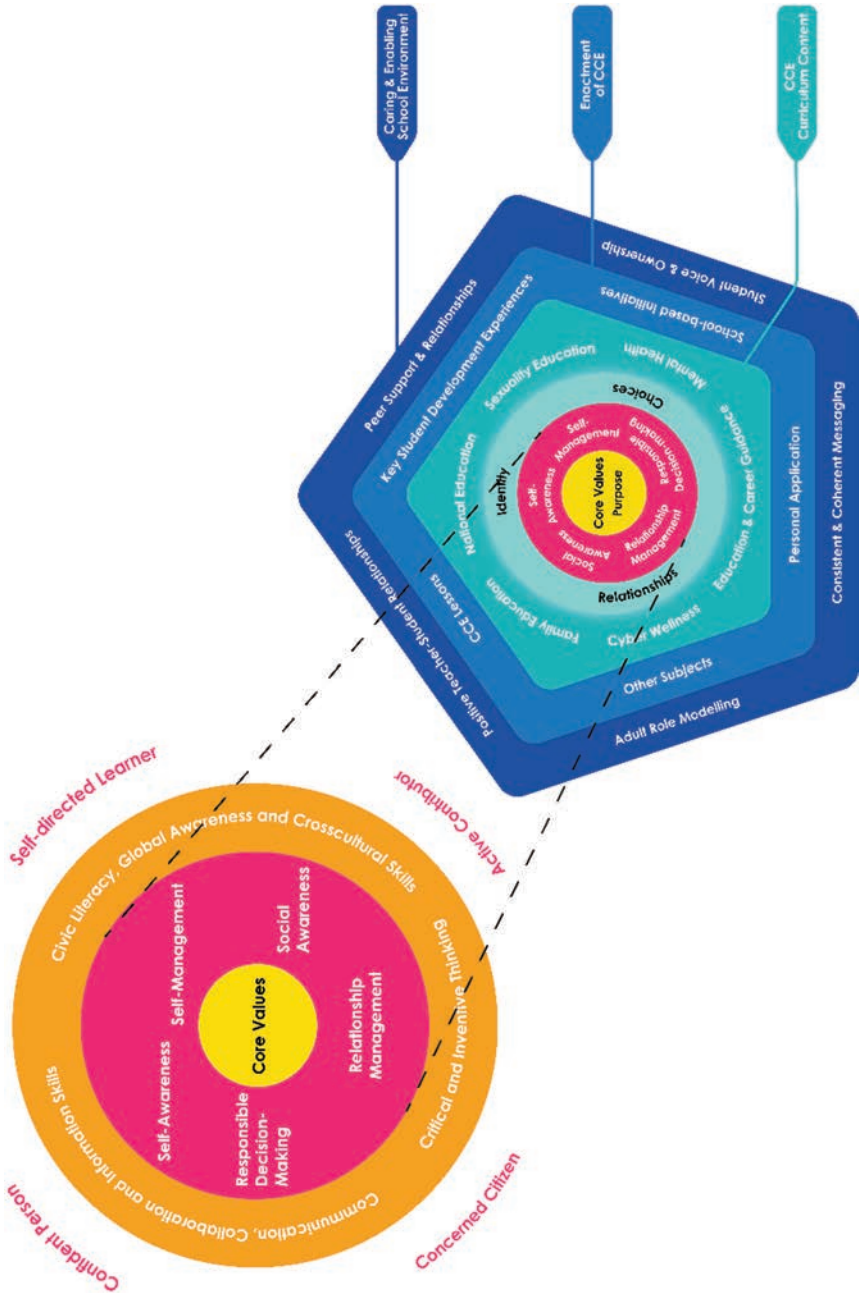


Figure 4. The 21CC and CCE 2021 Framework. MOE, *Character & Citizenship Education (CCE) Secondary Syllabus, Student Development Curriculum Division*. Ministry of Education, Singapore 2020, p. 6.

focus on MH in CCE at the secondary level helps students to strengthen their resilience and wellbeing; differentiate between stress, distress (overwhelming stress), and illness; enhance help-seeking efficacy; as well as destigmatise mental illness.

