International Civic and Citizenship Study (ICCS): Report for Ireland

Jude Cosgrove, Lorraine Gilleece, and Gerry Shiel

Educational Research Centre

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Cataloguing-in-publication data

Cosgrove, Jude
International Civic and Citizenship Study: Report for Ireland /
Jude Cosgrove, Lorraine Gilleece, Gerry Shiel.
Dublin: Educational Research Centre.

xx, 208 p., 30 cm.

ISBN: 978 0 900440 30 4

1. International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (Project)
2. Civic and Citizenship Education (Secondary) – Ireland
3. Student Attitudes Political and Social Issues (Secondary) – Ireland
4. International Educational Surveys – IEA

2011
I Title II Cosgrove, Jude III Gilleece, Lorraine

372.9

Cover designed by ePrint
Printed in the Republic of Ireland by ePrint, Dublin

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Preface

This report describes the findings from the 2008/2009 International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS), a project of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). The IEA, established in 1958, is a non-governmental, non-profit educational research organisation which currently has close to 100 member countries. ICCS examines issues relating to civic and citizenship education (CCE) across 38 participating countries. Previous studies of CCE date back to 1971 (where it was examined as part of the Six-Subject Study) and 1999 (the CIVED study). Ireland took part in the six-subject study, but not in CIVED. The current study seeks to answer questions such as: *How much do students know about civic concepts and processes? What are their rates of participation in civic and citizenship-related activities? What beliefs and attitudes do students hold on a range of civic and citizenship issues?* In all participating countries, representative samples of students, their teachers, and school principals took part in the study. In addition to civic and citizenship issues more generally, the study gathered information on students' knowledge of, and attitudes towards, Europe and the European Union, via the European Regional Module (an instrument commissioned by the EU).

The importance of civic and citizenship issues was recently recognised in Ireland with the establishment by the Office of An Taoiseach of the Taskforce on Active Citizenship, which published a report in 2007. In that report, it was recommended that Ireland participate in ICCS. Active citizenship is also considered important internationally: for example, 2011 has been established as the European Year of Volunteering, and each European Union Member State has designated a National Coordinating Body that is responsible for the planning, coordination and organisation of events and activities.

To date, the IEA has published three international reports on ICCS, available at www.iea.nl. These are a summary report (June 2010), a full international report (November 2010), and a report on the European Regional Module (November 2010). National summary reports for Ireland based on the IEA's June 2010 and November 2010 publications are available at www.erc.ie.

This report is designed to complement and augment existing reports through a more in-depth examination of research and policy issues in the Irish context, drawing on both international and national data sources. It begins with an Executive Summary and the remainder is divided into nine chapters.

Chapter 1 gives an overview of ICCS: its aims, content and design, along with a consideration of CCE issues in the national context. Chapter 2 examines the civic knowledge of Irish students in the international context. Chapter 3 describes civic knowledge, students' interest in political and social issues, and students' expected adult electoral participation in the context of key school and student background characteristics. Chapter 4 looks at students' attitudes towards, and engagement in, a variety of civic and citizenship issues. Chapter 5 considers school and teacher characteristics. Chapter 6 considers two student characteristics in more depth – students' civic knowledge and interest in political and social issues – with respect to

a range of school, teacher and student factors considered jointly. Chapter 7 considers the results of ICCS in the context of Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE; a compulsory subject taught to students in Ireland at lower secondary level). Chapter 8 provides a description of the main findings of the European Regional Module. Chapter 9 (the final chapter) provides a summary of main findings, implications for Irish educational policy in CCE, and areas that could be considered for further research.

This report is aimed at a general and non-technical audience and is expected to be relevant to various groups including policymakers, school principals, teachers (particularly of CCE-related subjects), parents, partners in education, researchers in education, individuals working in the area of curriculum development in CCE-relevant subject areas, members of the Citizenship Education Network, and NGOs with a role relevant to CCE.

The implementation of ICCS including the production of this report was the responsibility of the Educational Research Centre (ERC), working in collaboration with the Department of Education and Skills (DES). The conduct of the study was guided by a national advisory committee (see Acknowledgements).

Jude Cosgrove
Lorraine Gilleece
Gerry Shiel

March 2011

Where the terms *significantly higher* and *significantly lower* are used in this report, they denote *statistically significant* differences, which may or may not be of practical importance.

Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the support and dedication of participating schools, principals, teachers and students during the implementation phase of ICCS. Without this support, it would not have been possible to implement ICCS in Ireland.

We acknowledge the support and advice of the ICCS National Advisory Committee, who provided guidance at all stages of the implementation of ICCS in Ireland. As well as the authors of the present report, the committee members were: Tom Healy (DES, Chair), Catherine Byrne (CSPE Teachers' Association), Aidan Clifford (Curriculum Development Unit), Carmel Gallagher (Visiting Research Fellow, UNESCO Centre, Belfast), John Hammond (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment), Conor Harrison (Second Level Support Services), Gerry Jeffers (Education Department, NUI Maynooth), Kevin McCarthy (DES Inspectorate), Patricia McDonagh (National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals), Roland Tormey (Department of Education and Professional Studies, University of Limerick), and Máirín Wilson (Lecturer in Education, Church of Ireland College of Education).

Thanks are also due to Conor Harrison and Máirín Wilson for making comparisons between the assessments associated with ICCS and CSPE.

We acknowledge the input of Kevin McCarthy in drafting the chapter on Ireland in the forthcoming International ICCS Encyclopaedia, and to Conor Harrison, Tom Healy, Robert Kirkpatrick (DES), and Éamonn Murtagh (DES) for reviewing earlier drafts of the encyclopaedia chapter.

We thank staff at the Educational Research Centre for their assistance with various aspects of the study: Peter Archer (Director), Paula Chute, John Coyle, Mary Rohan, and Hilary Walshe.

Finally, we acknowledge the support and assistance of the IEA Secretariat, and of staff working at two of the international organisations that implemented the study: the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), Melbourne, and at the IEA Data Processing Centre, Hamburg.

List of Acronyms/Abbreviations

ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
CCE	Civic and Citizenship Education
CEN	Citizenship Education Network
CIVED	Civic Education Study
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CSPE	Civic, Social and Political Education
CWAB	Course-Work Assessment Booklet
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools
DES	Department of Education and Skills (formerly Science)
ERC	Educational Research Centre
EU	European Union
HLM	Hierarchical Linear Modelling (software)
ICCS	International Civic and Citizenship Education Study
IEA	International Organisation for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement
IRT	Item Response Theory
ISEI	International Socio-Economic Index
JCSP	Junior Certificate School Programme
LCA	Leaving Certificate Applied
LCVP	Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PLC	Post-Leaving Certificate Course
RAP	Report on an Action Project
RE	Religious Education
SE	Standard Error
SES	Socio-Economic Status
SPHE	Social, Personal and Health Education
SPSS	Statistics Package for the Social Sciences (software)
SSP	School Support Programme
VEC	Vocational Education Committee
YSI	Young Social Innovators

Executive Summary

E.1. Overview

The International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) was conducted in 38 countries[1] in 2008-2009. In Ireland, it was implemented by the Educational Research Centre (ERC) on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills (DES). ICCS examines the extent to which 14-year-olds (second years) are prepared for future civic and citizenship engagement, and considers the student, family and school characteristics associated with this. In Ireland, the survey was conducted in the spring of 2009 in a representative sample of 144 schools, where it was undertaken by about 3,400 students, 1,860 teachers and 140 school principals.

ICCS gathered a wide range of information from students, teachers, school principals, and national policy experts. In Ireland, general information about the education system and about Civic and Citizenship Education (CCE) was provided by the DES in a *national contexts questionnaire*. Students completed an *assessment of civic knowledge*, as well as a *questionnaire* that gathered information about their social and demographic backgrounds, and their attitudes towards, and beliefs about, a number of civic and citizenship issues. Students also completed a short *assessment of their knowledge about the EU* (administered in 22 of the 24 participating EU countries, along with two non-EU countries) and answered some questions on their *attitudes and beliefs about various European issues*. The information from students is complemented by the responses of teachers and principals to questionnaires. The *teacher questionnaire* included questions directed at all subject teachers of second-years and a specific section for teachers of Civic and Citizenship Education (in Ireland, these were teachers of Civic, Social and Political Education, or CSPE). The *principal questionnaire* gathered information on various topics, including the teaching of CCE in the school. In Ireland, the national relevance of the study was enhanced through the inclusion of several Ireland-specific questions in the questionnaires as well as through an analysis of aspects of the CSPE curriculum with reference to the ICCS assessment framework.

In a 34 of 38 ICCS countries, participating students were in grade 8 (second year) at the time of the study, with an average age of 14.4 years (in Ireland, the average age was 14.3 years). In four countries, students were in grade 9. In *all* countries, students were selected via a random sample of intact base classes (one to two in each participating school).

Since CCE is not confined to a single subject (although it is, arguably, most closely aligned to CSPE in Ireland), all subject teachers of second years were eligible for selection and, generally, 15 teachers were sampled at random from each school.

In 36 of the 38 countries, student response rates were deemed sufficiently high to compare results internationally, and in 27 of the 38 countries, teacher response rates were also sufficiently high for international comparisons to be made.

[1] A small number of participants were regions within countries (e.g. Flemish Belgium). In this report, the term 'countries' is used to refer to both countries and regions within countries.

Ireland fully met the sampling and response rate standards so that it is possible to compare results for Ireland with those of other participants.

Given that the countries participating in ICCS vary widely by culture, language, economic characteristics, etc., nine 'comparison countries' were selected against which to compare findings from Ireland in more depth in parts of this report. These are Belgium (Fl.), Denmark, England, Finland, New Zealand, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland. These countries were selected on the basis of high average performance, similar cultural/linguistic characteristics, similar population sizes, and/or recent educational reforms.

To date, the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA; www.iea.nl) has published three international reports on the findings of ICCS. These are: a summary report (June 2010), a full-length report (November 2010) and a report on the European Regional Module (November 2010). Further international publications are expected in 2011. These include an ICCS Encyclopaedia, which will describe general demographic and educational characteristics of participating countries, and outline provision for CCE within their educational systems; and an ICCS technical report, which will describe the survey design, methodology and analysis methods in detail.

This national report complements international reporting by examining ICCS results in detail in the national context. It adds to a growing body of literature looking at the experiences of students in Irish post-primary schools (e.g. Perkins, Moran, Cosgrove & Shiel, 2010; Smyth, 2009) and is timely given the ongoing review of the Junior Cycle by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA, 2010b). The remainder of this Executive Summary documents the key findings in this report and draws some conclusions.

E.2. Students' Civic Knowledge

The 45-minute test of civic knowledge has an international average of 500 and a standard deviation of 100. This means that across countries, two-thirds of students have an achievement score between 400 and 600. Results were also reported in terms of three international benchmarks or proficiency levels. Students at the lowest level of proficiency (Level 1) were able to demonstrate familiarity with basic concepts such as equality and freedom while students at the highest level (Level 3) demonstrated holistic civic knowledge and the ability to use more complex reasoning. There is also a level below Level 1 for students whose civic knowledge and skills are not assessed by ICCS. Key findings from the assessment of civic knowledge are as follows:

- Students in Ireland ranked 7th out of 36 countries.[2] Ireland's mean score, 534, is one-third of a standard deviation above the ICCS average of 500. This difference is statistically significant. Only four countries (Finland, Denmark, Korea, and Chinese Taipei) had statistically significantly higher scores than Ireland. Country mean scores ranged from 380 (Dominican Republic) to 576 (Finland).

[2] Although 38 countries participated in ICCS, student response rates in Hong Kong and the Netherlands were too low to allow reliable comparisons to be made. Thus, comparisons are made between 36 countries.

- Females scored significantly higher than males on civic knowledge in all but five countries. On average, females outperformed males by 22 points (about one-fifth of a standard deviation). The gender difference in performance in Ireland was the same as the international average.
- In Ireland, 10% of students achieved scores which were below the lowest proficiency level (i.e. below Level 1 or 395 points) compared with 16% of students internationally. In Ireland, 41% of students scored at the highest proficiency level (at Level 3 or above 563 points) compared with 28% internationally.
- Despite high average performance, the distribution of achievement (spread of scores) in Ireland is comparatively wide. For example, the Irish standard deviation on the civic knowledge scale is the fourth highest across 36 participating countries.
- Schools differ with respect to achievement in civic knowledge to a greater in Ireland than on average. In Ireland, 35% of performance differences are attributable to school-level variations, compared to 27% internationally. This needs to be interpreted with reference to the ways in which schools vary in their engagement with civic and citizenship activities and the ways in which they assign second-year students to base classes. Over a quarter of students were assigned to their base classes on the basis of academic ability, and a large majority of CSPE classes are the same as students' base classes. (It will be recalled that, in ICCS, intact base classes were selected at random to participate.)

E.3. Variations in Attitudes and Behaviours

The information collected in the questionnaires was used to construct various summary measures of attitudes and behaviours. Where relevant, differences between sub-groups of students (e.g. differences between boys and girls or between students attending different types of school) are discussed in this report.

The international comparisons in this section focus on measures where there was a statistically significant difference between the Irish average and the corresponding international average *and* where that difference amounted to at least one quarter of a standard deviation.

Some differences between the responses of students, teachers and principals in Ireland and their counterparts internationally were as follows:

- Students in Ireland demonstrated comparatively favourable attitudes towards equal gender rights, scoring 0.43 standard deviations above the international average on this scale. Compared to the Six-Subject Study in 1971 (the most recent study of civics in which Ireland participated prior to ICCS in 2009), this suggests improvements in attitudes towards equal gender rights.
- Students in Ireland reported comparatively low perceived influence in decision-making in school, with a mean score 0.57 standard deviations below the international average. This finding is of concern given the increasing importance placed on involving students in decision-making processes via mechanisms such as Student Councils.

- A large proportion of students in Ireland reported spending no time reading for fun (42%) compared with on average internationally (28%). This is of some concern given the association between leisure reading and achievement found in this study as well as in others (e.g. OECD, 2010a, b, c, d, e; particularly OECD, 2010c).
- According to the reports of school principals in Ireland, both teachers and students feel a stronger sense of belonging to the school than teachers and students on average internationally. The average scores in Ireland on the scales measuring teachers' sense of belonging and students' sense of belonging were more than half a standard deviation higher than the corresponding international averages.
- Principals in Ireland reported having comparatively better resources in the communities where their schools are located (e.g. parks, public libraries) than principals on average internationally. The average score in Ireland on this scale was one quarter of a standard deviation above the corresponding international average.
- Teachers in Ireland reported markedly lower levels of student participation in community activities, and the mean score on this scale was two-thirds of a standard deviation below the international average. This finding is of concern, but note should be taken of the fact that students were in second year when participating in ICCS, while they would generally have participated in an action project for CSPE in third year.
- Teachers in Ireland reported higher levels of social problems at school, with a score on this index about half of a standard deviation above the international average. There would be merit in investigating the specific aspects of this index that are contributing to the relatively high overall scores.
- CSPE teachers in Ireland had a relatively high score on their self-reported confidence in teaching CCE activities, i.e., one-third of a standard deviation above the international average.
- A large majority (95%) of students in Ireland indicated that they identify with a religion which was higher than the international average. Of all students in Ireland, 87% identified as Catholic. Attendance at religious services once a month or more frequently (63%) was also comparatively high in Ireland. In contrast, membership of religious organisations (such as Young Christian Workers) was relatively low in Ireland.

The latter part of this section discusses some of the results of the questions asked only in Ireland. These included the following:

- In the context of being a 'good adult citizen', students in Ireland were asked about the importance of taking part in activities relating to global development/justice issues. Almost three-quarters (73%) of students reported that participation in such activities is important for being a good adult citizen.
- Participation in sports clubs was reported to be widespread in Ireland: seven in ten students reported that they had been involved in a sports club in the twelve months prior to the ICCS survey. However, about one-quarter of students reported not spending any time on individual sports on a normal school day. A similar percentage reported not spending any time on group sports.

- CSPE teachers in Ireland rated the seven key concepts of the CSPE curriculum in terms of interest and enjoyment to them and their students. The order of the rankings from most to least interesting/enjoyable was: rights and responsibilities; human dignity; democracy; stewardship; interdependence; development; and law.
- CSPE teachers reported significant variation in their rates of attendance at CSPE-related professional development. While 98% of teachers had attended some relevant professional development in the three years prior to ICCS, 32% had attended only one course/event.

E.4. Associations between Civic Knowledge and Background Characteristics

This report examines associations between civic knowledge and a range of student, teacher and school background characteristics.[3] Results indicate that:

- Student and school characteristics examined explained almost half (46%) of the overall variation in civic knowledge scores.
- The only school characteristic which was significantly associated with civic knowledge was *school average socioeconomic status*. Thus, differences in civic knowledge associated with other school characteristics (e.g. differences between the scores of students in VEC-managed schools, community/comprehensive schools and secondary schools[4]) can be explained by differences in the socioeconomic status of students in these schools.
- Two student demographic variables were significantly associated with civic knowledge. *Student socioeconomic status* was positively associated with civic knowledge, while students speaking *a language other than English/Irish* had lower civic knowledge scores than other students, regardless of their migrant status.
- *Higher numbers of books at home* and regularly *discussing political and social issues with parents* were significantly and positively associated with higher levels of civic knowledge.
- The gender difference in civic achievement is associated with *gender differences in the frequency of engaging in leisure reading* (i.e. although girls in Ireland achieved a higher average score than boys, this was because girls spent a greater amount of their spare time engaged in reading). This finding merits further examination since it is unlikely that leisure reading *per se* accounts for the gender difference. This finding is possibly related to differences in literacy levels of boys and girls which themselves are related to engagement in reading (e.g. OECD, 2010c).

[3] Readers interested in the technical detail may note that following initial bivariate analyses, a multilevel model of civic knowledge was conducted. An advantage of a multilevel model is that the association between civic knowledge and a particular variable of interest can be examined, while controlling for the other variables in the model. Results reported in this section are based on the results of the multilevel analysis.

[4] VEC-managed schools include both vocational schools and community colleges.

- Students who reported a greater *level of openness in classroom discussion*s tended to have higher civic knowledge scores and students who demonstrated higher *levels of internal political efficacy (confidence)* also had higher civic knowledge scores.
- In general, students who perceived that they had a greater level of *influence on decision-making at school* achieved lower average civic knowledge scores. Although similar findings have been reported elsewhere in the literature, this finding is counter-intuitive and merits further examination.

E.5. Associations between Interest in Political and Social Issues and Background Characteristics

Interest in political and social issues was also examined with respect to a range of background characteristics. Results of this analysis[5] indicate that:

- The student characteristics that were examined explained 45% of the variation in interest in political and social issues. No school characteristics were associated with students' reported interest in political and social issues.
- In contrast to civic knowledge, *indicators of socioeconomic status* were unrelated to interest in political and social issues. This is a finding which could be investigated further.
- *Girls had significantly higher interest* in political and social issues than boys, by about a tenth of a standard deviation.
- The *frequency with which students discussed political or social issues with parents* was significantly and positively associated with interest; i.e. students who discussed political issues with their parents more regularly tended to have higher levels of interest in political and social issues than students who discussed such issues with their parents on a less frequent basis (although the relationship between these two things might well be circular).
- Other student measures that were significantly (and positively) associated with interest in political and social issues were: *students' civic participation at school*, *perceived openness of classroom discussion*, *perceived influence on decision-making at school*, and *students' internal political efficacy*.
- The *length of time spent on homework* was positively associated with interest; i.e. students who reported spending greater amounts of time on homework also tended to have higher levels of interest in political and social issues. Note, however, that this is a very general measure of homework activities and does not tell us what types of homework students engaged in.
- It is of note that the scale measuring students' perceptions of their influence at school was positively associated with interest, yet negatively so with knowledge (Section E.4).

[5] A multiple regression model at the student level was established as between-school variance on this measure was low.

E.6. ICCS in the Context of National Curriculum and Assessment

Ireland is one of 18 of 38 participating countries in which civic and citizenship education (CCE) is a specific, compulsory subject at lower secondary level (CSPE). CCE is also integrated into the school experience as a whole in Ireland. Students in second year may also encounter CCE content in subjects other than CSPE as well as outside of the context of the school.

Nonetheless, it is of interest to examine the content of the CSPE assessment with respect to the ICCS assessment. This was done by classifying questions from the CSPE Junior Certificate Examination papers for 2007, 2008 and 2009 within the ICCS assessment framework. The results of this exercise indicate that:

- Similar percentages of CSPE and ICCS questions (41% and 40% respectively) addressed issues related to civic society and systems (i.e. citizens, State institutions and civil institutions).
- More questions in CSPE (34%) than in ICCS (23%) addressed the concept of civic participation (i.e. decision-making, influencing and community participation).
- Fewer questions in CSPE (16%) than in ICCS (31%) examined civic principles (i.e. equity, freedom, and social cohesion).
- Few questions in either assessment (CSPE: 4%; ICCS: 6%) covered civic identities (i.e. civic self-image and civic connectedness).
- With regard to the cognitive processes required by the two assessments 24% of ICCS questions assessed the process of 'knowing' compared to 46% of CSPE questions, while 76% of ICCS questions assessed 'reasoning and analysing' compared to 54% of CSPE questions.

Although this comparison would suggest that the CSPE examination questions focus to a greater extent on the recall of knowledge (rather than reasoning or analytic processes) than the ICCS questions, it is important to note that the written examination for CSPE comprises just 40% of all marks and the remainder are awarded for a Report on (work on) an Action Project. An analysis of students' action projects (based on Wilson, 2008) showed that:

- Of projects submitted between 2001 and 2004, the most popular content areas (in terms of the CSPE syllabus) were rights and responsibilities (29%), stewardship (20%), democracy (18%), and law (12%).
- Regarding the type of civic action underpinning CSPE projects, more 'passive' forms (e.g. guest speaker and/or fundraising [62%]; visits [12%]) were preferred over 'active' forms of civic engagement (e.g. campaign or protest [just over 2%]). This would appear to be at odds with the subject's emphasis on active participatory citizenship, though it could be related to the limited amount of instructional time allocated to the subject and may be interpreted within the wider context of the examination-focused structures of the Junior Cycle.

- A large majority of action projects were undertaken as a whole class rather than by individuals or small groups. This may not be optimal in terms of developing the knowledge and skills emphasised in the CSPE curriculum.

