



Editorial: Special Issue on ICCS 2016 Norway

Guest Editor:

Idunn Seland¹, OsloMet – Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway

In 2016, Norway participated in the International Citizenship and Civic Education Study (ICCS) for the second time. A nationally representative sample of more than 6000 pupils in the 9th grade answered a test on their knowledge of civic principles, civic society and systems, and a survey to map their civic identities and participation. Among the 24 countries participating in ICCS 2016, Norwegian pupils and their peers in the Nordic countries scored in the top five in the civic knowledge test.

Data from ICCS have mostly been employed in this way, to benchmark countries in the manner of what is done with other test tools administered by IEA (the International Association of the Evaluation of Educational Achievement,) also responsible for the well-known PISA studies. However, ICCS also collects other data from participating countries, in the form of teacher and principal surveys on the context, priorities, content and methods of citizenship and civic education. These data have rarely been subject to in-depth analysis, neither nationally nor internationally.

The coordinators behind the Norwegian ICCS 2016-study wanted to change this situation, and have devoted this special issue of Nordic Journal of Comparative and International Education to articles analysing how teachers and principals in the 148 schools participating in the study reflect and reason on citizenship and civic education. Based on the two surveys to these professional groups including questions specific to the Norwegian teacher sample and interviews with teachers, the contributors to this issue explore and discuss various topics that broaden our understanding of what affects young people's knowledge and interest in democracy. Data from different levels in the study are linked and compared, so that relationships between teachers' professional development and understanding of conceptual, theoretical and didactical aspects of citizenship and civic education are explored with respect to pupils' results in the same study. Thus we learn about what kind of citizenship Norwegian teachers portray in their instruction, how they proceed to educate the young for environmental citizenship, how teachers reason on the use

¹ Corresponding author: Idunn.Seland@oslomet.no

of controversial issues in their teaching, and how these aspects may affect pupils' learning.

This issue thus paves the way for new and interesting longitudinal analysis of teachers and principals' role in the shaping of young citizens, inviting studies of equivalent material from new cycles of ICCS in years to come. It all adds to one of the main questions in citizenship and civic education, on whether schools are the dominant contributor to young people's civic identities and knowledge, or if this is mainly attributed to other factors known to affect pupils' learning results, like parents' level of education.