- 4) Education and Career Guidance (ECG). Through ECG, students explore their strengths and abilities, examine their life's purpose, and develop qualities of proactivity, adaptability, and resilience to prepare themselves for the 21st Century.
- 5) Cyber Wellness (CW). CW focuses on the well-being of our students as they navigate cyberspace, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to harness the power of ICT for positive purposes, maintain a positive presence in cyberspace, and be safe and responsible users of ICT.
- 6) Family Education (FE). FE is premised on the nation's shared value of the family as the basic unit of society. Students learn about being responsible family members, and to be grateful for the role their families play in shaping who they are and who they become⁵⁰².

Since 2021, MOE has enhanced the *Character and Citizenship Education (CCE) Curriculum* to place a stronger focus on online learning and interactions. Through CCE lessons, primary school students learn to be discerning of what they read and share online, and to be respectful of one another, including of their privacy. Older students at the secondary and pre-university levels learn to engage in online discussions in a respectful and meaningful manner; and to value multiple perspectives⁵⁰³. It is worth adding that, beyond the CCE curriculum, MOE also engages parents to highlight the importance of guiding their children to engage in respectful online and offline discussions. One may even get the impression that maintaining the significant role of parents as people who introduce children to the world of values has been strengthened by including them in various activities implementing the moral and civic education programme. Especially at the primary level, in the implementation of the programme, parents “accompany” their children in recognising values in various life environments.

It is worth emphasising a different orientation in the understanding of global citizenship, which is pointed out by Mitsuhiro Ikeda. In Singapore, as an English-speaking society, global citizenship was considered more important than ASEAN citizenship. However, the new curriculum (syllabus) announced by the Ministry of Education in 2020 changes this trend. The planned changes concern three

502 Ibidem.

503 MOE, *Character and Citizenship Education Curriculum*, Published Date: 06 March 2023 05:50 PM. Available at: <https://www.moe.gov.sg/news/parliamentary-replies/20230306-character-and-citizenship-education-curriculum> (accessed: 10.03.2024).

areas: ‘Enhancing CCE’, ‘Knowing Asia’, and ‘Strengthening Digital Literacy’. Under the new curriculum, an enhanced humanities curriculum, including Social Studies, Geography, History and Economics, will be enhanced at the secondary and pre-university levels for a deeper understanding of Asia, including ASEAN⁵⁰⁴. The changes can be read as fostering global awareness through learning about Asian development. Due to recent changes, it is difficult for now to assess the effectiveness of the undertaken actions.