E.7. Results from the European Regional Module

The European Regional Module was commissioned by the European Union. It comprised both a test and a questionnaire and was administered in 22 of the 27 EU Member States, as well as Switzerland and Liechtenstein. Unlike the test of civic knowledge, it was not possible to report results on a combined scale; instead, results were reported as percent correct on individual questions. It may be noted that students in Ireland normally study Europe and the EU in third year as part of CSPE and history, and were in second year at the time of ICCS survey administration. Results on the test indicated that:

- Generally, the percent correct scores in Ireland on the European Module test items were similar to the corresponding European average percent correct scores.
- Students in Ireland demonstrated a high degree of familiarity with basic facts. For example, 99% of students knew that Ireland is a member of the EU and 87% were able to identify the flag of the EU.
- There was somewhat lower familiarity with procedural aspects of the EU: 56% of students in Ireland knew the number of EU member states and 49% knew who votes to elect Members of the European Parliament.
- Knowledge of EU policies and laws was varied. For example, while 91% students in Ireland knew that the EU aims to promote peace, prosperity and freedom within its borders, only 21% were aware that all citizens of the EU can study in any EU country without needing a special permit.
- Only a third of students in Ireland could identify a particular requirement for a country to be allowed to join the EU or could indicate one factor that determines the amount a member country contributes to the EU.
- Three of four questions on the euro were answered correctly by at least two-thirds of students in Ireland. The fourth question, asking students whether or not the euro is the official currency of all EU countries, was answered correctly by about half of students in Ireland.

The European Module questionnaire collected information about students' attitudes to Europe and the EU, in areas such as common European policies, common currency, expansion of the EU, and sense of European identity. Students' responses were used to construct several attitudinal scales. Some key results were:

- Students in Ireland had a comparatively lower average score on the attitudes to European unification scale than students on average across Europe. In Ireland, the average score was about one-quarter of a standard deviation below the corresponding European average.
- Students in Ireland demonstrated less favourable attitudes to learning European languages than their counterparts internationally and fewer

students in Ireland reported being able to communicate in a European languages of other European countries than on average across ICCS countries. The average score in Ireland on the attitudes to European language learning scale was close to two-fifths of a standard deviation below the European average.

- Students in Ireland had comparatively positive attitudes towards a common European currency (a quarter of a standard deviation above the European average).

E.8. Concluding Remarks

The findings in this report suggest a number of areas for further research and policy analysis which are outlined in this section.

There are inconsistencies between the emphasis on participatory activities in the CSPE curriculum and the actual levels of participation in the community and in the school reported by students and teachers. This places Ireland in strong contrast with some other countries that participated in the study. It points to aspects of the CSPE syllabus that are aspirational rather than implemented (or implementable), and to the wider context of schools, where a comparatively low emphasis is placed on active student participation. Having said this, it should be noted that ICCS participants were in second year and key activities, such as the CSPE Report on an Action Project (which is likely to be associated with higher levels of participatory activities) normally take place in third year.

These findings can be interpreted in the context of the results of a recent international study of teachers at lower post-primary level (Teaching and Learning International Study; TALIS; Gilleece, Shiel, Perkins & Proctor, 2009; OECD, 2009b) which showed that Irish teachers made relatively little use of student-oriented teaching practices (i.e. practices which adapted teaching on the basis of individual student ability and involved students in planning classroom activities or topics) or enhanced activities (practices requiring students to engage in extended projects). Teachers in Ireland employed structuring practices (e.g. reviewing homework or recapping previous lessons) on a more frequent basis than teachers in all other TALIS countries and they also endorsed traditional views about teaching to a greater extent than teachers in several other countries. It has been argued that the extensive use of traditional approaches to teaching in Ireland may be a consequence of the strong focus on examinations in the Irish educational system (NCCA, 2010b).

The emphasis on project work in CSPE can be regarded as a positive and innovative departure from other Junior Certificate subjects. However, although the CSPE curriculum guidelines recommend innovative and collaborative teaching approaches, it is difficult to see how teachers can switch between traditional (examination-focused) and innovative modes of teaching during just one class period per week. In the wider context of teaching approaches at post-primary level, guidelines for Transition Year (Department of Education, 1993) recommend an emphasis on interdisciplinary and self-directed learning. Available evidence (e.g. Smyth, Byrne & Hannan, 2004) indicates that many teachers working with Transition Year students are successfully providing their students with innovative, self-directed

and collaborative learning experiences. Arguably though, these come too late in the system when many students who are disengaged from the education process may already have left school. As the Junior Cycle review progresses, it would seem important that the NCCA takes note of a low reported emphasis on student participation in Irish schools and in the community. It may be noted that many of the points raised in the NCCA's consultation paper (NCCA, 2010b) have the potential to address findings related to student engagement in learning observed in ICCS (and corroborated by some of the findings in TALIS).

Achievement differences between schools on the ICCS test of civic knowledge are higher in Ireland relative to the international average. This raises some concerns about the equity of our post-primary education system and points to a need to better understand whether, to what extent, and how this relates to practices of grouping and streaming in Ireland (indeed, the issue of grouping and streaming applies to a myriad of achievement and other educational outcomes). Also, ICCS indicated that over one-quarter of the (second-year) students who participated in Ireland were in classes whose membership was established on the basis of academic ability. This issue should be considered with reference to existing research on grouping and streaming (e.g. Smyth, 2009) and the negative impact that this can have on achievement and engagement in school more generally, particularly for less socioeconomically advantaged boys, who are more likely to be streamed than other students (ibid.).

Lower achievement on the ICCS test of civic knowledge by boys appears to be related to gender differences in the frequency of leisure reading and it could be hypothesised that a basic level of literacy is needed to access the content of the ICCS test, with increasing levels of reading literacy associated with increasing civic knowledge scores. This, coupled with findings from other studies on literacy, raises some fundamental concerns about the reading standards and practices of boys. For example, the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), administered to 15-year-olds in 2009 (OECD, 2010a, 2010c) showed that the reading literacy achievement of boys is lower in Ireland compared with girls (in line with patterns across the OECD generally), and it estimated that around 23% of Irish boys have reading literacy levels below that deemed to be needed for a minimum level of functioning in future learning and adult life more generally. PISA also indicated that boys in Ireland have lower levels of engagement in leisure reading activities. These findings indicate that the reading habits, literacy practices and literacy standards of boys in Ireland require careful review and strategies to foster stronger reading habits and self-directed learning more generally must be emphasised. The draft national strategy for literacy and numeracy, *Better Literacy and Numeracy for Children and Young People* (Department of Education and Skills, 2010) is welcome in this respect. However, it remains to be seen whether the strategy is specific enough to adequately address the concerns about literacy practices and literacy levels of boys raised by findings from ICCS and PISA. It can be hypothesised that raising literacy standards among boys could have the potential to improve standards in CSPE, as well as other subject areas.

The relatively low levels of parental involvement in schools found in this study may be noted as another finding of some concern since many studies emphasise the importance of parents in their children's education (e.g. Eivers et al., 2010; OECD, 2010b). This finding merits further consideration, particularly in developing strategies to enhance both students' and parents' engagement with civic processes.

Relatively low levels of knowledge about organisational and legal aspects of the EU among students in Ireland were noted in this report. This finding indicates that there is merit in considering whether or not these should be emphasised at an earlier stage in Ireland in the context of the CSPE syllabus and in other subject areas.

It was also noted that students in Ireland reported comparatively low familiarity with speaking a European language other than English. The National Development Plan 2007-2013 (Government of Ireland, 2007) identified the importance of strengthening language learning and diversifying the languages taught. It also noted that the development and implementation of an integrated language policy is a priority. The findings from ICCS regarding students' attitudes towards language learning provide further evidence of the need for such a policy.

The proposed future introduction of Politics and Society at Senior Cycle was noted. For this new subject to be successful, it would seem important for sufficient instruction time to be built into schools' timetables, along with a strategy to attract teachers with qualifications in politics or sociology to teach the subject. This raises implications for the teaching and assessment of CSPE and related subjects at Junior Cycle in order that students are adequately prepared for the new Senior Cycle subject, and have a sufficiently engaging experience at Junior Cycle to consider taking Politics and Society. Equity in the extent to which the subject is available to students across different school types would also be an important aim to achieve in securing adequate take-up of the subject.

Finally, as with any in-depth survey of education, there are several findings that merit further investigation. These include:

- gaining a better understanding of the reasons for the relatively wide dispersion of civic knowledge between students and schools (including how this relates to the manner in which classes were selected for ICCS);
- further analysis of the nature of the relationship between reading practices, civic knowledge scores, and reading literacy levels;
- identification of possible reasons for the relatively low rates of leisure reading;
- identification of characteristics of schools and teachers who successfully engage students, teachers and parents in a range of participatory activities; and
- identification of possible ways to promote interest in foreign language learning among students with a view to targeting students with low levels of interest.

The richness of the ICCS data should be further exploited to inform us about possible ways to improve CCE within our education system. The breadth of information contained in the ICCS database also means that it has the potential to inform improvements to our education system more generally.

Chapter 1. Overview of ICCS

1.1. Introduction

The International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) was implemented in 38 countries/regions including Ireland in 2008/2009, under the auspices of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). The study examines the ways in which 14-year-olds (students in Grade 8 or second year) in compulsory schooling are prepared to undertake their future roles as citizens. It investigates students' knowledge and understanding of civics and citizenship, their attitudes and perceptions in these areas, and their levels of engagement in civics and citizenship-related activities. It also examines differences among countries on key indicators and how such differences relate to student characteristics, school, teacher and community contexts, and national characteristics. In all, 140,000 students in 5,300 schools took part in ICCS, while data were also provided by 62,000 teachers, as well as by school principals and national research centres.

The 2009 ICCS study is the third in a series of studies of civic education conducted under the auspices of the IEA. The first was conducted as part of the IEA Six-Subject Study in 1971 (Litton, 1977; Torney, Oppenheim, & Farnen, 1975; Walker, 1996). The second, known as the IEA Civic Education Study (CIVED), was carried out in 1999 (Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Oswald, & Schulz, 2001; Torney-Purta, Schwille, & Amadeo, 1999). Second- and sixth-year students in Ireland participated in the civics component of the Six-Subject Study, with Ireland ranking lowest out of eight countries at each grade level on common items measuring civic knowledge. Although it is not possible to compare the civic knowledge of students in Ireland who participated in the 1971 study with that of Irish students in ICCS in 2009, some comparisons can be drawn between the attitudes of students across the two studies on such issues as support for gender equality and support for democratic values. However, readers need to bear in mind that the sample size and response rates in Ireland for the Six-Subject Study were lower than would now be deemed acceptable to ensure a representative sample. Ireland did not take part in CIVED in 1999.

The term "civic and citizenship education" (CCE) in the title of the ICCS study is intended to emphasise that civic education in many countries has been placed alongside or superseded by citizenship education in recent years. Civic education can be viewed as focusing on the knowledge and understanding of formal institutions and processes of civic life (such as voting in elections). The focus of citizenship education is on knowledge and understanding and on opportunities for participation and engagement in both civic and civil society[6], including the wider

[6] In ICCS, *civil society* refers to the sphere of society in which the shared connections between people are at a level larger than that of the extended family but do not include connections to the state. *Civic society* is defined as any community in which the shared connections between people are at a level larger than that of the extended family (including the State). Civic society also refers to the principles, mechanisms, and processes of decision-making, participation, governance, and legislative control that exist in these communities (Schulz et al., 2010a, p. i).

range of ways in which citizens interact with and shape their communities (including schools) and societies.

To date, the IEA has published three international reports on ICCS: a short first findings report (June 2010), a full-length report (November, 2010), and a report on the European Regional Module (commissioned by the EU, and in which Ireland participated; Section 1.4).

This chapter provides a broad overview of the ICCS study. There are eight further sections. In Section 1.2, key aims of the study are considered. Section 1.3 lists participating countries and educational systems. Section 1.4 describes the framework and instruments used in ICCS and Section 1.5 describes the context in which ICCS was administered in Ireland. Section 1.6 describes the sample design, age of participants, and response rates. Section 1.7 provides an overview of key ICCS indicators and describes how the data were analysed at national level. Section 1.8 describes additional national questions included in ICCS and a study of links between the Junior Certificate Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) examination and the ICCS assessment framework. The final section provides an overview of the remainder of this report.

1.2. Key Aims of ICCS

According to Schulz, Ainley, Fraillon, Kerr and Losito (2010a), ICCS aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What variations exist among countries and within countries in student civic knowledge?
2. What changes in civic knowledge have occurred since the last international assessment in 1999?[7]
3. What is the extent of student interest and disposition to engage in public and political life, and what factors within or across countries are related to this engagement?
4. What are students' perceptions of the impact of threats to civil society and of responses to these threats on the future development of society?
5. What aspects of schools and education systems are related to knowledge about, and attitudes to, civics and citizenship, including the following:
   (a) general approaches to civic and citizenship education and/or programme content structure and delivery;
   (b) teaching practices, such as those that encourage higher-order thinking and analysis in relation to civics and citizenship; and
   (c) aspects of school organisation, including opportunities to contribute to conflict resolution, participate in governance processes, and be involved in decision-making?

[7] 17 countries/regions, not including Ireland, participated in both CIVED and ICCS.

6. What aspects of student personal and social background, such as gender, socioeconomic background and language background, are related to students' knowledge about and attitudes towards civic and citizenship education?

1.3. Countries and Education Systems Participating in ICCS

Thirty-eight countries/systems (henceforth 'countries', listed in Table 1.1) participated in ICCS. Southern Hemisphere countries conducted the survey in autumn 2008 and Northern Hemisphere countries conducted it in the spring of 2009.

Table 1.1: Countries participating in ICCS

#Austria	#Greece	*,#Netherlands
#Belgium (Flemish region)	Guatemala	#New Zealand
Bulgaria	*, #Hong Kong (SAR)	#Norway
Chile	Indonesia	Paraguay
Chinese Taipei	Ireland	Poland
Colombia	Italy	Russian Federation
Cyprus	Korea (Republic of)	Slovak Republic
Czech Republic	Latvia	Slovenia
#Denmark	Liechtenstein	Spain
Dominican Republic	Lithuania	Sweden
#England	#Luxembourg	#Switzerland
Estonia	Malta	Thailand
Finland	Mexico	

*Country did not meet the international student sampling standards.

#Country did not meet the international teacher sampling standards.

1.4. ICCS Frameworks and Instruments

The ICCS assessment framework (Schulz, Fraillon, Ainley, Losito & Kerr, 2008) provides a conceptual basis for the international assessment instruments and a point of reference for the development of regional instruments, including the European Regional Module. The framework consists of two parts:

- The civic and citizenship framework, which outlines the outcome measures addressed through a cognitive test and student perception questionnaire; and
- The contextual framework, which maps out context factors expected to influence outcomes.

Civic and Citizenship Framework

The civic and citizenship framework is organised along three dimensions:

- An *affective-behavioural dimension* – describing the types of student perceptions and activities measured, which is further subdivided into value beliefs, attitudes, behavioural intentions, and behaviours (Table 1.2);
- A *cognitive dimension* – describing the two cognitive processes to be assessed, namely knowing, and reasoning and analysing (Table 1.3); and

- A *content dimension* – specifying subject matter to be assessed within civics and citizenship (with regard to affective-behavioural and cognitive aspects); four content domains are specified in the framework: civic society and systems, civic principles, civic participation and civic identities (Table 1.4).

Table 1.2: ICCS affective-behavioural domains

Domain	Definition	Examples
Value Beliefs	. . . are related to fundamental beliefs about democracy and citizenship that are more constant over time, more deeply rooted and broader than attitudes.	• Beliefs in citizenship values • Beliefs in democratic values
Attitudes	. . . include self-cognitions relating to civics and citizenship, attitudes toward the rights and responsibilities of groups in society, and attitudes towards institutions.	• Self-beliefs • Attitudes towards others • Attitudes towards institutions • Attitudes towards specific policies and practices
Behavioural intentions	. . . students' expectations of future action, not actual behaviour. These intentions relate to active citizenship in the near future or as adults.	• Preparedness to participate in forms of civic protest • Behavioural intentions regarding future participation in citizenship activities and in adult life
Behaviours	. . . refer to present or past participation in civic-related activities at school or in the wider community.	• Frequency of engaging in various leisure activities • Involvement in civic-related participation at school and in the community

Table 1.3: ICCS cognitive domains

Domain	Definition	Key Processes
Knowing	. . . the learned civic and citizenship information that students use when engaging in the more complex cognitive tasks that help them make sense of their civic worlds. Students will be expected to recall or recognize definitions, descriptions, and the key properties of civic and citizenship concepts and content, and to illustrate these with examples.	• Defining • Describing • Illustrating with examples
Reasoning and analysing	. . . the ways in which students use civic and citizenship information to reach conclusions that are broader than the contents of any single concept. Reasoning extends from the direct application of knowledge and understanding to reach conclusions about familiar concrete situations through to the selection and assimilation of knowledge and understanding of multiple concepts that are then used to reach conclusions about complex, multifaceted, unfamiliar, and abstract situations.	• Interpreting information • Relating • Justifying • Integrating • Generalising • Evaluating • Solving problems • Hypothesising • Understanding civic change • Understanding civic motivation

Table 1.4: ICCS content domains

Domain	Definition	Subdomains	Key Concepts
Civic society and systems	. . . . includes the formal and informal mechanisms and organisations that underpin both the civic contracts that citizens have with their societies and the functioning of the societies themselves.	• Citizens • State institutions (e.g. legislatures, parliaments, judiciaries;) • Civil institutions (e.g. religious institutions; trade unions; political parties; media, schools)	Power and authority; rules and the law; constitution; governance; decision-making; negotiation; accountability; sovereignty; nation-building; franchise and voting; the economy; the welfare state; treaties; sustainable development; globalisation
Civic principles	. . . refer to the shared ethical foundations of civic societies. The framework regards support, protection, and promotion of these principles as civic responsibilities and as frequently occurring motivations for civic participation by individuals and groups.	• Equity • Freedom • Social cohesion	Concern for the common good; human rights; empathy; respect; social justice; inclusiveness; equality
Civic participation	. . . refers to the manifestations of individuals' actions in their communities. Civic participation can operate at any level of community and in any community context. The level of participation can range from awareness through engagement to influence.	• Decision-making (including voting) • Influencing • Community participation (including volunteering)	Civic involvement; civic self-efficacy; co-operation and collaboration; negotiation and resolution; engagement
Civic identities	. . . include the individual's civic roles and perceptions of these roles. Civic individuals both influence and are influenced by the relationships they have with family, peers, and communities, and with regional, national, and global groupings. Thus, an individual's civic identity explicitly links to a range of personal influences and civic-related groupings. This situation results in individuals having multiple articulated identities rather than a single-faceted civic identity.	• Civic self-image • Civic connectedness	Civic self-concept; multiplicity; diversity; culture and location; patriotism; nationalism; civic and citizenship values

Table 1.5 illustrates the relative weighting allocated to the cognitive and affective-domains in ICCS, with 80 items on the test of civic knowledge[8] and on the student questionnaire. Cognitive items are classified according to content and cognitive domains, while questionnaire items are described with reference to content and affective-behavioural domains. It is noteworthy that the over three-quarters of cognitive items are classified as 'reasoning and analysing', suggesting that ICCS places a higher emphasis on reasoning processes and a lower emphasis on content knowledge. Table 1.5 also shows the strong emphasis in ICCS on attitudes towards and engagement in civic participation.

Table 1.5: Coverage of content and affective-behavioural domains in ICCS

	Content Domain				Total N
	Civic Society and Systems	Civic Principles	Civic Participation	Civic Identities	
Cognitive domain					
Knowing	15	3	1	0	19
Reasoning and Analysing	17	22	17	5	61
Total N	32	25	18	5	80
Affective-behavioural domain					
Value beliefs	12	12	0	0	
Attitudes	12	18	18	14	
Behavioural intentions			21		
Behaviours			14		
Total N	24	30	53	14	121

Contextual Framework

As noted above, ICCS also includes a contextual framework, which recognises that students develop understanding about their roles as citizens in contemporary society through activities and experiences that take place within the contexts of the home, school, classroom and wider community. The contextual framework identifies four overlapping levels:

- *Context of the wider community* – this level comprises the wider context within which schools and home environments operate. It can include factors at local, regional and national levels. In the case of Ireland (as with many ICCS countries), it also includes a supra-national context, the European Union.
- *Context of schools and classrooms* – this level comprises factors related to the instruction students receive, the school culture, and general school environment.
- *Context of home environments* – this level is associated with factors related to home background, and the social out-of-school environment for the student (e.g. leisure activities).

[8] One of the 80 civic knowledge questions was deleted from the ICCS database due to poor measurement properties. It was a multiple-choice item, in the content area of civic principles, and the process area of reasoning and analysing.

- *Context of the individual* – this level includes the individual characteristics of the student (e.g. gender, language spoken).

The contextual framework makes a distinction between contextual factors that are antecedent and those that represent processes. Antecedents are those factors that are thought to affect how student learning and the acquisition of civic-related understandings and perceptions take place. Such factors are level-specific and may be influenced by antecedents or processes at a higher level. For example, the preparedness of teachers to teach civic-related classes may be affected by historical factors and/or policies implemented at national level. Processes are factors related to civic-related learning and the acquisition of understandings, competencies, and dispositions. They are constrained by antecedents and influenced by factors relating to the higher levels of the multilevel structure. Examples of processes include school governance, teaching and learning, socialisation, and communication. Figure 1.1 illustrates how these relationships may operate in practice. Antecedents such as the education system and student characteristics (e.g. gender) are seen as influencing a range of teaching, learning and socialisation practices. These in turn have a reciprocal relationship with outcomes that include knowledge about civic society and systems, civic participation and civic identities. It is also possible that elements within a block might interact (for example, the education system might interact with school characteristics).