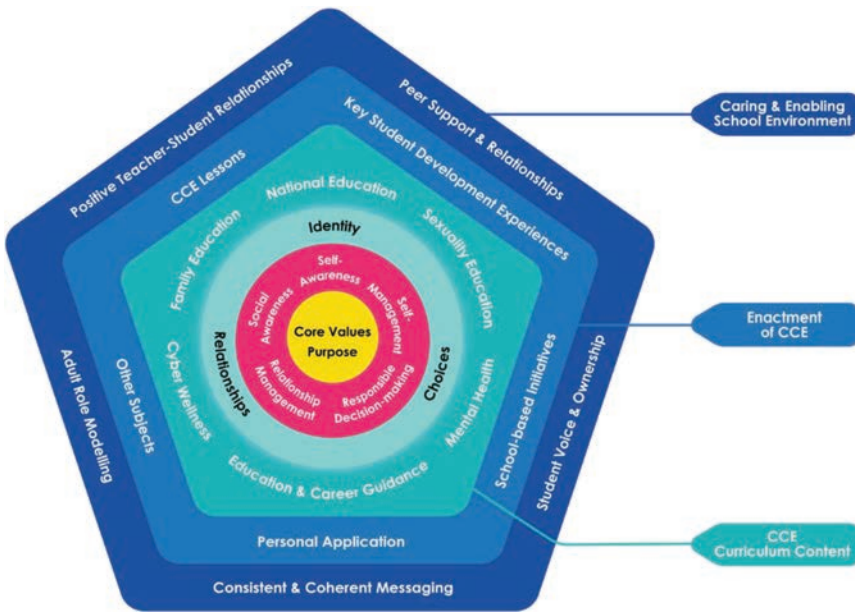


Figure 5. CCE 2021 Curriculum Framework. <https://singteach.nie.edu.sg/2023/10/11/character-and-citizenship-education-in-singapore/> (accessed: 10.12.2024).

The implementation of CCE is carried out through several integrated learning platforms where CCE is enacted with intentionality (Enactment of CCE). These include CCE Lessons during curriculum time, Key Student Development Experiences (SDEs) beyond the classroom, school-based initiatives, teachable moments during other subject lessons, and learning opportunities beyond school⁵⁰⁵. The essence of integrated interactions is to move away from understanding CCE as an additional profile of teachers’ work, towards something that permeates all students’ experiences at school. The possibilities of implementing CCE as-

504 M. Ikeda, *Citizenship Education in Singapore: Implementation of Character and Citizenship Education and Revised National Education*, [in:] *Citizenship Education in the ASEAN Community*, pp 203–214, (ed.) T. Hirata, Springer, Singapore 2023.

505 MOE, *Character & Citizenship Education (CCE) Syllabus Secondary*, op.cit., p. 14.

somptions through various student activities at school are presented in Table 5, divided into specific Learning Platforms.

Tables 5. Enactment of CCE

Learning Platforms	CCE enactment options
CCE Lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explicit teaching of values and social and emotional skills to address the holistic developmental needs of students, e.g. understanding emotions and how to regulate them, learning how to manage relationships, learning about sexuality, developing a sense of purpose in life. - Equip students with knowledge and skills to better understand real-world contexts, e.g. understand mental health issues, navigate cyberspaces responsibly, make appropriate educational and career choices, appreciate family life, understand Singapore’s racial and religious diversity. - Discussions on contemporary issues to enable students to grasp current realities in our national, regional, and global contexts, reflect on their national identity, develop civic consciousness, and the will to make a difference in society, as well as learn social-emotional competencies and 21CC skills such as civic literacy, crosscultural skills, and global awareness.
Key Student Development Experiences	<p>Key SDE are programmes and activities that ensure students’ holistic development in the following areas: physical, aesthetic, intellectual, moral and social. Each of these programmes and activities has its specific CCE Learning Outcomes. These activities are based on experiential learning pedagogy, including dialogue, discussion and reflection, and intentional application of values, social-emotional, and civic competencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-Curricular Activities (CCA); - Cohort Learning Journeys (LJs); - Education and Career Guidance (ECG) Experiences; - National Education (NE) Commemorative Days; - NRIC Presentation Ceremony; - Outdoor Adventure Learning (OAL) Cohort Camps; - Student Leadership Development (SLD) Programmes; - Values in Action (VIA).
School-based Initiatives	<p>These activities take into account the different context of each school and students’ specificity, their needs, interests and abilities. These initiatives also refer to learning outcomes.</p>

(Continued)

Learning Platforms	CCE enactment options
Other Subjects	As every school context is different, and students' needs, interests and abilities vary within each context, schools design and implement programmes and activities for CCE that cater to the profile of their students. These activities are reinforced by learning English and the native language, whereas Physical Education (PE) makes it possible for students to learn sportsmanship and take responsibility for a healthy lifestyle.
Personal Application	The process of learning to reflect on their character growth as a lifelong process plays a key role in strengthening the impact of CCE on students. To this end, many learning opportunities are created both inside and outside of school so that students can develop the habit of self-reflection and gratitude.

MOE, *Character & Citizenship Education (CCE) Secondary Syllabus, Student Development Curriculum Division*. Ministry of Education, Singapore 2020, pp. 14–16.

Caring and Enabling School Environment is a framework that encompasses and permeates all guidelines of the new CCE programme. The goal is to have a lasting impact on students. Schools are to be places where students' needs will be met, such as the psychological needs to connect with others, feel emotionally and physically safe, have a sense of belonging, exercise autonomy, and experience competence. The needs must be met in the conditions of building a caring community and positive relationships between teachers and students that are based on mutual respect, care and support. Meeting the needs is also intended to reinforce students' bonds with the school and their motivation to jointly own their learning and the school community (the school environment needs to support their dispositional development)⁵⁰⁶. Through CCE, the school makes an effort to involve its students in planning new experiences to make them more authentic and meaningful in their lives, first as young people, then as adults. This is consistent with the understanding of learning as a continuous, lifelong process resulting from various experiences, all of which have been collected and described in the CCE curriculum.

Summary and Prospects of Moral and Civic Education in Singapore

As a small country with limited natural resources, Singapore has always valued its human potential, if only because it has been the only natural resource that it had at its disposal. Its citizens attach great importance to education and show

506 MOE, *Character & Citizenship Education (CCE) Syllabus Secondary*, op.cit., p. 17.

readiness to invest in it. The government adheres to the principle that the best investment is to equip its citizens with knowledge and skills to meet the current and future needs of the country's economy. Over the years, this relationship has been interpreted differently and there has been a visible shift from an instrumental approach and 'templates' of expectations towards enhanced emphasis on innovative solutions reinforced by openness to criticism and permeated by the spirit of change. This is a departure from steering the society into a direction of change, including preparation to fulfill predetermined social roles, towards investing in young generations as future change creators and preparing them to set trends. As such, the education system in Singapore has undergone numerous reform programmes in order to prepare the young generation for the demands of the 'VUCA'⁵⁰⁷ world. Ultimately, a graduate educated in the Singapore education system is meant to become a self-confident person who is also capable of self-education and displays qualities of an active collaborator and a concerned citizen.

Singapore's specific circumstances have meant that character and citizenship education (CCE) has always been at the heart of the education system. It is through CCE that students learn the responsibility towards family and community, and ultimately learn about their role in shaping the future of the nation. The learning process is key here, but it is equally important to take into account the emerging trends and global changes that impact the Singaporean society, such as social changes, globalisation, and technological progress⁵⁰⁸. Oon Seng Tan highlights CCE's particular importance of in the current Singapore context, specifically drawing attention to the changing landscape of student profiles and demographics, the rise of global interconnectedness and conflict, as well as the widespread use of social media and digital tools. He states that 'establishing a strong anchor of values serves as a bedrock for our students to navigate this ever-changing world. This calls for prioritising CCE education and innovation in CCE pedagogies. (...) Within this context, *Character and Citizenship Education* (CCE) comes to the forefront of education, as it provides an integrated approach to cultivate students' values, character, social-emotional well-being, and citizenship dispositions'⁵⁰⁹.

In essence, schools in the Singapore education system have traditionally served two key functions: economic stability and social cohesion. Hence, CCE reform projects and programmes have been necessarily responsive to maintaining social cohesion, which is a fundamental issue for a small multiracial

507 VUCA, V(olatility), U(ncertainty), C(omplexity), A(mbiguity).

508 G. Lee, *Values education in Singapore*, op. cit.

509 O. S. Tan, *Strengthening Character and Citizenship Education*, op. cit.

nation-state⁵¹⁰. The importance of social cohesion has been crucial not only because of Singapore being an emerging young country, but also because of the wide ethnic, cultural and religious diversity of the society. For this reason, citizenship education has been crucial to the government since the very beginning of Singapore's autonomy. The formation of social cohesion and Singaporean identity is further strengthened by the policy of bilingualism (English and native languages, including Malay, Tamil and Chinese). Bilingualism is intended to equip students with linguistic competences which would enable access to both Eastern and Western cultures. As a move towards social cohesion and common identity, it ensures both the preservation of the 'Asian core' and the development of a global view⁵¹¹. The mother tongue policy is intended to make sure that with English being the language of instruction in all state schools, 'children know their mother tongue and retain their sense of identity, values and culture'⁵¹².