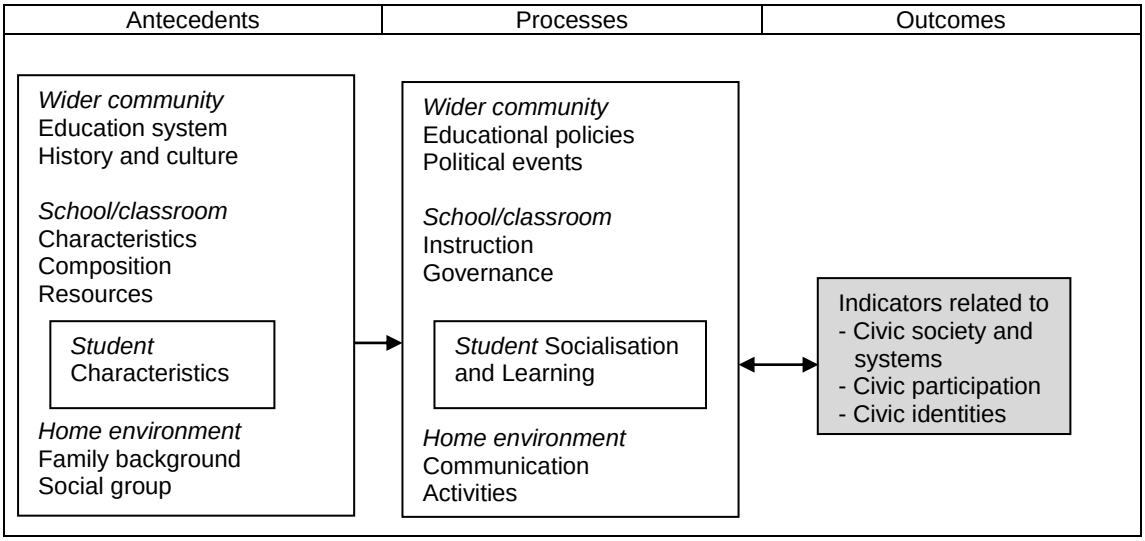

Figure 1.1: Relationships between antecedents, processes and outcomes in ICCS

Source: Schulz et al. (2008), p. 31.

European Regional Module

Regional Modules were offered to students in three regions – Asia, Europe and South America – in conjunction with the main ICCS components. The purpose of these modules was to ascertain students' knowledge and dispositions about their region. The European Regional Module, commissioned by the EU, was undertaken by students in 24 out of 26 European countries listed in Table 1.1, including non-EU countries Liechtenstein and Switzerland. The framework for the module was based on the ICCS framework, with a focus on both knowledge and affect and behaviour.

Aspects of knowledge that were assessed included knowledge of the European Union and its institutions, EU law and policies, and the euro currency, while information about the following dimensions of student attitude/behaviour in relation to Europe was obtained: sense of European identity; participation in activities at the European level; participation in communication about Europe; opportunities for learning about Europe in school; self-rated proficiency in communicating in other European languages; attitudes towards common policies in Europe; attitudes towards the common European currency, European unification and further expansion of the EU; attitudes towards equal opportunities for other European citizens; and attitudes towards freedom of migration and restricting migration within Europe. Information was also gathered on students' self-reported knowledge about the EU.

Assessment Instruments

ICCS used a suite of instruments to address the research issues noted above. These instruments are as follows:

- Student instruments – the 80-item[9] test of civic knowledge[10], the student questionnaire (including the 121 affective-behavioural questions[11]), the European regional module test (12 items, though some had multiple parts), and the European regional module questionnaire (83 affective-behavioural questions);
- Teacher instrument – the ICCS teacher questionnaire, administered to a sample of teachers of all subjects, teaching second-year students in participating schools;
- School instrument – the ICCS school questionnaire was administered to principals in all participating schools; and
- National contexts questionnaire – an online questionnaire completed by national research co-ordinators or their nominees that gathered information about system-level characteristics, both general and specific to CCE. In Ireland, this was completed by CSPE experts in the Department of Education and Skills.

Boxes 1.1 to 1.3 summarise these instruments and indicate the approximate time required to complete each one.

The test of civic knowledge consisted of two item (question) types: 74 multiple choice items (four response options, one of which was correct) and six open-ended response items, where students had to write an answer to a question. The test items were distributed across seven booklets, using a balanced rotated design, such that each cluster of items appeared in three booklets in different positions (see Schultz et al., 2008, Table 5). This design serves two purposes – students cannot be expected to complete all questions, and rotating the questions in different positions

[9] As noted previously, one item was deleted given its poor measurement properties, resulting in a 79-item test.
[10] The test included 17 questions from the CIVED 1999 study, to allow for comparisons over time.
[11] Some constructs covered in CIVED 1999 were included to allow for comparisons over time.

in the test booklets cancels out the confounding effects of survey fatigue in estimating the measurement properties of the questions. Hence, in practice, each student was asked to attempt only a subset of the full pool of 80 items. The six open-ended items on the ICCS cognitive test were marked in each country by trained raters using internationally-developed scoring rubrics.

Box 1.1: Summary of ICCS student instruments

Assessment of civic knowledge *(45 minutes)*
- Four content areas: civic society and systems; civic principles; civic participation; and civic identities.
- Two processes: knowing; and reasoning and analysing.

Student questionnaire *(40 minutes)*
- Demographics (e.g. gender, family structure, migrant status)
- Home background (e.g. parental education, books in the home)
- Parental interest in social and political issues
- Views on participation in class
- Participation in civic and citizenship education (CCE) related activities inside and outside of school time
- Interest in politics
- Views on gender, ethnic, and immigrant rights
- Voting intent and intent to join a political party
- Trust in civic institutions

EU Regional Module *(25 minutes) – taken by 24 participating countries including Ireland*
Part 1: knowledge about the European Union
Part 2: attitudes towards Europe (not specifically the EU), e.g.
- Sense of belonging to Europe
- Attitudes towards the euro
- Attitudes towards learning European languages
- Beliefs about EU governance and enlargement of the EU

Box 1.2: Summary of ICCS teacher and school questionnaires

Teacher questionnaire
30 minutes (Second year teachers of any subject)
- Demographics (e.g. gender, age, years' teaching experience)
- School and class climate
- Views on the content of the civic and citizenship education (CCE) curriculum

Optional teacher questionnaire section – 10 minutes (CCE teachers only)
- Confidence in teaching CCE-related topics
- CCE activities in and outside of class time
- Perceived improvements needed to the teaching and learning of CCE

School questionnaire
30 minutes (principals of participating schools)
- Management, resources and demographics
- Characteristics of and resources in the local community
- Teaching and learning of CCE

Box 1.3: Summary of ICCS national contexts questionnaire *(Completed by the Department of Education and Skills)*
- Structure of education system
- Civic and citizenship education in the curriculum
- Recent developments in civic and citizenship education

The ICCS student questionnaire included Likert-type items where students were asked to rate statements (e.g. ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'), indicate frequencies (ranging from 'often' to 'never') or rate levels of interest, trust or importance (from 'a lot' to 'not at all'). It also included multiple-response items (for example where respondents indicated three aspects of an issue that they viewed as most important) and categorical response items (e.g. for gender, educational level). Finally, open response items, where students were asked to write short responses, were used to collect information on parental occupations.

1.5. The Context of ICCS in Ireland

In March 2007 the *Taskforce on Active Citizenship* gave national prominence to civic and citizenship issues in Ireland. One recommendation of the report was that Ireland participate in ICCS. Ireland is one among 18 of the participating countries that offers all students the opportunity to learn about civic and citizenship education (CCE) issues as a compulsory subject at lower secondary education. In Ireland, the subject is called CSPE (Civic, Social and Political Education). There is a strong emphasis in CSPE on active engagement. The CSPE syllabus covers four content areas (the individual and citizenship, the community, the State – Ireland, and Ireland and the world) with seven concepts cross-cutting these content areas (democracy, rights and responsibilities, human dignity, interdependence, development, law, and stewardship).

CSPE is generally timetabled for one class period a week and is the only Junior Certificate subject assessed with a common-level paper (40% of marks) and a project (Report on an Action Project)(60% of marks). Other subjects, such as history, home economics, religious education (RE) and social, personal and health education (SPHE) also cover content relevant to the ICCS assessment. Students might also learn about ICCS concepts outside of school (e.g. in the news or in discussion with parents). It should be noted that students in Ireland participated in ICCS in the spring of second year and would not have covered all of the CSPE curriculum.

In the broader national context of CCE, other issues are noteworthy, for example:

- the current review of the junior cycle by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA, 2010a).
- opportunities for civic- and citizenship-relevant experiences in Transition Year including specific programmes such as Young Social Innovators (YSI) (see http://www.youngsocialinnovators.ie/).
- the development of a new senior cycle subject, Politics and Society, by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA, 2010b).
- patterns of social and political change that are occurring in Ireland and internationally, such as the increase in migration, the development of democracy, the increase in NGOs, globalisation, and security threats (see, for example, Schultz et al., 2010b).

In the European context, some relevant issues are as follows:

- Ireland joined the European Union (then European Economic Community) in 1973 and has received assistance from various funds including structural and cohesion funds, rural development funds and the Common Agricultural Policy.
- Both the Nice Treaty and the Lisbon Treaty were initially rejected by Irish voters but endorsed when a second referendum was held for each.
- Developing European awareness and a sense of European identity among citizens are viewed as priorities by European institutions such as the European Commission and the Council of Europe. To this end, various initiatives have been established, including the *Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education Project*, and the *European Year of Citizenship through Education* (2005). Work has been undertaken by the Centre for Research on Lifelong Learning (sponsored by the European Commission) on developing a composite indicator on civic competence in European countries (Hoskins, 2006; Hoskins et al., 2006).
- The year 2011 has been designated as *European Year of Volunteering*. The EU[12] will use the year to work towards objectives such as creating an enabling environment for volunteering in the EU; empowering volunteer organisations; rewarding volunteering activities; and raising awareness of the value of volunteering.

1.6. Sample Design, Age of Participants and Response Rates

In all countries, schools were selected, and then students, on the basis of intact base class. The target population for ICCS was grade 8 students, provided the average age at that grade level was 13.5 years or above. Where the average age was below 13.5, Grade 9 was defined as the target population. All but four countries (England, Malta, New Zealand, Paraguay) tested in grade 8. In Ireland, the average age of participating Grade 8 (second year) students was 14.3 years (Schultz et al., 2010a, Table 8). Students in six European countries in ICCS had lower average ages than their counterparts in Ireland: Belgium (Fl.) (13.9), Cyprus (13.9), Greece (13.7), Norway (13.7), Spain (14.1), and Slovenia (13.7),

The international contractor for ICCS was responsible for selecting the sample of schools in each country, using a database of schools provided by the country that included agreed explicit and implicit stratification variables[13]. In Ireland, the explicit variables were school type (community/comprehensive, secondary, VEC) and size (≤40 students in second year, 41-80, 81-170, ≥171), while the implicit variables were socioeconomic composition, split into four groups (based on the average percentage of students in receipt of a fee waiver for the Junior Certificate Examination over three school years, and percent of female students (0%, 1-45%, 46-99%, and 100%). In all,

[12] http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/focus/focus840_en.htm

[13] Stratification involves grouping schools into subgroups based on important characteristics of the education system. This helps to ensure a representative sample. Stratifiers vary across participating countries.

10 strata were formed – nine based on school type/size, and a tenth for all schools with 171 or more students[14] (Table 1.6).

Table 1.6: Population and sampled schools – Ireland

		Population		Sampled*	
Sector	Size	Schools	Students	Schools	Students**
Comm/Comp	≤40	6	172	2	(65)
	41-80	21	1307	4	(253)
	81-170	59	6919	20	(2405)
Secondary	≤40	50	1329	4	(115)
	41-80	139	8501	25	(1606)
	81-170	187	21237	62	(7303)
VEC	≤40	79	1933	6	(175)
	41-80	73	4233	13	(804)
	81-170	61	6575	19	(2173)
Very Large	≥171	20	3980	10	(2015)
Totals		695	56186	165	(16914)

*These are weighted population estimates.

**In practice, intact classes rather than students were sampled within schools.

It should be noted that ICCS was one of two studies involving post-primary schools in Ireland in 2009. The second, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), also required a representative national sample of schools, though the target group in that study was 15-year-olds. Sampling for the two studies was done using split sampling (i.e., by dividing the population of schools into two equivalent halves) and then selecting the required number of schools from each half. Independent research (LaRoche & Cartwright, 2010) confirms that conducting two studies concurrently has had no effect on the quality of the samples.

In Ireland and internationally, in each sampled school, one intact classroom was selected at random from a list of base classes, except in the very large schools where two such classes were selected. Software provided by the ICCS contractor was used to select classes.

The population for the ICCS teacher survey was defined as all subject teachers of the students in the target grade at each sampled school. It includes only those teachers teaching second year during the assessment period and employed at school from the beginning of the school year. Fifteen teachers were randomly selected from each school participating in the ICCS survey (or, if there were fewer than 15 teachers of second years, all were selected).

Table 1.7 provides a breakdown of the number of participating schools, students and teachers in each school type/size category. A discrepancy between the numbers of schools in a type/size category for students and teachers arises if an

[14] The approach taken to sampling involves establishing a fixed interval size for each stratification cell (e.g. large mixed secondary schools) and selecting a random starting point so that the required number of schools can be selected. If some schools are very large relative to other schools in the stratum, they run the risk of being under-represented in the sample. Hence, it is preferable to remove them, and create a separate category.

insufficient number of teacher questionnaires (fewer than 50%) have been returned by a school (in which case it was deemed not to have participated).

Table 1.7: Participating schools, students and teachers – Ireland

		Total Participating - Students		Total Participating - Teachers	
	Sch Size	Schools	Students	Schools	Teachers
Comm/Comp	≤40	2	33	2	32
	41-80	4	74	4	60
	81-170	18	387	16	226
Secondary	≤40	4	57	3	32
	41-80	22	448	22	274
	81-170	52	1263	51	684
VEC	≤40	6	93	6	79
	41-80	12	235	11	162
	81-170	17	405	13	184
Very Large	≥171	7	360	7	113
Totals		144	3355	135	1846

Response rates for Ireland are summarised in Table 1.8. In all, 144 schools participated, representing a weighted school response rate of 87.4% after replacement[15]. Within these schools, 3355 students participated, representing a weighted student participation rate of 91.6%. Since the product of the weighted response rates before replacement was 85%, and this met the required percentage stipulated by the IEA, Ireland's student sample was deemed to be 'acceptable' (i.e., it fell into the highest response rate category identified by the IEA; Schulz et al., 2010b).

Table 1.8: Response rates for Ireland – schools, teachers and students

Level		% Students	% Teachers
Schools:	% Participation before replacement (weighted)	81.8	79.0
	% Participation after replacement (weighted)	87.4	84.6
	% Participation after replacement (unweighted)	87.8	83.5
	Total number of participating schools	144	137
Individuals:	% Participation (weighted)	91.6	87.0
	Total number of participating students	3355	1861
Overall:	Before replacement (weighted) %	74.9	68.8
	After replacement (weighted) %	80.1	73.6

Teachers in 137 schools participated, representing a weighted response weight of 83.5% after replacement. Within these schools, 1846 teachers completed the ICCS Teacher Questionnaire, representing an overall weighted response rate of 68.8% before replacement and 73.6% after replacement. Since the latter percentage approached the required 75%, the sample of teachers was deemed to be 'acceptable

[15] Replacement schools are selected when an originally-selected school declines to participate. They have the same stratification characteristics as the original schools.

after replacement', falling into the second of three categories of sample quality used by the IEA[16].

ICCS was implemented in schools in Ireland in early spring 2009. A designated teacher, trained in how to administer ICCS, was responsible for administering the tests and questionnaires to students, and administering and collecting the school and teacher questionnaires from colleagues. A consequence of testing in the spring of second year is that students in Ireland would have been about half-way through the CSPE curriculum for Junior Cycle at that time, and hence might not have covered the full range of content, processes and experiences embodied in the curriculum, though some of these may have been encountered in other subject areas and/or outside of the school context.

1.7. Key Results Available and Procedures Used to Analyse the Data

This report uses a number of techniques to present results from the civic knowledge test and questionnaires, as well as the European Regional Module. Performance on the civic knowledge test was scaled using item response theory (IRT) methodology. This technique places students and test items on the same scale, allowing for a description of the types of tasks that students with varying scores are likely to be able to accomplish. Overall performance is reported in terms of scale scores, where the mean score across all 38 participating countries has been set at 500 and the standard deviation at 100 (i.e., about two-thirds of scores fall between 400 and 600 points). Hence, differences in performance can be compared in terms of standard deviation units[17]. Performance on the test is also reported with reference to proficiency levels – descriptions of the knowledge and skills that groups of students at different levels of performance are likely to demonstrate. Where appropriate, examples of items used in the ICCS test are also presented, along with percent correct scores for Ireland and the international average.

Many of the attitudinal and behavioural scales described in this report, such as students' interest in political and social issues, or teachers' confidence in teaching civic and citizenship education topics, are based on sets of items that assess a common underlying construct. Performance on these scales is reported with reference to an international mean score of 50 and a standard deviation of 10, such that two-thirds of scores fall between 40 and 60 points. It is important to note that, since these scales are based on respondents' perceptions, they are not necessarily fully comparable across countries.

Throughout this report, the scores achieved by students on the civic knowledge test and on the various attitudinal and behavioural scales are analysed with reference to key demographic variables. At the student level, these include gender, family structure (single parent, nuclear or mixed), and migrant status and language spoken at home (migrant, non-migrant and speaks English/Irish, migrant

[16] Additional information on sampling outcomes will be included in the *ICCS Technical Report* (in preparation).
[17] For example, a difference of 25 points in civic knowledge between two groups would represent one-quarter of an international standard deviation (25/100).

and speaks another language). At school level, the variables include school sector/gender composition, location (population density), enrolment size, and whether the school is in the School Support Programme (SSP) under DEIS.

For analyses involving these variables, a reference group is usually identified, and other groups are compared to the reference group. For example, in the case of family structure, the reference group is nuclear family, and the mean score of students in the reference group is compared with those of students in single-parent and mixed families. Where relevant, the statistical significance of differences has been adjusted to take into account the fact that more than two groups are compared.

Relationships between variables are also reported as correlation coefficients.

All results presented in the report (such as mean scores or percentages) are weighted population estimates. The data are weighted to ensure that they are representative of their respective populations, and not simply based on a particular sample of participating students or teachers.

Readers are referred to Box 1.4 for additional guidance in interpreting results presented in this report.

In Chapter 6 of this report, a multilevel model of student civic knowledge is presented. The model, which includes explanatory variables at the school and student levels, evaluates the effects on civic knowledge of a range of background characteristics considered simultaneously. In the second part of Chapter 6, a multiple regression analysis of students' interest in political and social issues is described. A multilevel model was not necessary in this instance, because interest is not associated with any of the school-level characteristics considered in this report.

The approach to presenting the results of the European Module test is a little different to the civic knowledge test since it was not possible to form an overall scale. Instead, average performance on individual test items in Ireland is compared with average performance across participating European countries. Performance on the attitudinal and behavioural scales is compared in much the same way as for the ICCS attitudinal and behavioural results.

Additional information on how the civic knowledge test was scaled, and how the different attitudinal and behavioural indices were constructed, is available in the *ICCS Technical Report* (forthcoming).

Box 1.4: Interpreting the results in this report

ICCS Averages: Each participating country contributes equally to the ICCS average on the civic knowledge scale which has a mean of 500 and a standard deviation of 100. In the case of scales derived from the school, teacher, student and European questionnaires, these have an ICCS average of 50 and a standard deviation of 10. Again, each country contributes equally to these scale means.

Comparing a country's mean score to the international mean score: As each country contributes to the overall international average, it is necessary to account for covariance when comparing a country's mean score to the international mean score. This is done by taking into account the covariance when calculating the standard error of the difference between the two mean scores (OECD, 2009a, p.171).

Examining group differences on mean scores within Ireland: In parts of this report, comparisons are made between the performance of different groups of students on the civic knowledge scale and between the attitudes and behaviours of different groups of students. A variety of symbols are used to illustrate whether or not the differences between the groups are statistically significant and shading is used to show the magnitude of the differences. The use of these symbols and shading are illustrated in the example below. The example looks at the mean civic knowledge scores of students who indicated that, as adults, they 'will certainly', 'will probably', 'will probably not', or 'will certainly not' stand as a candidate in a local election or join a trade union. In this example, 'probably not' is used as the reference category, thus students who reported that they 'will certainly', 'will probably', or 'will certainly not' do each of the activities as an adult are compared to those who indicated that they 'will probably not' do the activity.

Results show that students who indicated that they will probably not stand as a candidate in a local election achieved significantly higher mean civic knowledge scores ($p < .01$) than students who indicated that they certainly will. This is illustrated by the symbol ↟.

As the difference between the two groups is almost 57 points, the cell is shaded in grey to indicate that the difference is at least one quarter of an international standard deviation (25 points). Students who indicated that they will probably not join a trade union achieved a higher mean score than students who stated that they will certainly not join a trade union. This is illustrated by the symbol ↑, as the difference is statistically significant at the .05 level but not at the .01 level. As the difference between the groups is less than one quarter of a standard deviation, the cell is not shaded. Differences which are not statistically significant are represented by the symbol =.

EXAMPLE: Civic knowledge by likelihood of standing as a candidate in a local election as an adult

When you are an adult, what do you think you will do?	Probably Not – Certainly Will	Probably Not – Probably Will	Probably Not – Certainly Not
Stand as a candidate in local (e.g. Co Council) elections	↟	↟	=
Join a trade union	=	=	↑

Note: Significantly higher ($p \leq .05$) ↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .05$) ↓
Significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) ↟ Significantly lower ($p \leq .01$) ↡
No statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) =
Shading indicates that the difference between the two groups being compared is statistically significant and at least 25 points (one-quarter standard deviation).

Adjustment for multiple comparisons: If one comparison is made between two groups (e.g. comparing the mean scores of males and females), the accepted error rate is typically .05; i.e., in 5 times out of 100, the difference will be considered to be statistically significant even if there is no true significant difference in the population. As the number of comparisons increases, an adjustment should be made to reduce the likelihood of finding a difference by chance alone. The adjustment used is the Bonferroni method which involves dividing the alpha-level by the number of comparisons, e.g. if 2 comparisons are made, a critical value of .025 (.05/2) is used.

Correlation coefficients: A Pearson correlation is a measure of the linear association between two variables. The association may be positive, i.e., as one variable increases, the other also increases, or negative, i.e., as one variable increases, the other decreases. The value of a correlation lies between -1 and +1, where 0 signifies no linear relationship between the variables. Correlation coefficients can be described as 'weak' if they range from |.00| to |.10|, 'weak to moderate' from |.11| to |.25|, 'moderate' from |.26| to |.40|, 'moderate to strong' from |.41| to |.55|, and 'strong' if greater than |.55|.

Weights: All results are weighted using sampling weights, which ensures that the estimates are representative of the population from which the sample was drawn.

Error in the estimates: The results presented are not perfectly precise and this arises mainly from two sources – sampling error (i.e. a subset of the population only was surveyed) and measurement error (in the case of the civic knowledge test, where individual students complete a subtest of the pool of 80 items). Therefore, analysis techniques adjust the estimates of error (standard error, or SE; OECD, 2009a).

1.8. National Additions to the International Component

In addition to the international questions in the student questionnaire, it was possible to include a small number of items of national interest. Students in Ireland were asked about their participation in individual and group sports as out of school activities (see Chapter 3). They were also asked to distinguish between attendance at religious services at school and outside of school, and to indicate their level of agreement with the statement that religious beliefs are an important influence on their lives. The results from these questions are reported in Chapter 4.

A number of questions directed at CSPE teachers completing the teacher questionnaire were also national additions. These included perceived interest and enjoyment by teachers and students (as rated by teachers) in the teaching and learning of seven key concepts underpinning the CSPE curriculum, teachers' participation in continuing professional development (CPD), and the means by which teachers are generally assigned to teaching CSPE in schools. The responses of teachers to these questions are reported in Chapter 5.

Finally, in Ireland only, the Junior Certificate examination in CSPE was compared in a systematic way to the ICCS assessment framework, taking into account the fact that the content of the examination may change from year to year. The results of this analysis are reported in Chapter 7.

1.9. Overview of Remainder of the Report

Chapter 2 compares the performance of students in Ireland on the ICCS test of civic knowledge with the performance of students in other participating countries in terms of overall mean scores and percentages of students performing at each proficiency level. The extent to which schools differ with respect to achievement across countries is also considered as are gender differences in performance and proficiency. A subset of nine 'comparison' countries against which Ireland is more closely compared throughout the remainder of the report is identified.

Chapter 3 describes two additional student indicators – interest in political and social issues and expected adult electoral participation – and examines how these and students' civic knowledge are related to a range of student and school background variables. The chapter concludes with a description of students' out-of-school activities and how these relate to civic knowledge, interest in political and social issues, and adult electoral participation.

Chapter 4 outlines students' attitudes towards, perceptions of, and participation in, civic- and citizenship-related activities, based on indices derived from the student questionnaire. These include students' attitudes towards equal rights for men and women, towards people from different ethnic groups and for immigrants, citizenship self-efficacy, sense of internal political efficacy, and attitudes towards and participation in school life. The chapter also includes a description of students' views on the importance of religion in their lives. Where relevant, the responses of students in ICCS are compared with those of their counterparts in the Six-Subject Study in 1971.

Chapter 5 seeks to consider the context of schools, teaching, and learning. Following a consideration of demographic data, it looks at teachers' participation in

various community activities with their second-year students, their levels of confidence in various general teaching activities, and their confidence in teaching CCE-specific topics. The teaching and assessment practices of CCE (CSPE) teachers are described. The chapter concludes with a review of 18 scales – seven derived from the school questionnaire and 11 from the teacher questionnaire – covering issues such as student participation at school, teachers' confidence in teaching methods, and teachers' perceptions of student behaviour at school.

The first part of Chapter 6 uses multilevel analysis to examine the effects of a range of school- and student-level variables on civic knowledge, and to explain the variance in civic knowledge that can be accounted for by these variables, both singly and in combination. The second part uses multiple regression to examine the effects of a selection of student-level variables on students' interest in political and social issues. The chapter concludes by highlighting a number of key issues that arise from comparing the two models.

Chapter 7 locates the ICCS study in the context of national curricula and assessment. Starting with a description of the CSPE syllabus in terms of the ICCS assessment framework, it proceeds to classify CSPE examination questions within the ICCS assessment framework, and to examine the types of projects that students undertake in CSPE. The chapter then contextualises some of the findings in ICCS in Ireland with reference to CCE developments in Ireland more generally.

Chapter 8 outlines students' performance on the European Regional Module test (knowledge about Europe) and students' attitudes and behaviours as measured by the European Regional Module questionnaire. The performance of students in Ireland and on average across 24 countries on individual test items is described (as noted previously, no overall scale of performance on the European test is available). Subsequent sections consider a range of issues including students' self-reported knowledge about the EU, their sense of European identity, their participation in activities at the European level, their ability to communicate in other European languages, and their attitudes towards migration within Europe.

Chapter 9, the final chapter, summarises the main findings of the study and draws conclusions.

Chapter 2. Students' Civic Knowledge

2.1. Overview

This chapter presents findings relating to the assessment of civic knowledge, as described in Chapter 1 (Section 1.4).[18] The chapter begins by providing a description of proficiency levels associated with civic knowledge and discusses examples of questions used in the assessment (Section 2.2). Section 2.3 provides an initial description of the performance of students on the assessment, i.e. means, standard deviations, and the extent to which schools differ with respect to achievement. Section 2.3 also describes how students in participating countries vary in terms of average age and grade (year) level.

Section 2.4 provides a description of the knowledge and skills that students are likely to be able to demonstrate on the civic knowledge assessment according to international benchmarks or proficiency levels, and describes the distribution of students across these proficiency levels.

Section 2.5 examines gender differences in civic knowledge, both in terms of average differences in achievement, and in the distribution of males and females across the ICCS proficiency levels.

The majority of variation in achievement on the civic knowledge assessment lies within, rather than between, countries. Therefore, this chapter should be viewed as an initial description of student performance on the ICCS assessment. Chapters 3 and 5 examine the extent to which achievement in Ireland varies with respect to a range of student, teacher and school characteristics, while Chapter 6 examines several of these characteristics simultaneously.

The economic, cultural and educational characteristics of countries that participated in ICCS vary widely. Therefore, in this and subsequent chapters, we make reference to Irish results with respect to nine comparison countries. These are:

- Belgium (Fl.)
- Denmark
- England
- Finland
- New Zealand
- Poland
- Slovenia
- Sweden
- Switzerland.

[18] It should be recalled from Chapter 1 that the response rates of students in two countries did not meet the international standards – Hong Kong (SAR) and the Netherlands – so country achievement is interpreted on the basis of 36 rather than 38 countries.

These countries were selected for a variety of reasons: high average performance (Finland, Denmark, Sweden), similar performance compared with Ireland (Poland, Sweden, Switzerland), similar cultural and linguistic characteristics (England, New Zealand), similar population sizes (New Zealand, Slovenia, Belgium (Fl.)), and/or recent educational reform (Poland).

Readers can refer to Box 1.4 in Chapter 1 for further information on how to interpret the results presented in this chapter.

2.2. Proficiency Levels and Example Questions from the ICCS Assessment

The development of the described proficiency scale of achievement in ICCS was based on the content and difficulty levels of the questions. Initially, descriptions of the knowledge and processes associated with each question were drafted by a team of civic and citizenship education (CCE) content area/test development specialists. The descriptions were then ordered according to item difficulty to produce an item map. Analysis of the item map and student achievement data established proficiency levels that had a width of 84 scale points and level boundaries at 395, 479, and 563 points. Student scores under 395 scale points indicate civic knowledge proficiency below the level targeted by the assessment.

The proficiency level descriptions are syntheses of the characteristics of items within each level. They describe a hierarchy of civic knowledge in terms of increasing sophistication of content knowledge and cognitive process. Because the scale was derived empirically, increasing levels on the scale represent increasingly complex content and cognitive processes, as demonstrated through performance. The levels also reflect development encompassing the concrete, familiar, and mechanistic elements of knowledge through to the more complex policy and institutional processes that determine the features of civic communities.

The levels are hierarchical in the sense that civic knowledge becomes more sophisticated as student achievement progresses up the scale. They are also developmental since it is assumed that students are likely to be able to demonstrate achievement on scale content below their measured level of achievement. Table 2.1 shows brief statements of the kinds of knowledge and skills that students are likely to be able to demonstrate at each proficiency level of the ICCS test. (See Schulz et al., 2010b, for more detail on how these levels were developed.)

Three examples of questions from the test are next described in this section in order to illustrate the types of tasks that students were asked to do.

Table 2.1: Brief description of ICCS proficiency levels

Proficiency Level	Brief description: Students at this level are likely to…
Level 3 (563 points and above)	Make connections between processes of social/political organisation and influence; generate accurate hypotheses about benefits, motivations and likely outcomes of policies and actions; integrate, justify and evaluate positions, policies or laws based on their underlying principles; demonstrate familiarity with economic forces and the strategic nature of active participation
Level 2 (479-562 points)	Demonstrate familiarity with representative democracy; recognise ways that institutions and laws protect and promote principles and values; understand the potential of voting within a representative democracy; generalise principles and values from specific policies and laws; generalise the role of the individual citizen to broader civic activities
Level 1 (395-478 points)	Demonstrate familiarity with equality, social cohesion and freedom as principles of democracy and are able to relate these principles to everyday examples; demonstrate understanding of concepts relating to the individual as an active citizen; recognise the necessity for individuals to obey the law; relate individual courses of action to likely outcomes; relate personal characteristics to an individual's ability to affect change
Below Level 1 (<395 points)	Knowledge and skills of students at this level are not assessed by ICCS

Source: Schulz et al., 2010a, Table 5.

Example 1 (Table 2.2) aims to assess understanding of civic society and systems and the process of reasoning/analysing. It asks about the regulation of the media by the government. On average both in Ireland and internationally, 41% of students answered the question correctly (option d); option b was an attractive distractor (incorrect response), picked by more than 35% of students nationally and internationally. This item is located at Level 3 on the ICCS test, with a difficulty (600 points) that is one standard deviation above the average (500 points).

Table 2.2. Example Question 1 from the ICCS assessment

In many countries, media such as newspapers, radio stations and television stations are privately owned by media companies. In some countries, there are laws which limit the number of media companies that any one person or business group can own.		
IRL %	INT'L %	Why do countries have these laws?
16	11	a) To increase the profits of media companies
37	39	b) To enable the government to control information presented by the media
6	9	c) To make sure there are enough journalists to report about the government
41	**41**	**d) To make it likely that a range of views is presented by the media**

Correct answer is shown in bold.

Example 2 (next page) aims to assess knowledge about civic principles and the process of reasoning/analysing. The question requires a written response, in which students are asked to provide two different ways in which public debate can benefit society. Students can achieve a score of 0, 1 or 2 points depending on the quality of their answers. To get full points, a student needs to give reasons that cover two of the five categories on the next page.

1. provides better knowledge or understanding of the substance of an issue or situation
2. provides solutions to problems *or* a forum from which solutions can come
3. can increase social harmony, acceptance of difference, or reduction of frustration
4. can increase people's confidence or motivation to participate in their society
5. represents/enacts the principle of freedom of expression for people.

A score of 1 is given for a reason that covers one category, 2 points are given for a response that covers two categories, and 0 points is given for a response that does not cover any of the categories. Looking at sample responses from students in Ireland to Example 2 (Table 2.3), the first response is not directly relevant to the question, so 0 points are awarded. About a third of students in Ireland were given a score of 0 on this question. In the second example, the student's reason covers only one of the five specified categories (category 3), so 1 point is given. The third response is an example of a full-score (2-point) response since reasons covering two different categories are given (categories 2 and 3, respectively). Irish students did better on this item in international comparison, with 28% obtaining a score of 2 compared to 20% internationally. Because this item can be scored for partial credit (1 point) or for full credit (2 points), it is located on two points on the civic knowledge scale. A score of 1 is associated with 529 score points (Level 2), while a score of 2 is associated with 717 score points (the upper portion of Level 3).

Table 2.3. Example Question 2 from the ICCS assessment

Public debate is when people openly exchange their opinions. Public debate happens in letters to newspapers, TV shows, radio talkback, Internet forums and public meetings. Public debate can be about local, state, national or international issues.			
Score	*IRL* %	*INT* %	How can public debate benefit society? Give **two different** ways. (Examples of responses in Ireland)
0	33	40	*There is too much graffiti around the place so we need to stop it!*
1	39	40	*It can help people see that there are always two sides to a story/argument*
2	28	20	a) *They might want to inform people about problems which can be looked into.* b) *It can make other people see different views which others have*

Example 3 (Table 2.4) concerns the content area of civic participation and again covers the process of reasoning/analysing. It is on the topic of the boycotting of products due to exploitation of cheap labour. This was a relatively easy item, with 85% of students in Ireland responding correctly to it. Again, the Irish percent correct is higher than the international one (73%). This is the easiest question of the three, located at Level 1 with a score of 443 points.

Table 2.4. Example Question 3 from the ICCS assessment

Marek buys new school shoes. Marek then learns that his new shoes were made by a company that employs young children to make the shoes in a factory and pays them very little money for their work. Marek says he will not wear his new shoes again.		
IRL %	*INT %*	Why would Marek refuse to wear his new shoes?
3	8	a) He thinks that shoes made by children will not last very long.
85	**73**	**b) He does not want to show support for the company that made them.**
3	9	c) He does not want to support the children that made them.
8	11	d) He is angry that he paid more for the shoes than they are actually worth.

Correct answer is shown in bold.

2.3. Country Average Performance and Variation in Performance

Table 2.5 shows, for all participating countries, the country average score, standard error, standard deviation, student grade (year) level, student average age, and whether a discrete civic and citizen education (CCE) subject is offered at lower secondary level ('CCE' column). The table also indicates whether each country's score is significantly above, the same as, or significantly below the international average ('international comparison' column), and whether the other country averages are significantly above, the same as, or significantly below the Irish average ('national comparison' column). Box 2.1 provides some information to assist with the interpretation of the table. The average age of participants was 14.4 years and the mean age of Irish students (14.3) is close to the international average. Average age across countries ranges from 13.7 to 15.0 years. In the majority of countries (34), students were sampled from grade 8 (second year in Ireland). Variations in average age and grade level should be borne in mind when interpreting the results. It can also be seen that there is a compulsory CCE subject in 18 of 38 countries, and CCE is offered on an optional basis in a further two countries. There is no clear relationship between having a dedicated CCE subject and country average achievement.

Box 2.1: Interpreting the results in Table 2.5

The international average is 500 and the standard deviation is 100. This was computed on the basis of all countries being equally weighted, i.e. countries with bigger populations contribute to the same degree to the overall average as countries with smaller populations. The standard deviation indicates the distribution of achievement. Internationally, about two-thirds of students score between 400 and 600 on the ICCS test, and about 95% score between 300 and 700. The smaller the magnitude of the standard deviation for a given country, the narrower the achievement distribution, and vice versa.

The standard error (SE) is an indication of the uncertainty of the mean estimates. It arises mainly from two sources (i) a sample of (in most countries) grade 8 (second year) students rather than the population of grade 8 students participated (sampling error) and (ii) each student attempted a sub-set of all ICCS questions rather than the full set (measurement error).

Taking Ireland as an example, given an average of 534 and a standard error of 4.6, we can say with 95% confidence that the 'true' score is between 525 and 543 (i.e. the mean plus and minus 1.96 times its standard error).

Hong Kong (SAR) and the Netherlands are placed at the bottom of the table as their student response rates were too low to allow for reliable comparisons with other countries. For this reason, the international and national comparison columns have been left blank for these two countries.

Table 2.5: Mean ICCS score, standard error, standard deviation, international and national comparisons, grade level, and mean age, all countries

Country/System	ICCS Mean	SE	Standard Deviation	International Comparison	National Comparison	Grade Level	Mean Age	CCE
Finland	576.4	2.39	84.4	▲	🡅	8	14.7	
Denmark	576.4	3.59	98.9	▲	🡅	8	14.9	
Korea, Republic of	564.8	1.92	80.9	▲	🡅	8	14.7	++
Chinese Taipei	558.7	2.44	93.9	▲	🡅	8	14.2	++
Sweden	537.0	3.10	98.6	▲	=	8	14.8	
Poland	536.3	4.66	98.6	▲	=	8	14.9	++
Ireland	533.7	4.56	101.2	▲		8	14.3	++
Switzerland	531.4	3.79	82.9	▲	=	8	14.7	
Liechtenstein	531.4	3.31	92.9	▲	=	8	14.8	
Italy	530.8	3.29	88.0	▲	=	8	13.8	
Slovak Republic	528.6	4.49	89.3	▲	=	8	14.4	++
Estonia	525.3	4.54	91.5	▲	=	8	15.0	++
England	518.7	4.40	104.6	▲	🡇	9	14.0	++
New Zealand	516.7	4.98	110.3	▲	🡇	9	14.0	
Slovenia	515.9	2.66	87.1	▲	🡇	8	13.7	++
Norway	514.6	3.41	95.9	▲	🡇	8	13.7	
Belgium (Fl.)	514.1	4.67	81.4	▲	🡇	8	13.9	
Czech Republic	510.2	2.38	87.4	▲	🡇	8	14.4	++
Russian Federation	506.4	3.77	85.2	=	🡇	8	14.7	++
Lithuania	505.2	2.84	80.4	=	🡇	8	14.7	++
Spain	504.8	4.13	86.1	=	🡇	8	14.1	++
Austria	502.9	3.98	97.2	=	🡇	8	14.4	
Malta	489.7	4.45	95.3	▼	🡇	9	13.9	
Chile	483.0	3.54	87.5	▼	🡇	8	14.2	
Latvia	481.6	3.99	81.6	▼	🡇	8	14.8	
Greece	476.0	4.39	98.3	▼	🡇	8	13.7	+
Luxembourg	473.3	2.24	95.7	▼	🡇	8	14.6	++
Bulgaria	466.5	5.03	105.4	▼	🡇	8	14.7	
Colombia	461.9	2.95	80.9	▼	🡇	8	14.4	+
Cyprus	453.5	2.41	93.1	▼	🡇	8	13.9	
Mexico	451.7	2.79	82.8	▼	🡇	8	14.1	++
Thailand	451.5	3.65	77.2	▼	🡇	8	14.4	
Guatemala	434.6	3.78	75.7	▼	🡇	8	15.5	
Indonesia	432.5	3.43	69.6	▼	🡇	8	14.3	++
Paraguay	423.7	3.41	88.9	▼	🡇	9	14.9	++
Dominican Republic	380.3	2.42	66.4	▼	🡇	8	14.8	++
ICCS average	500.0	0.61	100.00				14.4	
10-country average*	535.7	1.26	94.8				14.4	
Hong Kong (SAR)	554.1	5.68	96.8			8	14.3	
Netherlands	493.6	7.62	91.1			8	14.3	++

Note: Significantly higher than int'l average ▲; Significantly lower than int'l average ▼; no significant difference =; Significantly higher than Ireland 🡅; Significantly lower than Ireland 🡇; no significant difference =.

++ = CCE is a compulsory subject at lower secondary; + = CCE is an optional subject at this level.

Countries are ordered by mean achievement.

*Belgium (Fl.), Denmark, England, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland.

The table shows that the country average scores range from 380 to 576 – almost two standard deviations. Four countries are clustered at the top end of the mean country achievement distribution with scores ranging from 565 to 576. In contrast, the country average achievement distribution is wider at the lower end, with 54 score points separating the four lowest-achieving countries (Guatemala, Indonesia, Paraguay, and the Dominican Republic). Eighteen countries including Ireland have mean scores significantly above the international average, four have a mean score that does not differ from the international average, and 14 countries have a mean score significantly below the international average. The mean score for Ireland (534) results in a rank of seventh out of 36 countries. Ireland's score is similar to the 10-country average, i.e. Ireland and the nine comparison countries (536, shaded in the table). Just four countries have a significantly higher score than that of Ireland – Finland, Denmark, Korea and Chinese Taipei. Seven countries have a mean score that does not differ to the Irish mean – Sweden, Poland, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Italy, the Slovak Republic, and Estonia. England, New Zealand, Slovenia, Norway, and Belgium (Fl.) have mean scores ranging from 514 to 519, and all are significantly lower than the mean score for Ireland.

The standard deviations in Table 2.5 provide an indication of the extent to which achievement is dispersed across participating students. These range from 66 in the Dominican Republic to 110 in New Zealand. Finland, Korea and Switzerland are examples of countries where high average achievement is also associated with a narrow achievement distribution. The standard deviation in Ireland (101) ranks Ireland as having the fourth highest distribution of achievement. Only England, Bulgaria and New Zealand have higher standard deviations than in Ireland.

Figure 2.1 (see also Table A2.1) shows the percentage of variance in achievement that lies between schools (i.e. the extent to which schools differ with respect to achievement) for ICCS countries (except Hong Kong, Liechtenstein and the Netherlands[19]) plotted against country mean achievement (divided by 10 for ease of interpretation). The lower the between-school variance, the less schools differ with respect to achievement, and *vice versa*. There is a wide range in between-school variance from under 10% in Cyprus, Korea, Norway, Slovenia, and Finland to values exceeding 40% in the Russian Federation, New Zealand, Belgium (Fl.), Bulgaria and Malta. The ICCS average is 27.9% and the 10-country average is 27.0%. In Ireland, the percentage of variance that lies between schools is 34.9% which implies that schools differ to one another more than on average across ICCS countries. Countries with similar between-school variance to that of Ireland include Mexico, Thailand, England and Indonesia.

[19] Hong Kong and the Netherlands are excluded due to low response rates and Liechtenstein due to the low number of schools and students in the sample.