The bilingualism policy, but also the adopted orientation towards the development of the knowledge-based economy and the pursuit of social cohesion, have created a specific approach to civic education, which has contributed to sustainable management of education for nationalism, while taking into account diversity and education for prosperity. This phenomenon has been termed cosmopolitan nationalism⁵¹³. It can be assumed that the changing political and economic circumstances have had influence on certain constant but also variable values in civic education programmes. However, the contemporary importance of CCE has its limitations. Although all schools are equipped with the resources to implement the CCE programme, researchers note that CCE approaches and implementation vary significantly between schools. In a society which has developed pressure and orientation towards high-stakes examinations, this obstacle is of paramount importance. For the segment of the society that values PSLE exam results, the CCE values remain more than abstract and this attitude is expected to remain a challenge for the development of CCE. This should determine enhanced attention to the ongoing process of involving parents in joint

510 Z. Boon, B. Wong, *Character and Citizenship Education*, [in:] *School Leadership and Educational Change in Singapore*, (eds) B. Wong, S. Hairon, P. T. Ng, National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore 2019, p. 183–199.

511 S. Hameed, B. Lingard, S. Creagh, *Global citizenship education practices in Singapore and Australia: Tensions between educational and market rationales*, "Research in Comparative & International Education" 2023, 18 (3), 2023, 465–484.

512 H. L. Lee, Speech by prime minister Lee Hsien Loong at the onepeople.Sg's Community Leaders' conference at the grassroots club, Singapore 2015. Available at: https://www.mfa.gov.sg/content/mfa/overseasmission/geneva/press_statements_speeches/2015/201510/press_20151004.html (accessed: 10.02.2024).

513 M. Yemini, L. Engel, M. Lee, C. Maxwell, *Cosmopolitan*, op. cit.; M. Yemini, C. Maxwell, E. Wright, L. Engel, M. Lee, *Cosmopolitan nationalism*, op.cit.

activities with their children in order for them to understand the importance of the CCE approach for both the family and Singapore.

The new approach to CCE, which is intended to be universal across the whole schooling system, also constitutes a challenge for teachers. Tan emphasises that some aspects of CCE implementation remain challenging for educators. He refers to research results which indicate that ‘that while Singaporean teachers are investing time and effort into modelling and explaining positive values, relatively less focus is given in equipping students with the skills to analyse how their own values are shaped. These findings underscore the need for continuous commitment to CCE research and professional development’⁵¹⁴.

When reviewing the evolution that has taken place in the field of citizenship education, it should be emphasised that Education for 21CC remains the main topic of contemporary educational reforms in Singapore. It can even be said that its importance is growing, as the burden of responsibility for future changes is shifting from the centre onto individuals, i.e onto individual citizens who will face new challenges in their everyday and professional lives, that is changes that are for the most part impossible to determine or predict today. Therefore, it can be concluded that Singapore’s goal of preparing young people for the 21st century has by no means been implemented or completed. This also means that with the old dynamics of the world being long disturbed, further development in this area will not be simple and linear. Therefore, we must assume that this is an open process of Singapore’s journey, which began when the country gained autonomy.