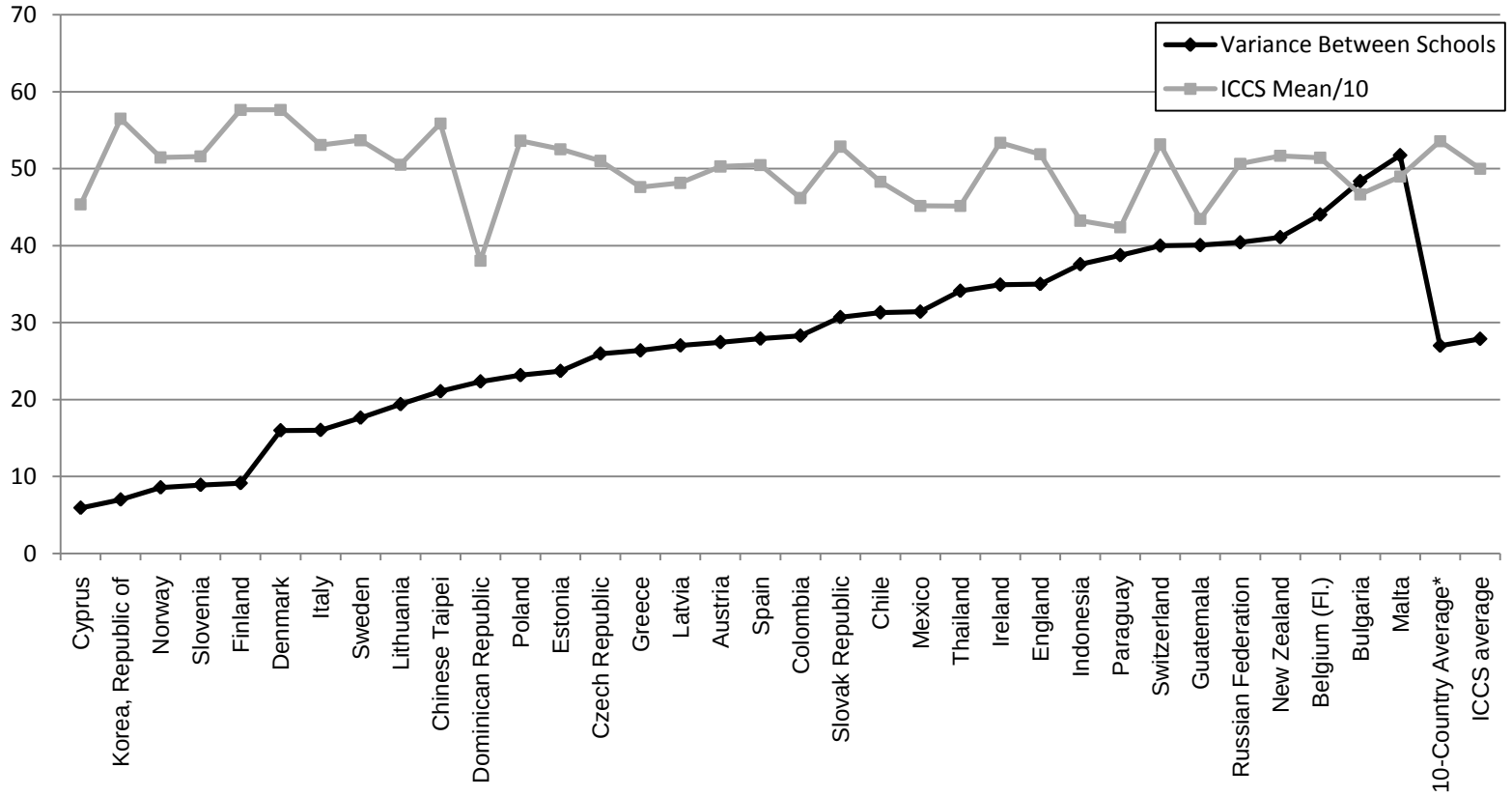

Figure 2.1: Between-school variance in achievement (expressed as a percentage of total variance) and country mean ICCS scores (divided by 10), all countries

*Belgium (Fl.), Denmark, England, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland.
Countries are ordered by percentage of achievement variation between schools.

Three of the comparison countries have higher between-school variance than that of Ireland (i.e. Switzerland, 40.0%, New Zealand, 41.1%, and Belgium (Fl.), 44.0%) while the majority of comparison countries have lower between school variance than in Ireland (i.e. Slovenia, Finland, Denmark, Sweden, and Poland). The between-school variance is higher for Ireland in ICCS compared with other studies such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA; e.g. OECD, 2010a, b, c, d, e), but PISA used random age-based sampling, while ICCS used intact class sampling. The higher between-school variance found in ICCS may be related to the practice of ability grouping within and across countries. It may be noted that just over one-quarter of students in Ireland were grouped into their base classes (and were sampled on the basis of their base class) by academic ability. Finally, Figure 2.1 shows that there is no discernible relationship between achievement and between-school variance.

In summary, performance in Ireland is characterised by a high mean score with a wide range in the distribution of achievement among students, and a relatively wide range in the distribution of achievement among schools.

2.4. Performance on the ICCS Proficiency Scale

Table 2.6 shows, for all participating countries, the percentages of students at each ICCS proficiency level (see Table 2.1 for a description of proficiency levels). Consistent with average performance shown in Table 2.4, Finland, Denmark, Korea and Chinese Taipei all have in excess of 50% of students scoring at Level 3. This is substantially higher than the international average of 28%. At the other end of the achievement distribution, in excess of one-quarter of students in Mexico, Thailand, Paraguay, Guatemala, Indonesia, and the Dominican Republic had scores on the ICCS test that were below Level 1. In Ireland, 41% of students scored at Level 3, 29% at Level 2, 20% at Level 1, and 10% below Level 1. These percentages are similar to the averages for Ireland and the nine comparison countries (the 10-country average, shaded in the table) of 40%, 32%, 20% and 8%, respectively. Notwithstanding the large standard error associated with the percentage of students scoring below Level 1, Ireland has the highest percentage of students at this level among the top 12 performing countries, despite the fact that its overall average ranking is seventh (Table 2.4).

2.5. Gender Differences in Performance

This section examines gender differences first by comparing the mean scores of boys and girls on the ICCS test and then by comparing the distribution of males and females across the ICCS proficiency levels. Figure 2.2 (Table A2.2) shows the score difference of boys and girls (a positive difference meaning that girls scored higher) ordered by country average performance. In all countries but five (Belgium (Fl.), Colombia, Guatemala, Liechtenstein and Switzerland), the score difference is significantly in favour of girls, although these differences range from 8 points (Denmark) to 48 points (Thailand). The average gender difference is 22 points and the gender difference in Ireland is the same as the international one. The average gender difference across Ireland and the nine comparison countries (the 10-country

average) is 21, which is similar to the international average. Gender differences exceeded one-quarter of a standard deviation in Finland, Slovenia, Poland and New Zealand. There is no discernible association between the size of the gender differences and country average achievement.

Table 2.6: Percentages of students at each proficiency level on the ICCS test, all countries

	Below Level 1 (<395 points)		Level 1 (395-479 points)		Level 2 (479-563 points)		Level 3 (>563 points)	
Country/System	%	SE	%	SE	%	SE	%	SE
Finland	2.1	0.32	10.2	0.73	30.0	1.21	57.7	1.32
Denmark	3.7	0.47	12.7	0.78	27.5	1.11	56.1	1.60
Korea, Republic of	2.5	0.29	12.0	0.58	31.5	0.87	54.0	1.12
Chinese Taipei	4.9	0.44	15.3	0.81	29.5	1.01	50.4	1.26
Liechtenstein	7.5	1.36	17.6	1.90	30.2	2.40	44.6	2.02
Ireland	9.9	1.14	19.9	1.39	29.1	1.18	41.1	1.80
Poland	8.6	1.04	19.4	1.14	30.9	0.98	41.0	1.98
Sweden	7.8	0.79	20.5	0.94	31.7	1.08	40.1	1.40
Italy	7.1	0.73	20.2	1.03	35.2	0.98	37.6	1.54
Slovak Republic	7.2	0.92	22.1	1.41	33.9	1.42	36.7	2.18
Switzerland	5.6	0.78	20.5	1.54	37.3	1.27	36.6	1.81
Estonia	8.2	1.11	21.8	1.29	34.4	1.40	35.6	2.08
New Zealand	14.4	1.17	22.0	1.49	28.1	1.40	35.4	2.08
England	12.7	1.18	22.2	0.95	30.8	1.19	34.3	1.61
Norway	11.3	0.86	23.6	1.08	33.4	1.12	31.7	1.35
Slovenia	8.6	0.85	25.0	1.14	36.3	1.24	30.0	1.20
Belgium (Fl.)	8.4	1.22	23.8	1.68	38.8	1.63	29.1	2.08
Austria	14.6	1.41	25.0	1.22	31.5	1.25	28.9	1.44
Czech Republic	9.6	0.69	26.9	0.97	35.6	1.13	27.9	1.12
Spain	11.0	1.30	25.9	1.30	36.8	1.48	26.4	1.81
Russian Federation	9.7	0.87	28.7	1.48	35.8	1.18	25.8	1.80
Lithuania	8.8	0.77	27.8	1.18	38.9	1.24	24.4	1.31
Malta	17.3	1.60	26.1	1.78	32.7	1.94	23.9	2.28
Greece	22.4	1.70	27.9	1.33	29.1	1.15	20.6	1.39
Bulgaria	26.8	1.84	26.3	1.50	26.9	1.61	20.0	1.86
Chile	16.3	1.26	32.7	1.19	31.6	1.29	19.3	1.07
Luxembourg	21.8	1.19	30.4	0.97	29.2	0.79	18.6	0.63
Latvia	15.0	1.58	33.4	1.31	35.4	1.66	16.1	1.35
Cyprus	28.1	1.00	32.1	0.96	27.3	0.98	12.5	0.90
Colombia	21.2	1.33	36.1	1.03	31.9	1.06	10.9	0.83
Mexico	26.5	1.29	36.3	1.06	27.3	1.01	9.9	0.80
Thailand	24.6	1.64	38.2	1.40	29.4	1.59	7.7	1.06
Paraguay	38.5	1.93	34.8	1.60	20.1	1.16	6.6	0.74
Guatemala	30.3	1.70	42.3	1.59	22.2	1.36	5.2	1.20
Indonesia	30.3	1.88	44.4	1.46	21.8	1.33	3.5	0.71
Dominican Republic	61.3	1.63	30.5	1.35	7.4	0.64	0.7	0.20
ICCS average	15.7	0.20	26.0	0.21	30.5	0.22	27.8	0.25
10-country average*	8.2	0.30	19.6	0.39	32.1	0.39	40.1	0.54
Hong Kong SAR	6.7	1.22	13.9	1.42	29.8	1.47	49.6	2.56
Netherlands	14.6	2.74	28.4	2.36	33.1	2.32	23.9	2.98

*Belgium (Fl.), Denmark, England, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland.
Countries are ordered by mean achievement.

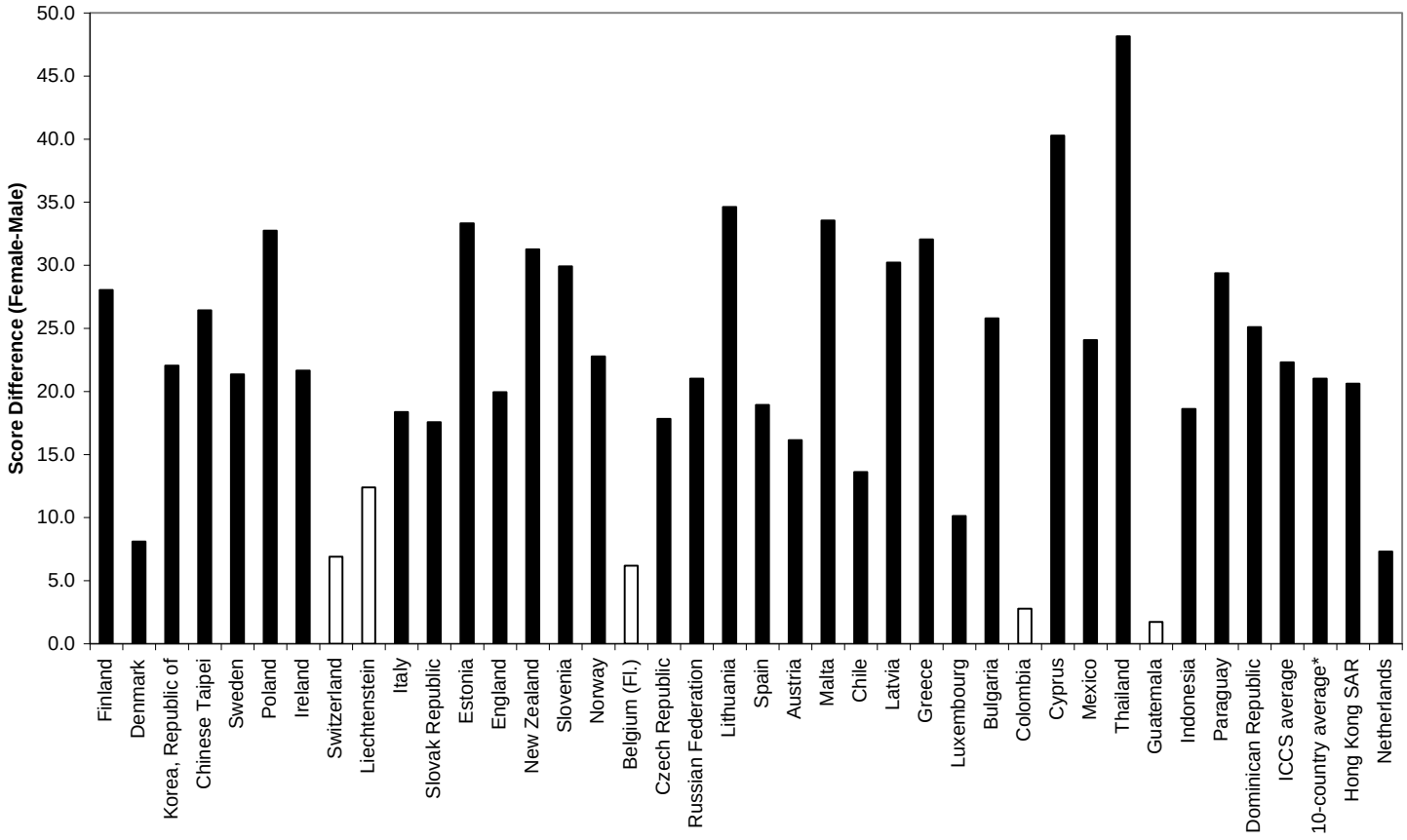

Figure 2.2: Gender differences in ICCS test scores (female-male), all countries

*Belgium (Fl.), Denmark, England, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland.

Significant differences are shown in black.

Countries are ordered by mean achievement from high to low.

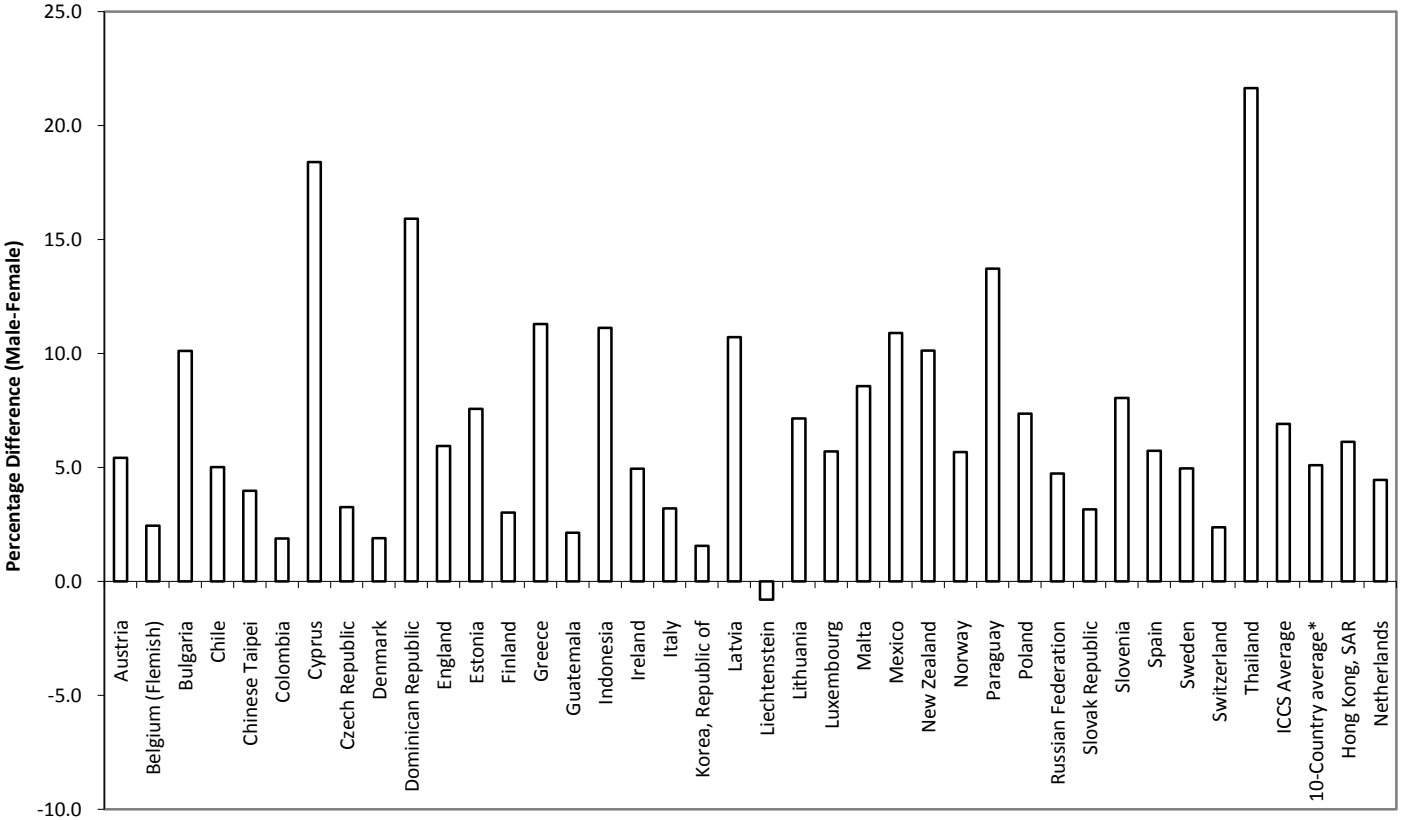

Figure 2.3. Gender differences in the percentages of students below Level 1 (male-female), all countries

*Belgium (Fl.), Denmark, England, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland.

Countries are ordered alphabetically.

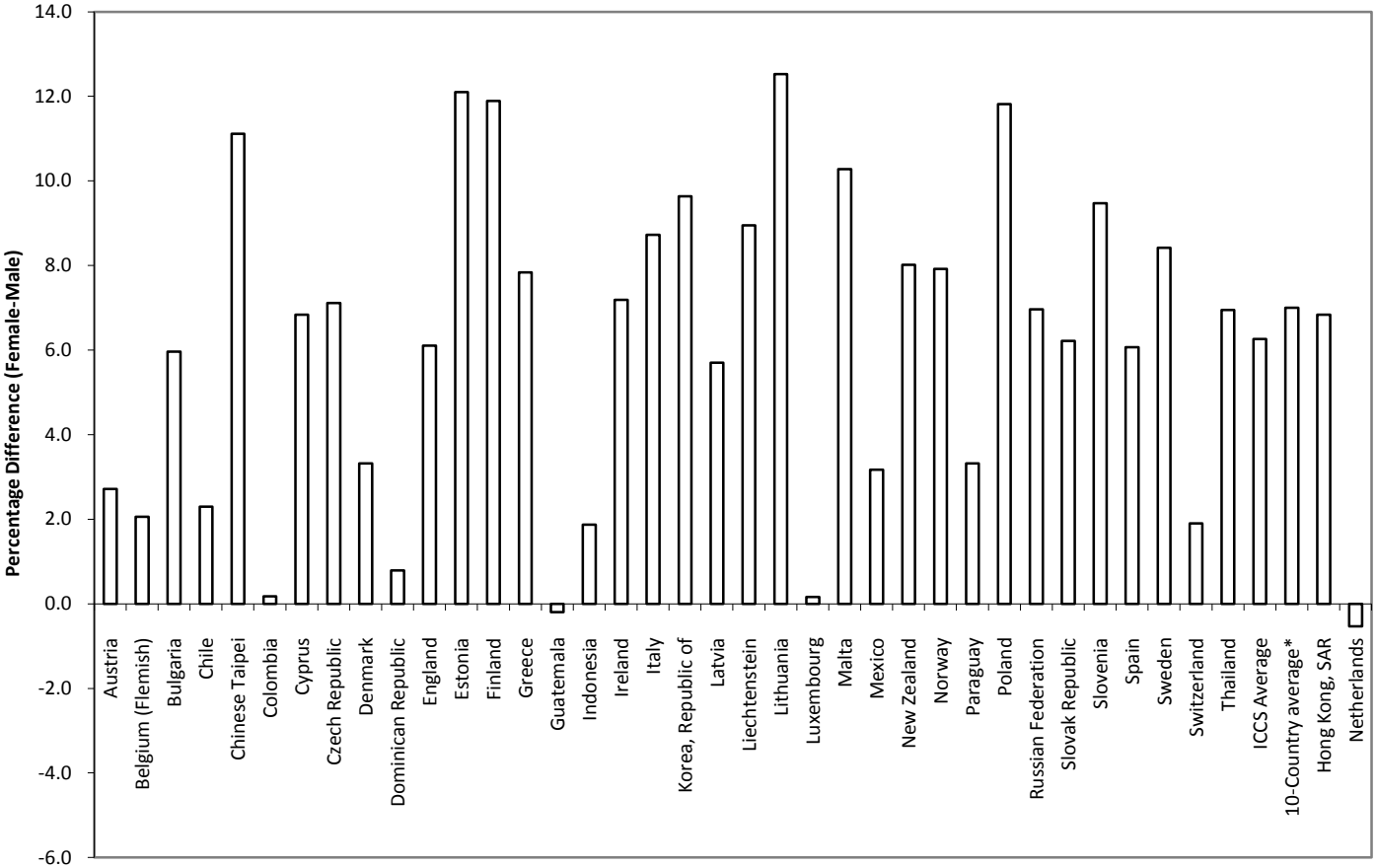

Figure 2.4. Gender differences in the percentages of students at Level 3 (female-male), all countries

*Belgium (Fl.), Denmark, England, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland.

Countries are ordered alphabetically.

Figures 2.3 and 2.4 show the differences in the percentages of boys and girls below Level 1 and at Level 3, respectively (see also Tables A2.3 and A2.4). Consistent with the average gender differences favouring girls on the test of civic knowledge, there are comparatively more males with an ICCS score below Level 1 and comparatively more females with an ICCS score at Level 3. Internationally, 12% of girls compared with 19% of boys scored at or below Level 1, while 31% of girls and 25% of boys scored at Level 3.

Across Ireland and the nine comparison countries, 11% of boys and 6% of girls scored below Level 1, and the percentages scoring at Level 3 for boys and girls respectively were 37% and 44%. The percentages of boys in Ireland scoring below Level 1 and at Level 3 (12% and 38%, respectively) and the corresponding percentages for girls in Ireland (7% and 45%) are similar to the 10-country average (see also Tables A2.3 and A2.4).

The tendency for girls to outperform boys on the ICCS test can be considered with reference to the results of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA; OECD, 2010a), in which 15-year-old females significantly outperformed their male counterparts on an assessment of reading literacy in all 65 participating countries, including Ireland. It may be the case that accessing the content of the ICCS test requires a basic or functional level of reading literacy (see also Chapter 6).