The establishment of the Singapore CCE Centre⁵¹⁵ on May 30, 2023 by the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the National Institute of Education (NIE) is a good example confirming the openness of the process. It is the first of its kind in the region and aims to expand Singapore’s knowledge and capacity in *Character and Citizenship Education* (CCE). This includes support for professional learning and CCE research which is focused on supporting the holistic development of children and adolescents. ‘In particular, the Centre will conduct educational research in CCE with emphasis on classroom practice and pedagogy in the Singapore context. It also aims to collaborate with schools to develop new and innovative ways to enhance learning in CCE’⁵¹⁶. The establishment of the CCE Centre during the opening of the 11th Teachers’ Conference and ExCEL Fest 2023 (TCEF2023), with the motto ‘Ignite Imagination. Empower Communities. Transform Practice’, clearly reinforced the direction of the search. This only

514 O. S. Tan, *Strengthening Character and Citizenship Education*, op. cit.

515 MOE, New Character and Citizenship Education Centre to Deepen Research in Pedagogy and Practice, Singapore 30 May 2023, <https://www.moe.gov.sg/news/press-releases/20230530-new-character-and-citizenship-education-centre-to-deepen-research-in-pedagogy-and-practice> (accessed: 25.03.2024).

516 Ibidem.

confirms the now obvious fact that another stage of CCE development is opening up for Singapore.

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Final Remarks

Analysing the citizenship education approaches of England, the Netherlands, Canada (Ontario), and Singapore provides a compelling insight into how different societies navigate the interplay between cultural diversity, national identity, and educational policies. This analysis shed light on common challenges and distinct responses shaped by each country's unique historical, cultural, and political contexts. The selection of countries in this volume was strategic: former colonial powers – England and the Netherlands and former colonies – Canada and Singapore offered diverse perspectives on the influence of post-colonial legacies on current citizenship education policies. However, the primary focus of this volume was not on the detailed history of colonialism but rather on the evaluation of multiculturalism stemming from a colonial past and its influence on citizenship education policies.

Our study demonstrated that citizenship operates at multiple levels – status, feelings of belonging (commitment), and participation (practice) – across all the countries analysed. Building on this multi-layered understanding, we adopted the perspective that citizenship is a complex and comprehensive construct. This view posits that citizenship not only introduces new roles and identities for individuals but also promotes the development of civic competencies that extend beyond traditional political and legal boundaries. Although citizenship was initially conceived as an exclusive concept ('us' vs. 'them'), for the past two decades, scholars and educational advisors have noted that it has evolved into a more inclusive idea. This conceptual shift is primarily evident in academic research and educational philosophy and has yet to permeate the political sphere, which continues to be influenced by economic imperatives and pressures from public opinion.

The nature of citizenship has to evolve as societies strive for greater recognition of diverse identities. The discussions in this volume, echoing P. Berger and T. Luckmann's perspective on the social construction of reality, demonstrated that citizenship education is also a dynamic and evolving social construct. Analysing the changing phases of citizenship education policies in different coun-

tries, our findings underscore the fluidity of citizenship concepts and their shifts resulting from historical legacies and social/political transformations. They support the view that both citizenship and citizenship education are socially and politically constructed phenomena, subject to ongoing change and re-interpretation.

According to J.A. Banks, proposals for citizenship education in multicultural societies highlight the importance of celebrating diversity. These proposals emerge from a continuous search for balance between unity and diversity, as well as harmonising local, national, and global educational orientations. This delicate equilibrium is designed to create citizens who are not only attuned to their cultural identities and values but also responsive to the global interconnectedness prevalent in contemporary life. The policies of the countries analysed in this volume, although to a different extent, reflect Banks' view on the necessity of multicultural societies to achieve balance between promoting unity and appreciating diversity. Banks' view has been recognised, at least rhetorically, in the policy changes observed in the selected countries. This 'delicate balance' is recognised as vital for developing citizens in multicultural settings: conscious of their cultural identities and open to global perspectives.