2.6. Key Points Arising From Chapter 2

This chapter provided an overview of the civic knowledge of students in the 38 participating countries that participated in ICCS. It was noted that two countries (Hong Kong, SAR and the Netherlands) had response rates that were too low to allow for reliable comparisons with other countries, so comparisons are based on 36 rather than 38 countries.

The chapter examined average performance, the distribution of performance between students and between schools, the performance of students on international benchmarks (proficiency levels) and gender differences in achievement. As such, Chapter 2 should be regarded as only a first glance at the results, since variations in performance are likely to be associated with a wide range of student, teacher and school characteristics. The results for Ireland are explored further with respect to associations between achievement and background characteristics in Chapters 3 and 5, and particularly in Chapter 6.

The main results of the analyses presented in this chapter are summarised below.

- On the test of civic knowledge, which had an international mean of 500 and a standard deviation of 100, Ireland ranked seventh out of 36 countries with a mean score (534) that was one-third of a standard deviation higher than the international mean.
- Four countries – Finland, Denmark, Korea and Chinese Taipei – achieved mean scores on the ICCS test that are significantly higher than Ireland.

- Seven countries – Sweden, Poland, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Italy, the Slovak Republic, and Estonia – had mean scores that do not differ from that of Ireland.
- Four of the nine comparison countries England, New Zealand, Slovenia, and Belgium (Fl.) had scores that were between 15 and 20 score points lower than the Irish mean and were statistically significantly lower in all cases.
- Performance was reported in terms of international benchmarks or proficiency levels, with students scoring at Level 3 being able to demonstrate higher-level knowledge and reasoning. A score below Level 1 indicated a level of civic knowledge below that targeted by the test.
- In Ireland, 41% of students scored at Level 3, 29% at Level 2, 20% at Level 1, and 10% below Level 1. These percentages compare favourably with the international averages of 28%, 31%, 26% and 16% respectively.
- Despite the fact that the Irish mean score ranked seventh, Ireland had the highest percentage of students scoring below Level 1 among the 12 top-performing countries.
- Consistent with the comparatively longer 'tail' at the lower end of the achievement distribution in Ireland, the Irish standard deviation was the fourth highest across 36 countries, indicating a relatively high level of variation in the scores among students in Ireland.
- The extent to which schools differ with respect to achievement on the civic knowledge test was examined via the percentage of variance in achievement that lies between schools. The higher this is, the more schools differ with respect to achievement and *vice versa*. In Ireland, 35% of variance was between schools. This was higher than the ICCS average of 28%, and also higher than what has been found in other studies (e.g. for reading literacy in PISA 2009), but such differences are likely to be due to different sample designs in the two studies.
- In 31 of the 36 countries that can be compared, girls scored significantly higher than boys, although the magnitude of the (significant) gender differences ranged from 8 to 48 points. The gender difference in Ireland (22 points) was the same as the international average.
- Consistent with the gender differences in mean scores, higher percentages of boys scored below Level 1, while higher percentages of girls scored at Level 3, although the magnitude of the differences in these percentages varied across countries. Internationally, 12% of girls and 19% of boys scored below Level 1, and 31% of girls and 25% of boys scored at Level 3. In Ireland, 7% of females and 12% of males scored below Level 1, while 45% of females and 38% of males scored at Level 3.
- The gender differences evident in the ICCS achievement data are consistent with gender differences in reading literacy scores of 15-year-olds found in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), and suggest that reading literacy may be a prerequisite for accessing the content of the ICCS test.

Chapter 3. Civic Knowledge and Attitudes in Context

3.1. Overview

This chapter outlines the associations between indicators of civic knowledge and civic-related attitudes and a range of student and school background variables. The indicators considered are civic knowledge, students' interest in political and social issues, and students' expected adult electoral participation. The chapter accords equal importance to the measures of student interest and expected electoral participation as to civic knowledge, as the intention of civic education is to prepare students for active participatory citizenship (see e.g. Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) syllabus in Ireland, discussed in detail in Chapter 7). Other student attitudinal scales are considered in Chapter 4.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into seven sections. In the second section (3.2), associations between civic knowledge and student background characteristics are presented. In Section 3.3, associations between civic knowledge and a number of school characteristics are explored. In the fourth (3.4), the scales measuring students' interest in political and social issues and their expected adult electoral participation are described. The fifth section (3.5) focuses on the association between students' background characteristics and their performance on these scales. In Section 3.6, we outline the associations between various school characteristics and student interest in political and social issues and expected electoral participation. Section 3.7 provides information on the activities which students reported doing outside of school on a normal school day. The chapter concludes with a review of key findings (Section 3.8).

The student questionnaire provided the source of most of the student background information discussed in this chapter, as well as the data on student interest in political and social issues and expected electoral participation. Although much of the school-related information came from the school questionnaire, some additional data (e.g. school type) came from other sources such as the Department of Education and Skills' database of post-primary schools. In some instances, responses on the ICCS questionnaires were used to derive more complex indices (e.g. student socioeconomic status).

In this chapter, a range of school and student variables is considered one by one in terms of their association with achievement, students' interest in political and social issues, and expected adult electoral participation. However, in practice, these variables are also likely to be associated with each other; e.g. school socioeconomic status may vary by school type, with the result that differences found in achievement/attitudes between the different types of school might actually be due to differences in school socioeconomic status or other background characteristics. Multivariate analyses, which examine the association between an outcome of interest (civic knowledge and interest in politics and social issues) and a range of background characteristics simultaneously, are presented in Chapter 6.

Readers are referred to Box 1.4 in Chapter 1 for information on how to interpret the results presented in this chapter.

3.2. Association between Civic Knowledge and Key Student Characteristics

The student background characteristics examined in this section are: family structure (nuclear, single-parent, mixed), country of birth/language spoken at home, parental interest in political and social issues, number of siblings, socioeconomic status (based on parental education and occupation), and number of books in the home (a proxy measure of students' home educational environment).

Almost four-fifths (78%) of students in Ireland indicated that they lived in a nuclear family (i.e., with two biological/adoptive parents), 16% in a single-parent family and 5% in a 'mixed' family (i.e., one biological/adoptive parent and one step-parent). As the category of other family type (e.g. one grandparent and one parent) accounted for just 1% of cases in Ireland, this was not analysed separately and these cases were combined with missing cases to give an overall missing rate of 4% for family structure. Students who reported living in nuclear families had a significantly higher average score than either students from single-parent families or students from mixed families. The differences amounted to more than one-quarter of an international standard deviation (Table 3.1). It may be noted that there is currently little research into the experiences of students living in mixed families, and it would be worthwhile researching this issue further (although see Chapter 6, which analyses this issue in the context of other student background characteristics).

Table 3.1: Associations between civic knowledge and key student characteristics (family structure, native and language status, parental interest in political issues, number of siblings, socioeconomic status, and books in the home)

Comparisons							Correlations		
Family structure		Native and language			Parental interest in political issues				
Nuclear family – Single parent family	Nuclear family – Mixed family	Native – Migrant, speaks English / Irish	Native – Migrant, other language	Migrant, English / Irish – Migrant, other language	Quite interested – Not interested	Quite interested – Very interested	Number of siblings (r)	SES (r)	Books in the home (r)
⇑	⇑	=	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇓	**-.122**	**.339**	**.347**

Note: Significantly higher ($p \leq .05$) ↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .05$) ↓
Significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) ⇑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .01$) ⇓
No statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) =

Values of r in bold indicate that correlation is significant ($p < .05$)

Shading indicates that the difference between the two groups being compared is statistically significant and at least 25 points (one-quarter standard deviation).

Students were asked to provide information about their place of birth and the place of birth of their parents, indicating for themselves and each of their parents whether they were born in the Republic of Ireland or elsewhere. Schulz et al (2010a) classified a student as 'native' if he/she had at least one parent or guardian born in

the Republic of Ireland, regardless of the place of birth of the student him-/herself. First-generation students were those born in Ireland but with both parents (or guardians) born outside Ireland. If both parents (or guardians) and the student him-/herself were born outside of Ireland, the student was classified as a newcomer. If both parents and/or the student were missing values for place of birth, this variable was set to missing. For the purposes of this report, both first-generation and newcomer students are considered to be from a migrant background (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Percentages of newcomer, first generation and native students in Ireland, definitions of these terms based on place of birth and language spoken at home by students, by country of birth

	Place of birth		IRL %	Terms used in this report	Language spoken at home by migrant status	
	Student	Parents / guardians			English or Irish %	Other language %
Newcomer	Outside IRL	Both parents / guardians born outside IRL	10.7	Migrant	5.2	6.6
First generation	IRL	Both parents / guardians born outside IRL	1.4			
Native	Either in IRL or elsewhere	At least one parent / guardian born in Ireland	87.9	Native	85.2	2.9

Ireland had a comparatively higher percentage of students (12%) from a migrant background (i.e., either first-generation or newcomer) than some of the other comparison countries (see Chapter 2, Section 2.1 for a list of these countries). For example, in Poland and Finland, very few students were from a migrant background (1% and 2% respectively; Table 24, Schulz et al., 2010a). Of the 12% of students in Ireland who indicated that they had a migrant background, most were themselves born abroad (newcomers; 11% of total) and only a small minority (first generation; 1% of total) were Irish-born with foreign-born parents (Table 3.2). It is noteworthy that, in Ireland, a greater proportion of migrant students are foreign-born than in other comparison countries with similar overall percentages of students from a migrant background. For example, although the percentages of students from a migrant background in Belgium (Fl.) and England (11% and 15% respectively) are similar to that in Ireland, the percentages of foreign-born students in these countries are lower (5% and 6% respectively; Schulz et al., 2010a).

Of the 12% of students in Ireland with a migrant background, just under half (5% of total) indicated that they spoke English or Irish most often at home. The majority of students classified as native (85% of total) spoke English or Irish at home. Throughout this report, native students are analysed as a single category regardless of the language spoken at home, as native students speaking languages other than English or Irish accounted for only 3% of students in Ireland. Analyses in this report use place of birth combined with language spoken at home as previous studies have shown that home language is more strongly associated with achievement in Ireland than place of birth (see e.g. Eivers et al., 2010; OECD, 2010b).

No significant difference in civic knowledge was found between migrant students who spoke English or Irish at home and native students (Table 3.1). However, both native students and migrants speaking English or Irish at home achieved significantly higher mean civic knowledge scores than migrant students who spoke other languages at home (Table 3.1). Differences in excess of 50 points (half a standard deviation) were found in favour of native students and English/Irish-speaking migrant students over migrants who spoke languages other than English or Irish at home.

Students were asked about their parents' or guardians' level of interest in political and social issues. Levels of parental interest in politics in Ireland were comparatively high, as 30% of students indicated that their parents were very interested in political and social issues – the highest percentage across comparison countries and more than twice the percentage in Finland (14%). Students who indicated that their parents were very interested in politics achieved a higher mean civic knowledge score than students who reported that their parents were quite interested in politics (Table 3.1). Fewer than one in five students in Ireland (19%) reported that their parents were not interested in political and social issues and these students achieved significantly lower civic knowledge scores than students who indicated that their parents were quite interested in these issues (Table 3.1).

Almost 84% of Irish students indicated that they had one, two or three siblings while only 5% reported having none. Larger families were less common and those with four or more siblings accounted for just 11% of students in Ireland. Although students with one sibling outperformed those with no siblings (by an average of 23 points or about one-quarter of a standard deviation), increasing family size was associated with lower achievement, particularly when the number of siblings exceeded three (r=-.12) (Table 3.1).

A measure of student socioeconomic status was derived from information provided by students on parental education and occupation. Students were asked to indicate the highest level of education completed by their mothers and fathers, and also the occupations of each. Students were advised that where a parent or guardian was not currently in employment, the last main job should be given. Responses to the occupation questions were coded according to the International Standard Classification of Occupation (ISCO) system and then transformed into an International Socioeconomic Index (ISEI) (Ganzeboom, de Graaf & Treiman, 1992). In cases where two ISEI scores were available for a student, i.e., one for each parent, the higher of the two was taken. For the current analyses, the higher of the two ISEI scores was combined with the higher of the two parental education values to give a socioeconomic score for the student, producing a new national measure of socioeconomic status. This was done using Factor Analysis.[20] A moderate positive correlation (r=.34) was found between student socioeconomic status and achievement on the ICCS test in Ireland (Table 3.1). Looking specifically at ISEI as this variable is internationally comparable, the percentage of variance in civic

[20] To create the student SES variable, exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the higher of the two values for parental education (ranging from 'did not complete primary' to 'advanced university degree') and the higher of the two parental occupation values (mean in Ireland = 49.5; SD = 16.07). The exploratory factor analysis confirmed that these two variables formed a single latent factor explaining 70.8% of the variation in the variables. Confirmatory factor analysis was therefore carried out and the resulting SES scores were generated using regression to have a mean of 0 and standard deviation of 1 (i.e., about 66% of students in Ireland have an SES score ranging from -1 to +1).

knowledge explained by ISEI in Ireland (10.6%) was about the same as the international average (10.4%) but above that found in some countries such as Finland (6.0%; Table 25, Schulz et al., 2010a.

When asked about the number of books in their homes[21], fewer than 10% of students in Ireland indicated that they had between zero and ten books, and at the opposite end of the spectrum, only 7% had more than 500 books. Irish students most commonly reported having between 26 and 100 books at home (31%). Prior to examining the association between civic knowledge and the number of books in a student's home, each student was assigned the value representing the mid-point of the category they had selected (e.g. 18 for the 11-25 category) which helps to address the problem of the categories having unequal intervals. This variable had a moderate positive association with civic knowledge (r=.35) (Table 3.1).

3.3. Association between Civic Knowledge and Key School Characteristics

In this section, the associations between civic knowledge and a number of school characteristics are examined. These are: school sector and gender composition, school participation in the School Support Programme (SSP) under DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools; DES, 2005), school location, enrolment size and school average socioeconomic status. As previously noted, the analyses discussed in this chapter are bivariate in nature, whereby the association between achievement and each school-level characteristic is considered one at a time.

As school gender composition is closely related school sector (i.e., single-sex schools typically belong to the secondary sector), sector and gender composition were combined into a single variable for the present analyses. About 8% of students in the Irish sample attended community or comprehensive schools, while approximately 16% attended VEC schools[22]. Boys' secondary schools were attended by 19% of students, girls' secondary schools by almost 24% of students and mixed secondary schools by 34% of students[23]. No significant differences in civic knowledge were associated with school sector/gender composition (Table 3.3).

Over three-quarters of students (78%) participating in ICCS attended schools which were not participating in the SSP under DEIS. Students attending schools participating in the SSP scored significantly lower on the civic knowledge scale than students in schools not participating in the SSP (Table 3.3). The difference was statistically significant and amounted to over half a standard deviation.

A large majority of students (92%) attended schools where student fees were not charged. Looking specifically at students in secondary schools, 10% attended fee-paying schools and 90% attended free secondary schools. Students enrolled in fee-paying secondary schools achieved higher average scores than students attending secondary schools which did not charge fees (Table 3.3). The difference was statistically significant and amounted to more than three-fifths of a standard deviation.

[21] The response categories available to students were 0-10 books; 11-25; 26-100; 101-200; 201-500; and more than 500.

[22] VEC schools comprise vocational schools and community colleges; i.e. those under management of Vocational Education Committees (VECs).

[23]Percentages do not sum to 100 as percentages within each category are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Table 3.3: Associations between civic achievement and key school characteristics (school sector/gender composition, school participation in School Support Programme [SSP] under DEIS, fee-paying status, location, school enrolment size, average socioeconomic status)

Comparisons										Correlations
School sector / gender composition				In SSP under DEIS	Fee-paying status	Location		Enrolment size		
Mixed Secondary – Comm. / Comp.	Mixed Secondary – VEC	Mixed Secondary – Boys' Sec.	Mixed Secondary – Girls' Sec.	Yes – No	Fee-paying secondary – Free secondary	Town (3,000 – 100,000) – Rural (<3000)	Town (3,000 – 100,000) – City (> 100,000)	Medium (41 – 80) – Small (<40)	Medium (41 – 80) – Large (>81)	School average SES (r)
=	=	=	=	↓↓	↑↑	=	=	=	↓	**.395**

Note: Significantly higher ($p \leq .05$) ↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .05$) ↓
Significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) ↑↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .01$) ↓↓
No statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) =

Values of r in bold indicate that correlation is significant ($p < .05$)

Shading indicates that the difference between the two groups being compared is statistically significant and at least 25 points (one-quarter standard deviation).

School principals were asked to indicate the location (population density) of their school. They were given five response options: rural or small town (fewer than 3,000 people); town (3,000 to 15,000 people); large town (15,000 to 100,000 people); city (100,000 to 1,000,000 people); and, large city (over 1,000,000). For the current analysis, a school was classified as being in a rural location if it was situated in an area with a population of less than 3,000, as being in a town if the population was between 3,000 and 100,000, and as being in a city if the population was over 100,000. About 46% of students were enrolled in schools in rural areas, 21% in schools in towns and 34% in schools located in a city of at least 100,000 people. Student achievement on the civic knowledge scale was not found to vary by school location (Table 3.3).

A school with fewer than 40 students enrolled in second year was considered to be a small school, a school with 41 to 80 second year students was classified as a medium sized school, while a school with more than 81 second year students was considered large. Just 6% of students were enrolled in small schools, 25% in medium schools and 69% in large schools. Students in medium-sized schools had significantly lower mean civic knowledge scores than students in large schools (Table 3.3). The difference amounted to approximately one-third of a standard deviation. There was no difference in mean civic knowledge scores between students in small and medium schools.

A school's socioeconomic composition was computed as the average socioeconomic status of ICCS students within the school (based on the average of the nationally-derived scale described in Footnote 20). A moderate positive correlation was found between school-average socioeconomic status and student performance on the civic knowledge scale (r=.39); thus, in schools where the average socioeconomic status was higher, students tended to perform better on the ICCS test (Table 3.3).

3.4. Overview of the Measures of Students' Interest in Political and Social Issues and Expected Adult Electoral Participation

In this section, results from two key attitudinal measures from ICCS are examined: students' interest in political and social issues and students' expected adult electoral participation. Firstly, sample items from each of the scales are presented along with the percentages of students responding positively or negatively to the items in Ireland and on average across ICCS countries. Comparisons are then made between the mean score on each of the scales in Ireland and the international mean score. Gender differences in Ireland are examined and the association between civic knowledge and performance on each of the two scales is considered.

Students were presented with questions asking about their interest in political issues in the local community, political issues in their country, social issues in their country, politics in other countries, and international politics, and asked to rate their level of interest in each of these on a four-point scale ranging from 'not interested at all' to 'very interested'. In Ireland, more than half of students indicated that they were very or quite interested in political issues in their own country (Table 3.4). In contrast, just 30% of students in Ireland reported that they were very or quite interested in politics in other countries. These figures are similar to the corresponding international averages.

In the context of interest in political and social issues, an additional item was presented in Ireland which was not included in the international battery of items. Students in Ireland were asked about their levels of interest in global development/justice. Over half of students (55.5%) indicated that they were very or quite interested in these issues.

The expected adult electoral participation scale was composed of three items which asked students about their intentions to vote in local elections, to vote in national elections, and to get information about candidates before voting in an election. The lower portion of Table 3.4 presents the percentages of students in Ireland and on average across ICCS countries indicating that they were likely or unlikely to vote in national elections or to get information prior to voting. High percentages of students in Ireland (87%) and internationally (81%) reported that they intend to vote in national elections. The percentages of students who reported that they would certainly or probably vote in local elections were similar to the percentages intending to vote in national elections. Also, most students (78% in Ireland, 76% internationally) indicated that they intend to get information about candidates before voting in an election.

Overall measures of students' interest in political and social issues and students' expected adult electoral participation were constructed on the basis of the individual questions. These scales have an international mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10.

Table 3.4: Sample items from the *interest in political and social issues* and *expected adult electoral participation* scales and percentages giving positive and negative responses in Ireland and on average across ICCS countries

Scale / Question wording	Sample items	Ireland		International average	
		+	-	+	-
Students' interest in political and social issues	Political issues in your country	55.7	44.3	52.7	47.3
How interested are you in the following issues?	Politics in other countries	30.1	69.9	28.3	71.7
		+	-	+	-
Students' expected adult electoral participation	Vote in national elections	86.7	13.3	81.0	19.0
When you are an adult, what do you think you will do?	Get information about candidates before voting in an election	78.4	21.6	76.3	23.6

Note: For students' interest in political and social issues scale, + represents very or quite interested, - represents not very or not at all interested; for students' expected adult electoral participation, + represents will certainly or probably do this, **-** represents will certainly or probably not do this.

Table A4.2 shows the reliabilities of these scales for Ireland and the corresponding international averages.

Students in Ireland had similar levels of interest in political and social issues as students on average across ICCS countries (Table 3.5). Of the comparison countries, Belgium (Fl.), Finland, Slovenia and Sweden differed significantly and substantively from the international average on the interest in political and social issues scale: all were significantly below the international average by at least four points (Table 5.1, Schulz et al., 2010b).

Students in Ireland were significantly more likely to indicate that they intend to engage in electoral activities such as voting: the mean score in Ireland on this scale was just over two points (about one-fifth of a standard deviation) above the international mean. Irish students had a higher mean score on this scale than any of the comparison countries, where averages were at or below the international mean (Figure 3.1).

In Ireland, boys had a significantly lower level of interest in political and social issues than girls and boys were also significantly less likely than girls to indicate that they intend to vote as adults (Table 3.5). The difference in favour of girls on the interest in political and social issues scale is about one-seventh of a standard deviation, and about one-fifth of a standard deviation on the expected electoral participation scale.

In Ireland, a weak to moderate positive association was found between performance on the ICCS test and interest in political and social issues (r=.11). A somewhat stronger association (r=.40) was found between civic knowledge and expected electoral participation. A moderate positive association (r=.39) was found between interest in politics and expected electoral participation (Table 3.5). At the country level, interest in political and social issues does not appear to be related to expected adult electoral participation (Figure 3.1).

Table 3.5: Mean student scores (SE, SD) in Ireland on *interest in political and social issues* and *expected adult electoral participation* scales, comparisons with international mean and by gender, correlation with civic knowledge and intercorrelation between scales

Scale	Comparison with international mean	Ireland					
		Mean	SE	SD	Gender (Male – Female)	ICCS civic knowledge (r)	Students' expected adult electoral participation (r)
Students' interest in political and social issues	=	49.5	0.24	10.32	⇓	**.114**	**.387**
Students' expected adult electoral participation	⇑	52.2	0.26	9.89	⇓	**.397**	–

Note: Significantly higher ($p \leq .05$) ↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .05$) ↓
Significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) ⇑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .01$) ⇓
No statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) =

Values of r in bold indicate that correlation is significant ($p < .05$)

Shading indicates that the difference between the two groups being compared is statistically significant and at least 2.5 points (one-quarter standard deviation).

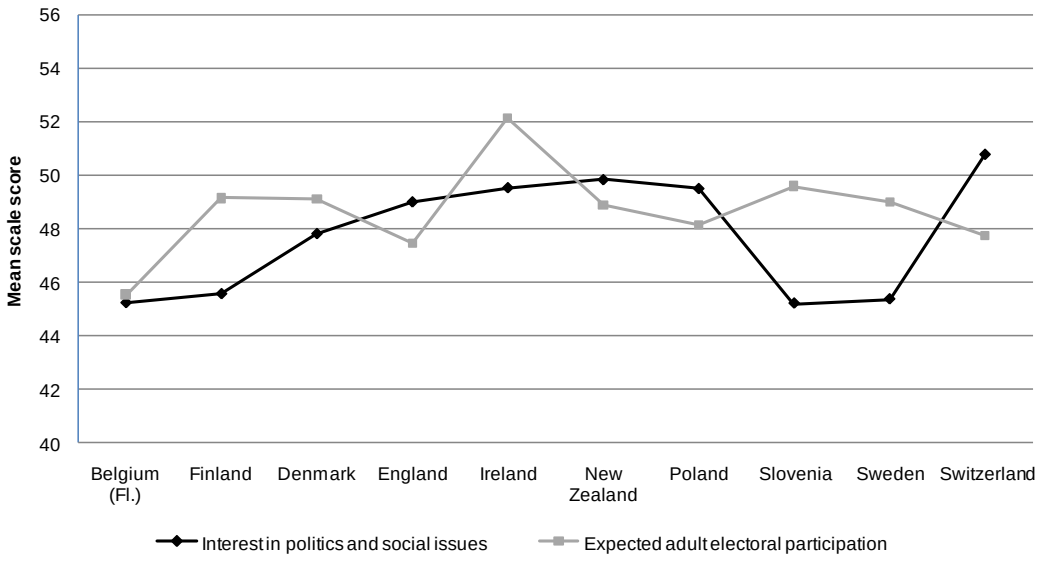

Figure 3.1: Mean scores on the interest in political and social issues and expected adult electoral participation scales, Ireland and comparison countries

3.5. Associations between Students' Interest in Political and Social Issues, Expected Adult Electoral Participation and Key Student Characteristics

In this section, we examine associations between students' background characteristics, their interest in political and social issues, and their expected adult electoral participation.

In Ireland, native students had a significantly lower level of interest in political and social issues than migrant students, irrespective of the language spoken at home by migrant students (Table 3.6). The difference is greatest between native students and migrants who speak languages other than English or Irish at home. A different response pattern was found on the expected electoral participation scale. That is, native students scored significantly higher on this scale than migrant students who speak languages other than English or Irish at home. No significant difference was found on the expected electoral participation scale between native students and migrant students who speak English or Irish at home.

Table 3.6: Comparisons of mean scores on students' *interest in political and social issues* and *expected adult electoral participation* scales by native status, family structure and parental interest in political and social issues, and correlations with student SES, number of siblings and books in the home

Scale	Native & language			Family structure		Parental interest in political and social issues		Correlations		
	Native – Migrant, speaks English / Irish	Native – Migrant, other language	Migrant, English / Irish – Migrant, other language	Nuclear family – Single-parent family	Nuclear family – Mixed family	Quite interested – Not interested	Quite interested – Very interested	Student SES (r)	Number of siblings (r)	Books in the home (r)
Students' interest in political and social issues	↓	🡻	=	=	=	🡹	🡻	**.093**	.022	**.133**
Students' expected adult electoral participation	=	🡹	🡹	🡹	🡹	🡹	🡻	**.197**	**-.050**	**.209**

Note: Significantly higher ($p \leq .05$) ↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .05$) ↓
Significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) 🡹 Significantly lower ($p \leq .01$) 🡻
No statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) =

Values of r in bold indicate that correlation is significant ($p < .05$)

Shading indicates that the difference between the two groups being compared is statistically significant and at least 2.5 points (one-quarter standard deviation).

No significant association was found between family structure (see Section 3.2 for a description of the family structure types) and interest in political and social issues (Table 3.6). However, students from nuclear families were significantly more likely to indicate that they expect to vote as adults than students from single-parent or mixed families. Students from nuclear families scored two-fifths of a standard deviation higher on the expected electoral participation scale than students from mixed families. A smaller though statistically significant difference was found between students from nuclear families and students from single-parent families on this scale.

A relatively robust association was found between student attitudes and parental interest in political and social issues. Students who indicated that their parents were quite interested in politics were themselves significantly more interested in politics and also significantly more likely to intend to vote than students who reported that their parents were not interested in political and social issues. (Table 3.6). Similarly, students who perceived their parents to be very interested political and social issues achieved higher mean scores on the interest in political and social issues and expected electoral participation scale than those who perceived their parents to be less interested in political and social issues.

Positive associations were found between interest in political and social issues, expected electoral participation and student socioeconomic status and also between interest in political and social issues, expected electoral participation and the number of books in students' homes (Table 3.6). Student socioeconomic status was weakly and positively associated with interest in political and social issues (r=.10). Weak to moderate positive associations were found between socioeconomic status and students' expected adult electoral participation (r=.20), between books at home and interest in political and social issues (r=.13), and between books at home and expected electoral participation (r=.21). In contrast, a weak negative association was found between the number of siblings students had and their expected adult electoral participation (r=-.05).

3.6. Associations between Student Interest in Political and Social Issues, Expected Adult Electoral Participation and Key School Characteristics

In this section, associations between students' interest in political and social issues, expected adult electoral participation and some school characteristics are examined. Findings indicate that few associations exist between school characteristics and students' scores on these two scales. However, students attending mixed-sex secondary schools scored significantly lower on the expected electoral participation scale than students enrolled in all-girls secondary schools. Some differences in attitudes and intended behaviours were also associated with SSP and fee-paying status (Table 3.7).

Students attending schools participating in the SSP reported having lower levels of interest in political and social issues, and they also had lower scores on the expected electoral participation scale than students in schools not participating in the SSP (Table 3.7). Although the difference was small between the two groups on the scale measuring interest in political and social issues, a difference of more than two-fifths of a standard deviation was found between the two on the expected adult electoral participation scale.

Students attending fee-paying secondary schools showed somewhat higher levels of interest in political and social issues than students in non-fee-paying secondary schools. They also scored about one-quarter of a standard deviation higher on the expected adult electoral participation scale (Table 3.7).

Student interest in political and social issues correlates weakly but significantly with school socioeconomic status (r=.07). A somewhat stronger positive correlation was found between students' expected adult electoral participation and school average socioeconomic status (r=.22) (Table 3.7).

Table 3.7: Associations between key school characteristics (school sector/gender composition, school participation in School Support Programme [SSP] under DEIS, fee-paying status, location, school enrolment size, average socioeconomic status) and students' *interest in political and social issues* and students' *expected adult electoral participation*

Scale	Comparisons										Correlations
	School sector / gender composition				In SSP under DEIS	Fee-paying status	Location		Enrolment size		
	Mixed Secondary – Comm. / Comp.	Mixed Secondary – VEC	Mixed Secondary – Boys' Sec.	Mixed Secondary – Girls' Sec.	Yes – No	Fee-paying secondary – Free secondary	Town (3,000 – 100,000) – Rural (<3000)	Town (3,000 – 100,000) – City (> 100,000)	Medium (41 – 80) – Small (<40)	Medium (41 – 80) – Large (>81)	School average SES (r)
Students' interest in political and social issues	=	=	=	=	↓	🡅	=	=	=	=	**.073**
Students' expected adult electoral participation	=	=	=	↓	🡇	🡅	=	=	=	=	**.216**

Note: Significantly higher ($p \leq .05$) ↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .05$) ↓
Significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) 🡅 Significantly lower ($p \leq .01$) 🡇
No statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) =

Values of r in bold indicate that correlation is significant ($p < .05$)

Shading indicates that the difference between the two groups being compared is statistically significant and at least 2.5 points (one-quarter standard deviation).

3.7. Student Activities Outside of School on a Normal School Day

This section describes the percentages of students who reported spending no time, an hour or less, or more than an hour, on various activities on a normal school day. The associations between time spent on activities, civic knowledge, interest in political and social issues and expected electoral participation are also considered.

A very small minority of Irish students (3%) reported that they spent no time watching television, videos or DVDs on a normal school day (Table 3.8). The same percentage reported not spending any time on homework on a normal school day. Although these percentages are about the same as the corresponding international averages (5% and 4% respectively), findings indicate that Irish students spent comparatively more time on homework than their counterparts in each of the other comparison countries apart from Belgium (Fl.). In Ireland, 46% of students indicated that they spent more than an hour on homework or study on a normal school day compared to 47% of students in Belgium (Fl.), 22% of students in England and just 6% of students in Finland. Internationally, an average of 39% of students indicated that they spent more than an hour a day on homework.

Table 3.8: Percentages of students participating in out-of-school activities on a normal school day and mean scores on the civic knowledge scale by frequency of participation

	No time				60 minutes or less*				More than an hour			
	Intl	Ireland			Intl	Ireland			Intl	Ireland		
Activities	%	%	Mean	SE	%	%	Mean	SE	%	%	Mean	SE
Watching television, videos or DVDs for fun	5.3	2.9	522.5	14.75	45.0	48.6	537.3	4.80	49.7	48.5	530.5	5.15
Doing homework or study for school	4.3	2.9	**453.0**	13.39	56.6	51.5	522.6	5.36	39.1	45.6	**552.5**	4.77
Using a computer or the Internet for fun	13.3	13.9	539.8	6.98	38.6	58.5	543.9	4.29	48.1	27.7	**511.6**	5.93
Reading for fun	28.4	42.2	**500.8**	4.87	58.5	46.8	551.1	5.09	13.1	11.1	**592.7**	6.34
Chatting with friends over the phone or Internet	14.6	6.6	545.4	10.27	49.6	52.4	549.9	4.65	35.8	41.0	**512.5**	4.89
Spending time with friends	8.5	10.8	577.6	7.16	25.6	31.2	562.7	5.62	65.8	58.0	**510.6**	4.74
Participating in individual sports activities (e.g. swimming, running, skateboarding) **	–	24.9	546.6	5.15	–	35.3	543.3	5.21	–	39.8	**518.2**	5.19
Participating in group sports activities (e.g. basketball, football, hockey) **	–	26.5	543.0	5.55	–	24.3	536.6	5.49	–	49.2	528.3	5.04

Note: Scores in bold are *significantly* different ($p \leq .05$) from the mean for the reference (*) group.

**This is a national question unique to Ireland.

Irish students reported spending comparatively less time using computers or the Internet for fun than students in other ICCS countries. In Ireland, almost 28% of students indicated that they spent more than an hour using a computer or the Internet for fun on a normal school day, compared to 48% of students on average across all ICCS countries (Table 3.8). The percentages of students in comparison countries Poland, Denmark, Finland, England, Slovenia and Sweden reporting that they used a computer for more than an hour on a typical school day exceeded the international average and ranged from 55% in England to 69% in Sweden.

Regarding the weekly use of television, newspapers and the Internet in order to get information about national and international news (not shown here), 50% of students in Ireland reported watching television for this purpose at least once a week (Table 5.6, Schulz et al., 2010b). This is significantly below the corresponding international average (67%) but similar to the percentages in many of the comparison countries (England 56%, Finland 50%, Slovenia 54% and Sweden 49%). Students in Ireland who reported watching TV at least weekly to inform themselves about national and international news had a civic knowledge score 30 points higher than students who reported watching TV for this purpose less frequently. (Table 5.7, Schulz et al., 2010b).

The percentage of students in Ireland (40%) that reported reading a newspaper at least once a week to inform themselves about national and international news was about the same as the corresponding ICCS average (42%) (Table 5.6, Schulz et al., 2010b). No significant difference in achievement in Ireland

was associated with frequency of reading the newspaper (Table 5.7, Schulz et al., 2010b).

Fewer students in Ireland (12%) than on average across ICCS countries (28%) reported using the Internet at least weekly to get information on national and international news (Table 5.6, Schulz et al., 2010b). Students in Ireland who reported using the Internet on a weekly basis achieved a lower average civic knowledge score than those who reported using the Internet less frequently (Table 5.7, Schulz et al., 2010b). This difference amounts to 19 points in favour of students who reported using the Internet less than weekly. Ireland was the only ICCS country to record a significant difference in achievement in favour of those who reported using the Internet less than weekly; in other countries, the difference was either not statistically significant or in favour of those who used the Internet at least weekly.

Looking across all three types of media, 61% of students in Ireland reported using at least one on a weekly basis to inform themselves about national or international news (Table 5.6, Schulz et al., 2010b). Of all ICCS countries, only Cyprus had a lower percentage of students than Ireland (58%) using at least one of the three media on a weekly basis.

Regarding daily leisure reading, Irish students (42%) were more likely to report spending no time reading for fun outside of school on a normal school day than students in any other country apart from Belgium (Fl.) where 46% of students reported that they spent no time reading for fun. The international average for the percentages of students who spent no time reading for fun outside of school was 28% (Table 3.8). This low rate of leisure reading was also found in Ireland in a 2009 international study of 15-year olds (OECD, 2010c).

Over 90% of Irish students reported spending at least some time chatting with friends over the phone or Internet on a normal school day (Table 3.8). This compares to an international average of 85%. The majority of students in Ireland (89%) and internationally (91%) also reported spending time with friends outside of school on a normal school day.

Students in Ireland (but not internationally) were asked to indicate the amount of time they spent on individual and group sports on a normal school day. About one-quarter of students reported not spending any time on individual sports and a similar percentage reported not spending any time on group sports. Almost half of students spent more than an hour on group sports and about 40% reported spending more than an hour on individual sports activities (Table 3.8).

Some gender differences are apparent in the amount of time students in Ireland reported spending on different activities. While 4% of boys in Ireland reported spending no time on homework, just 1% of girls fell into this category. Conversely, 56% of girls in Ireland reported spending more than an hour per day on homework compared to 36% of boys. Irish boys were more likely than girls to report spending no time reading for fun (51% and 33% respectively) and boys in Ireland (10%) were also more likely than girls (3%) to indicate that they spent no time chatting with friends over the phone or Internet. A greater percentage of Irish girls (34%) than boys (20%) reported spending no time on group sports. Gender differences in Ireland were small for participation in individual sports and for using a computer or the Internet for fun.

In Ireland and in each of the comparison countries, spending time on reading for fun or homework was associated with higher civic knowledge scores. Students who reported spending no time on reading for fun achieved lower civic knowledge scores than students who reported spending some time on reading for fun, and students who reported that they spent more than an hour on reading for fun achieved higher scores than students who indicated that they spent less than this amount of time (Table 3.8 and Figure 3.2).

Similarly with homework, students in Ireland and in each of the comparison countries who reported spending no time on homework had lower civic knowledge scores than students who spent some time on homework (Figure 3.3). In Ireland, students who spent more than an hour on homework had significantly higher average civic knowledge scores than students who reported spending less than an hour (Table 3.8). Findings were similar in England, and to a lesser extent in New Zealand and Poland (Figure 3.3). However, the association between higher civic achievement and longer time spent on homework did not hold across all comparison countries, e.g. in Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland, equally high scores were associated with spending more than an hour or less than an hour on homework (Figure 3.3). As noted above, the percentages of students spending more than an hour a day on homework varied considerably across countries but it is of interest that there is no clear association between the average time spent on homework in a country and average civic and citizenship knowledge in that country.

Broadly speaking, spending more than an hour per day on any activity other than homework or reading for fun was associated with lower civic knowledge scores in Ireland and in each of the comparison countries, although some variations were found across countries. For example, in Ireland, students who indicated that they spent more than an hour per day using a computer or the Internet, or more than an hour with friends, achieved lower civic knowledge scores than students who spent less than an hour on these activities (Table 3.8).

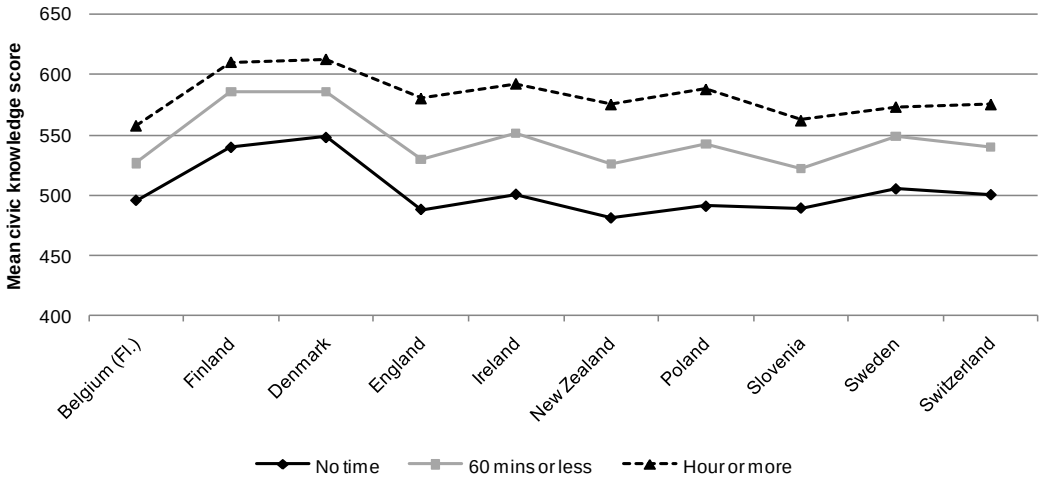

Figure 3.2: Civic knowledge scores in Ireland and comparison countries by time spent on reading outside of school on a normal school day

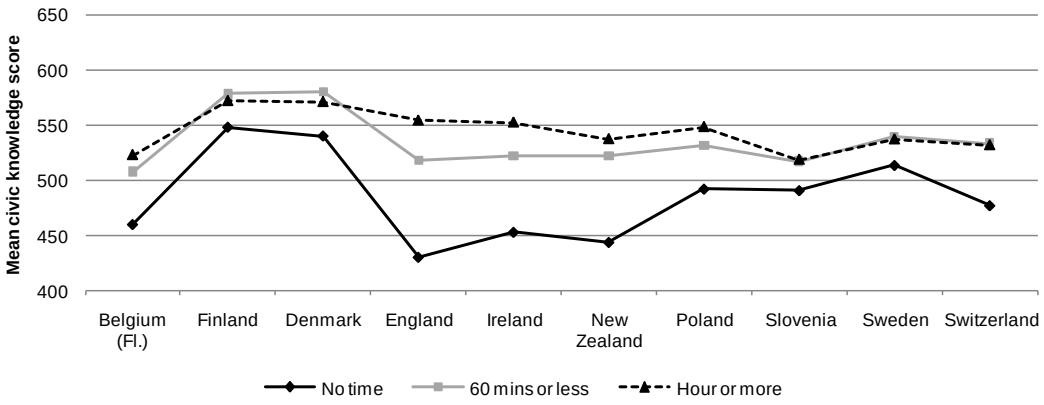

Figure 3.3: Civic knowledge scores in Ireland and comparison countries by time spent on homework or study outside of school on a normal school day

In Ireland, spending some time on homework or reading for fun was positively associated not only with civic knowledge but also with a higher interest in political and social issues (Table 3.9) and higher scores on the expected adult electoral participation scale (Table 3.10). Irish students who reported that they spent some time (up to an hour) on homework scored on average between three-fifths and three-quarters of a standard deviation higher on these two scales than students who indicated that they spent no time on homework. Students who reported spending more than an hour on homework achieved somewhat higher mean scores again (about three-tenths of a standard deviation).

Table 3.9: Mean scores on the *interest in political and social issues* scale by frequency of participation in out-of-school activities, Ireland

	No time		60 minutes or less*		More than an hour	
Activities	Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE
Watching television, videos or DVDs for fun	51.1	1.10	50.1	0.32	**48.8**	0.34
Doing homework or study for school	**41.9**	1.34	48.1	0.32	**51.6**	0.29
Using a computer or the Internet for fun	49.3	0.51	50.2	0.27	**48.3**	0.37
Reading for fun	**46.2**	0.37	51.8	0.29	52.6	0.62
Chatting with friends over the phone or Internet	50.1	0.68	50.8	0.27	**47.6**	0.38
Spending time with friends	51.1	0.58	50.7	0.36	**48.6**	0.30
Participating in individual sports activities (e.g. swimming, running, skateboarding)[a]	**48.1**	0.47	50.3	0.29	49.7	0.38
Participating in group sports activities (e.g. basketball, football, hockey)[a]	49.4	0.43	50.0	0.39	49.4	0.30

Note: Scores in bold are *significantly* different ($p \leq .05$) from the mean for the reference (*) group.

[a]This is a national question unique to Ireland.

Table 3.10: Mean scores on the *expected adult electoral participation* scale by frequency of participation in out-of-school activities, Ireland

	No time		60 minutes or less		More than an hour	
Activities	Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE
Watching television, videos or DVDs for fun	51.7	1.41	52.6	0.31	51.7	0.28
Doing homework or study for school	**43.6**	1.66	50.8	0.31	**54.3**	0.28
Using a computer or the Internet for fun	52.3	0.48	53.0	0.26	**50.4**	0.45
Reading for fun	**49.5**	0.37	53.8	0.28	**55.2**	0.44
Chatting with friends over the phone or Internet	52.6	0.69	53.3	0.29	**50.7**	0.41
Spending time with friends	54.7	0.59	53.6	0.33	**51.0**	0.32
Participating in individual sports activities (e.g. swimming, running, skateboarding)	51.5	0.38	52.5	0.37	52.3	0.36
Participating in group sports activities (e.g. basketball, football, hockey)	51.6	0.45	52.3	0.42	52.4	0.29

Note: Scores in bold are *significantly* different ($p \leq .05$) from the mean for the reference (*) group.

*This is a national question unique to Ireland.

Somewhat smaller, though still statistically significant, differences in interest in political and social issues and expected electoral participation were found between students in Ireland who reported not spending any time reading for fun and those who indicated that they spent some time (up to an hour) reading for fun on a normal school day. A small significant difference (about one-seventh of a standard deviation) was found on the expected adult electoral participation scale between students in Ireland who reported reading for fun for more than an hour a day compared to those who read for 60 minutes or less per day.