In analysing the citizenship education policies of former colonies versus former colonising powers, distinct approaches shaped by historical legacies become evident. For example, England's citizenship education policy emphasises national orientation, reflecting and intending to consolidate national identity. Conversely, Singapore prioritises a global perspective, a stance likely influenced by its post-colonial context and its ambition to establish itself as a global hub. The approach to citizenship education can be understood through the lens of the countries' colonial legacies. Those with the experience of being colonised tend to adopt more inclusive and expansive educational frameworks that emphasise global interconnectedness and multicultural integration. In contrast, former colonisers tend to adopt a more introspective focus, emphasizing national histories and identities. Our analyses illustrate a clear distinction in orientation: one towards embracing a (global) future and minority identities, and the other retaining a stronger focus on (national) past and majority identities.

Another conclusion drawn from the analyses in this volume highlights the changing significance of government influence on education policies across different countries. The findings of the chapters reveal that while each nation demonstrates considerable government involvement in shaping citizenship education, there is variation in the degree of central control and the autonomy granted to local educational authorities or individual schools. This variability reflects each country's unique political and administrative structures, influencing the implementation and adaptation of citizenship education policies at local levels. Singapore adopts a highly centralised and prescriptive approach, priori-

tizing social cohesion through a well-defined set of national values. The government maintains strict control over curriculum content, emphasizing economic stability and civic responsibilities to foster a cohesive national identity. Canada's decentralised and inclusive approach grants provinces substantial autonomy to tailor citizenship education to local needs. Canadian policies strongly emphasise multiculturalism, integrating these principles into the educational framework to promote a pluralistic society where diverse cultural backgrounds are celebrated. England has recently shifted towards a more national-oriented curriculum that emphasises historical achievements and fundamental British values, often driven by conservative government policies. This shift, intended to address societal challenges like terrorism and social integration, has been criticised for marginalising broader global and multicultural perspectives. The Netherlands focuses on integration similar to England, with recent shifts towards emphasizing Dutch values and language as prerequisites for integration. However, unlike England, the Netherlands allows schools a high degree of autonomy, enabling them to align citizenship education with local community ideologies and broader societal and religious values.

Our work also delved into the intricacies of multiculturalism, exploring how societies and political forces in England, the Netherlands, Canada (Ontario), and Singapore have addressed the complexities of a multi-ethnic and multi-religious populace. All chapters emphasised demographic changes and the challenges posed by diverse groups, including immigrant communities, guest workers, or postcolonial migrants, as well as social cohesion and the principles of liberal democracy. Although tensions between multiculturalism and national identities arise in all societies, notable differences among them demand attention. Canada remains the most committed to a multicultural approach, actively integrating this principle into its citizenship education. Multiculturalism is seen as a foundational aspect of national identity, with economic motivations also playing a significant role in its sustained emphasis. Singapore and England have shifted towards reinforcing a cohesive national identity, which sometimes sidelines deeper engagement with multiculturalism in favour of promoting a more unified national narrative. This approach aims to strengthen societal cohesion but risks diminishing the rich diversity within these societies. However, Singapore's policy strengthens bilingualism, which enables decoding fundamental values through the lens of cultural and language distinctiveness. The educational approach in Singapore indicates balancing the global issues with the local ones. It confirms that citizenship education is a dynamic social construct. It is also worth noticing that every teacher is responsible for teaching CCE as a separate subject and as a cross-curricular activity. The Netherlands, with its commitment to compromise, navigates between these approaches by promoting integration while still allowing for significant cultural autonomy within its educational system. This dual focus

is aimed at balancing the benefits of a unified national identity with the recognition of diverse cultural backgrounds.

Despite the challenges posed by neoliberalism and national populism(s), our analyses across various countries demonstrate that multiculturalism persists as a resilient framework. It continues to assert its relevance, constantly present in the realms of political struggle and academic discourse. It remains a vital conceptual tool in addressing the complexities of today's diverse societies and offers a counterbalance when the tide of uniform national narratives rises.