Findings indicate that slightly lower average scores on the interest in political and social issues and expected electoral participation scales are associated with spending in excess of an hour a day using a computer for fun, chatting with friends over the phone or Internet, and spending time with friends (Tables 3.9 and 3.10).

3.8. Key Points Arising From Chapter 3

This chapter examined students' civic knowledge, interest in political and social issues and expected adult electoral participation. Key findings are as follows:

- In Ireland, the mean score on *interest in political and social issues* did not differ from the international mean, while the Irish mean for *expected electoral participation* was significantly higher. Boys in Ireland had lower mean scores on both of these scales than girls.
- Moderate positive correlations were found between interest in political and social issues and expected electoral participation (.39), and between achievement and expected adult electoral participation (.40). Interest and achievement were only weakly correlated (.11).
- About 12% of students in Ireland had a migrant background and of these, just under half (5% of total) spoke English or Irish at home. Home language was strongly related to achievement and expected electoral participation; higher scores were associated with speaking English or Irish. A different association was found between home language and interest in political and social issues, whereby native students had lower levels of interest than students from a migrant background, irrespective of the language spoken at home.

- Almost 80% of students in Ireland lived within a nuclear family structure. These students had higher civic knowledge scores and expected electoral participation scores than students from single-parent or mixed families. Family structure, particularly mixed families (i.e. with one biological parent and one 'step-parent') was highlighted as an area that merits further research.
- Comparatively high levels of parental interest in politics were reported in Ireland. Parental interest was strongly and positively associated with civic knowledge, interest in political and social issues, and expected electoral participation.
- Student socioeconomic status and the number of books at home were both positively related to the three outcomes and the associations were stronger in the case of civic knowledge. Number of siblings was weakly and negatively associated with achievement and expected electoral participation.
- School characteristics indicative of the social composition of the school, i.e. participation in the SSP under DEIS and fee-paying status, were related to all three outcomes. School average socioeconomic composition also correlated positively with achievement and with students' expected electoral participation, while a weaker association was found between socioeconomic composition and interest in political and social issues.
- Time spent reading for fun and doing homework showed positive associations with all three outcomes, particularly civic knowledge, while spending longer amounts of time on other activities (e.g. time on the Internet or chatting on the phone) tended to be associated with lower achievement scores, somewhat lower levels of interest in politics or social issues and expected electoral participation.
- Irish students reported spending comparatively little time reading for fun and comparatively large amounts of time on homework, relative to students in other countries. Boys in Ireland reported lower amounts of time on both of these activities than girls, particularly in the case of leisure reading.

Chapter 4. Students' Attitudes to and Engagement in Civic and Citizenship Issues

4.1. Overview

This chapter outlines students' attitudes towards, perceptions of, and participation in, civic- and citizenship-related activities, based on their responses to the ICCS student questionnaire. Where relevant, comparisons are made with the results of the 1971 Six-Subject Study (Litton, 1977). As noted in Chapter 1 (Section 1.1), the sample size was small in 1971, the response rate was lower than would now be considered acceptable, and many of the concepts examined in ICCS were not included in the 1971 study. Therefore, detailed comparisons between ICCS and the Six-Subject Study cannot be made.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into nine sections. Section 4.2 considers students' attitudes towards equal rights for men and women, for people from different ethnic groups, and for immigrants. Students' attitudes towards their country, their trust in civic institutions, and support for democratic values are examined in Section 4.3. In Section 4.4, we describe students' perceptions of the importance of conventional and social movement-related citizenship. Students' citizenship self-efficacy and their sense of internal political efficacy are examined in Section 4.5. Students' current and expected future participation in various activities are the focus of Section 4.6. The seventh section explores students' attitudes towards, and participation in, school life. In Section 4.8, we describe students' views on the importance of religion in their lives. The chapter concludes with a summary of key points.

The sections in this chapter are organised according to the following structure: firstly, a number of sample questions (items) are presented along with the percentages of students in Ireland and on average across ICCS countries that responded positively or negatively to each. Additional items are discussed for scales where the individual items are of particular interest. Overall measures of student attitudes and behaviours, which were derived by combining student responses on the individual items, are then presented. These overall measures (or scales) have an international mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10. The mean scores of students in Ireland on these scales are compared to the corresponding international averages, and differences in Irish students' mean scores by gender and migrant/language status are discussed. Correlations between scale scores in Ireland and student socioeconomic status and civic knowledge are presented, along with scale intercorrelations, where relevant. Finally, the mean scale scores of comparison countries are compared to those of Ireland.

Readers can refer to Box 1.4 in Chapter 1 for further information on how to interpret the results in this chapter. The rationale for selecting particular countries as comparison countries is outlined in Section 2.1 (Chapter 2). Table A4.2 shows the reliabilities of the student questionnaire scales for Ireland, and the corresponding international averages.

4.2. Attitudes to Equal Rights

Students were presented with a number of items asking about their attitudes towards equal rights in three areas: between men and women, for people from all ethnic or racial groups, and for immigrants. Looking firstly at attitudes towards gender equality, in Ireland and on average across participating countries, high percentages of students supported equal rights. Almost 96% of students in Ireland agreed or strongly agreed that 'men and women should have the same rights in every way', while 93% disagreed or strongly disagreed that 'women should stay out of politics' (Table 4.1). The corresponding international averages were 93% and 85%.

The 1971 Six-Subject Study also looked at attitudes to gender equality (Torney, Oppenheim & Farnan, 1975). While just 7% of Irish students in 2009 agreed or strongly agreed that 'women should stay out of politics' (Table 4.1), almost 22% of Irish students strongly agreed or agreed with this statement in 1971 (Litton, 1977). Furthermore, while 96% of Irish students in ICCS strongly agreed or agreed that 'men and women should have the same rights in every way', this figure was just 62% in 1971 (ibid.).

In 2009, most students in Ireland and on average internationally were in support of equal rights for all ethnic or racial groups (Table 4.1). Over 90% of students in Ireland agreed or strongly agreed that 'people of all ethnic groups should have the same rights and responsibilities in society' and that 'all ethnic groups should have an equal chance to get a good education in Ireland'. The corresponding international averages were 90% and 93%, respectively.

Table 4.1: Sample items for *gender equality*, *immigrant rights* and *ethnic/racial group rights* scales, percentages for combined response categories in Ireland, and international averages

Scale / Question wording	Sample item	Ireland		International average	
		+	–	+	–
Students' attitudes towards gender equality[1]	Women should stay out of politics	7.3	92.7	14.9	85.1
How much do you agree or disagree…?	Men and women should have the same rights in every way	95.9	4.1	92.7	7.3
Students' attitudes towards equal rights for all ethnic/racial groups[1]	People of all ethnic groups should have the same rights and responsibilities in society	91.5	8.5	89.9	10.1
How much do you agree or disagree…?	All ethnic groups should have an equal chance to get a good education in Ireland	94.4	5.6	93.3	6.70
Students' attitudes towards equal rights for immigrants[1]	Immigrants should have all the same rights that everyone else in the country has	88.6	11.4	85.8	14.2
How much do you agree or disagree…?	Immigrants should have the opportunity to continue speaking their own language	73.8	26.2	76.4	23.6

[1]Positive response options: Strongly agree or agree. Negative response options: Disagree or strongly disagree.

Questions about equal rights for all ethnic groups in the 1971 study were presented in the broader context of civil rights. Most Irish students at that time rejected discrimination on the basis of religion or race (e.g. 93% of 14-year olds agreed or strongly agreed that 'no matter what a man's colour, religion or nationality, if he is qualified for a job he should get it'). However, Irish students supported the idea that political rights should be in line with the distribution of status in society: 22% of students in 1971 were of the opinion that doctors should have more rights and freedoms than everyone else; 20% believed that religious leaders should have more rights and freedom; and 21% indicated that discharged prisoners should have fewer rights and freedoms than everyone else (Litton, 1977).

Results from ICCS show that a large majority of students in Ireland and on average internationally were in favour of equal rights for immigrants (Table 4.1). Almost 89% of students in Ireland agreed or strongly agreed that 'immigrants should have all the same rights that everyone else in the country has'. A lower percentage (74%) agreed or strongly agreed that 'immigrants should have the opportunity to continue speaking their own language'. The corresponding international averages were similar to those in Ireland (86% and 76%, respectively).

Table 4.2: Mean student scale scores (SE, SD) in Ireland for *gender equality*, *immigrant rights* and *ethnic/racial group rights*, comparisons with international means and by student gender and native status, and correlations with student socioeconomic status and ICCS civic knowledge

Scale	International Mean	Ireland								
		Mean	SE	SD	Gender (Male – Female)	Native & language: Native – Migrant, speaks English / Irish	Native & language: Native – Migrant, other language	Native & language: Migrant, English / Irish – Migrant other language	Student SES (r)	ICCS Civic Knowledge (r)
Students' attitudes towards gender equality	⇑	54.3	0.29	10.21	⇓	=	⇑	⇑	**.151**	**.395**
Students' attitudes towards equal rights for all ethnic/racial groups	⇑	50.9	0.26	10.76	⇓	⇓	=	⇑	**.149**	**.302**
Students' attitudes towards equal rights for immigrants	=	49.9	0.22	10.3	⇓	⇓	⇓	=	**.109**	**.172**

Note: Significantly higher ($p \leq .05$) ↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .05$) ↓
Significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) ⇑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .01$) ⇓
No statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) =

Values of r in bold indicate that correlation is significant ($p < .05$)

Shading indicates that the difference between the two groups being compared is statistically significant and at least 2.5 (one-quarter of a standard deviation).

On the overall measure of students' attitudes towards gender equality, Irish students scored significantly above the international mean by about two-fifths of a standard deviation (Table 4.2; see Box 1.4, Chapter 1 for assistance with interpretation). Irish students also had somewhat more favourable attitudes to equal

rights for all ethnic or racial groups than students on average across ICCS countries (Table 4.2). However, although statistically significant, the difference between the Irish average and the international average on this scale was less than 1 point (one-tenth of a standard deviation). The average score of students in Ireland on the equal rights for immigrants scale did not differ significantly from the international average (Table 4.2).

As in all participating countries, girls in Ireland showed higher levels of support for equal gender rights than boys. Although Irish boys scored somewhat lower than Irish girls on this scale (a statistically significant difference of about 8 points or four-fifths of a standard deviation; Table 4.2), Irish boys had more favourable attitudes to gender equality than boys on average across ICCS countries. The mean score of boys in Ireland was 50 points compared to the corresponding international average of 47.

A large difference between the attitudes of males and females was found in Finland, where girls scored one standard deviation higher than boys on the gender equality scale (Table 4.5, Schulz et al, 2010b). Smaller differences between the attitudes of boys and girls were generally found in countries where overall support for gender equality was low; e.g. students in the Dominican Republic, Indonesia, the Russian Federation and Thailand scored below the international average overall on this scale and gender differences in those countries ranged between 2 and 4 points (one-fifth to two-fifths of a standard deviation) in favour of girls (ibid.).

Males in Ireland had less favourable attitudes than females to equal rights for all ethnic or racial groups (Table 4.2). The difference was about three-tenths of a standard deviation. Males also had less favourable attitudes to equal rights for immigrants than females: the mean score of males was again about three-tenths of a standard deviation lower than that of females.

Differences in attitudes to gender equality were found between native students and migrant students who spoke languages other than English or Irish at home (see Table 3.2, Chapter 3 for definitions of native and migrant). Native students had a significantly higher mean score on this scale. Migrant students who spoke English or Irish at home also had a significantly higher mean score than migrant students who spoke other languages at home. In both cases, the difference amounted to about half a standard deviation.

Differences in attitudes towards equal rights for all ethnic groups were also found between native Irish students and migrant students, with native Irish students scoring significantly lower (by about two-fifths of a standard deviation) than migrant students who spoke English or Irish at home. Differences within the group of migrant students are also significant: migrants who spoke English or Irish at home had significantly more positive attitudes to equal rights for all ethnic groups than migrants who spoke other languages at home.

Native Irish students also had less favourable attitudes than migrants towards equal rights for immigrants, regardless of the language spoken at home by the migrant students (Table 4.2). Differences in favour of migrant students were substantial: migrants who spoke English or Irish scored, on average, two-fifths of a standard deviation higher than native students and migrants who spoke other languages scored, on average, seven-tenths of a standard deviation higher than native students.

A weak to moderate association was found in Ireland between socioeconomic status and attitudes to gender equality (r = .15) and a somewhat stronger correlation between civic knowledge and attitudes to gender equality (r = .40) (Table 4.2). Students in Ireland who supported equal rights for all ethnic groups also tended to be in favour of equal rights for immigrants: there is a strong correlation between the two scales (r = .57) (Table A4.1, Appendix 4). There are also positive, moderate to strong correlations between students' attitudes to gender rights and their attitudes to equal rights for all ethnic groups (r = .44), and between their attitudes to gender rights and attitudes to immigrant rights (r = .33) (Table A4.1, Appendix 4). There are weak to moderate positive correlations between attitudes to equal rights for immigrants and socioeconomic status (r = .11) and between attitudes to equal rights for immigrants and civic knowledge (r = .17) (Table 4.2).

Students in the comparison countries (as in Ireland) generally had favourable attitudes towards gender equality, with students scoring at or above the international average in all countries except Poland (Figure 4.1).

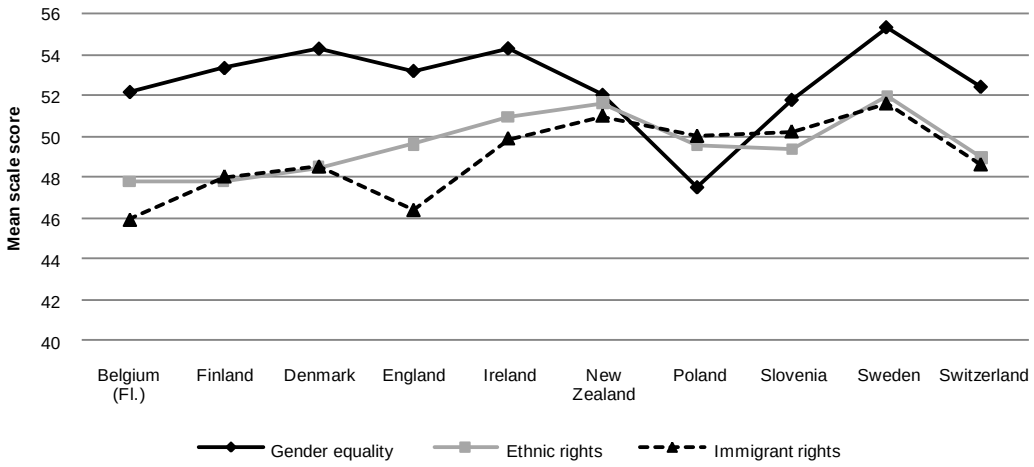

Figure 4.1: Mean scale scores for *gender equality*, *equal rights for all ethnic groups* and *immigrant rights* scales, Ireland and comparison countries

As in Ireland, students in New Zealand and Sweden scored significantly above the international average on the scale measuring attitudes to equal rights for all ethnic groups. Conversely, students in Belgium (Fl.), Finland and Denmark had somewhat lower mean scores on this scale (Figure 4.1). Differences between the comparison countries were not large on this scale.

Greater variation is evident across comparison countries in attitudes towards equal rights for immigrants (Figure 4.1). Students in England and Belgium (Fl.) had the least favourable disposition towards equal rights for immigrants across all ICCS countries (Table 4.7, Schulz et al, 2010b). In contrast, students in New Zealand and Sweden were somewhat more positively predisposed to equal rights for immigrants than students on average across ICCS countries.

4.3. Attitudes to Institutions and Society

Students were asked about their attitudes towards the country in which they resided, their trust in various civic institutions in that country, and their support for democratic values. Table 4.3 presents some sample items from each of these scales along with the percentages of students responding positively and negatively to each in Ireland and internationally.

High percentages of students in Ireland and internationally agreed that the country's flag is important to them (89% and 86% respectively), while a somewhat higher percentage of students in Ireland than internationally agreed that people in the country should be proud of what they have achieved (94% and 88%, respectively) (Table 4.3).

A lower percentage of students in Ireland indicated that they trust the government (52%) than internationally (62%) (Table 4.3). Students in Ireland and internationally reported having lower levels of trust in political parties than in their national governments: only about 40% of students in Ireland and internationally indicated that they trust political parties completely or quite a lot. Higher percentages of Irish students reported trusting the police (71%) than internationally (67%).

In addition to the questions on trust in civic institutions shown in Table 4.3, students were asked about their levels of trust in the media, schools and people in general. Just under half of students in Ireland (48%) indicated that they trust the media completely or quite a lot. The corresponding international average was 61%. The low level of trust of Irish students in the media contrasts with the high level of trust they place in schools. Three-quarters of Irish students reported that they trust schools completely or quite a lot; this was the same as the corresponding international average. Almost two-thirds of Irish students (64%) indicated that they trust people in general. This was somewhat (and significantly) higher than the corresponding international average (58%) (see Table 4.10, Schulz et al, 2010b).

Students were asked to rate their levels of support for democratic values by indicating their levels of agreement with five statements about people's rights to protest, to criticise the government, to elect their leaders, to have their rights respected, and to express their opinions freely. High percentages of students in Ireland and internationally agreed with the statements which were supportive of democratic values[24] (Table 4.3); the Irish percentages for 2009 are compared below with the percentages in Ireland agreeing with similar statements in 1971.

[24] Given that a large majority of students supported democratic values (i.e. the responses are highly positively skewed), the reliability of the overall measure is somewhat lower than that of other scales (0.67). Alpha values for all student questionnaire scales are provided in Table A4.2 (Appendix 4).

Table 4.3: Sample items for *attitudes to country*, *trust in civic institutions* and *democratic values* scales, percentages for combined response categories in Ireland, and international averages

Scale / Question wording	Sample item	Ireland		International average	
		+	–	+	–
Students' attitudes towards their country[1]	The Irish flag is important to me	89.4	10.6	85.8	14.2
How much do you agree or disagree…?	In Ireland we should be proud of what we have achieved	93.5	6.5	88.3	11.7
Students' trust in civic institutions[2]	the national government	52.0	48.0	62.1	37.9
	political parties	40.0	60.0	41.1	58.9
How much do you trust…?	the Garda Síochána (police)	71.4	28.6	66.5	33.5
Students' support for democratic values[1]	People should be able to protest if they believe a law is unfair	93.6	6.4	91.7	8.3
How much do you agree or disagree…?	People should always be free to criticise the government publicly	81.8	18.2	78.1	21.9

[1]Positive response options: Strongly agree or agree. Negative response options: Disagree or strongly disagree.

[2]Positive response options: Completely or quite a lot. Negative response options: A little or not at all.

A number of the items used in ICCS to measure students' support for democratic values were similar to items presented in the 1971 Six-Subject Study (Torney et al, 1975; Litton, 1977). In Ireland, 78% of 14-year-old students in 1971 agreed or strongly agreed that 'citizens must always be free to criticise the government' (Litton, 1977). This is similar to the percentage of students in 2009 (82%) who agreed or strongly agreed with a similarly-worded item, 'people should always be free to criticise the government publicly' (Table 4.3). In contrast, a lower percentage of students (59%) in Ireland in 1971 agreed or strongly agreed that 'people who disagree with the government should be allowed to meet and hold public protests' (Litton, 1977). Almost all students (94%) in Ireland in 2009 agreed or strongly agreed with a similar statement ('people should be able to protest if they believe a law is unfair').

Irish students had a significantly lower score on the trust in civic institutions scale than students on average across ICCS countries (Table 4.4). The difference, however, is small (less than one-quarter of a standard deviation). Conversely, students in Ireland scored significantly above the international mean on the overall scale measuring students' attitudes to their country of residence and on the scale measuring support for democratic values (Table 4.4). However, despite being statistically significant, the differences in favour of Irish students on these scales are small.

It is interesting to contrast the Irish average score on the support for democratic values scale with Irish students' attitudes to democratic values in 1971, where it was found that although Irish students generally endorsed democratic values, they scored below average on an overall measure of attachment to democratic values (Litton, 1977). Irish students in 1971 also had a comparatively weak grasp of the logic behind democratic values and showed poor understanding

of how democratic principles were put into practice (e.g. through regular elections) (ibid.).

Small but statistically significant gender differences were found in Ireland on the ICCS measures of attitudes towards country of residence and trust in institutions (Table 4.4). Males had more positive attitudes towards Ireland than females, while males in Ireland had lower levels of trust in civic institutions than females.

Table 4.4: Mean student scale scores (SE, SD) in Ireland for *attitudes to country*, *trust in civic institutions* and *democratic values*, comparisons with international means and by student gender and native status, and correlations with student socioeconomic status and ICCS civic knowledge

Scale	International Mean	Ireland								
		Mean	SE	SD	Gender (Male – Female)	Native & language			Student SES (r)	ICCS Civic Knowledge (r)
						Native – Migrant, speaks English / Irish	Native – Migrant, other language	Migrant, English / Irish – Migrant other language		
Students' attitudes towards their country	↑	50.5	0.22	8.99	↑	↑	↑	=	**-.080**	**-.092**
Students' trust in civic institutions	↓	49.2	0.23	9.74	↓	=	=	=	.033	-.014
Students' support for democratic values	↑	50.8	0.25	10.01	=	=	=	=	**.127**	**.362**

Note: Significantly higher ($p \leq .05$) ↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .05$) ↓
Significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) ↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .01$) ↓
No statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) =

Values of r in bold indicate that correlation is significant ($p < .05$)

Shading indicates that the difference between the two groups being compared is statistically significant and at least 2.5 (one-quarter of a standard deviation).

There are no significant differences by migrant/language status on the trust in institutions and support for democratic values scales (Table 4.4). In contrast, there is a significant difference in favour of native students over migrant students on the attitudes to country scale. Native Irish students scored about half a standard deviation higher on the attitudes to country scale than migrant students, regardless of the language spoken at home by migrant students.

There are statistically significant, but weak, negative correlations between student socioeconomic status and attitudes to Ireland and also between attitudes to Ireland and civic knowledge (Table 4.4). There are somewhat stronger, positive correlations between support for democratic values and student socioeconomic status (r = .13) and between support for democratic values and civic knowledge (r = .36). There is a moderate, positive correlation (r = .39) between attitudes towards Ireland and trust in civic institutions, and a weak correlation (r = .07) between attitudes to Ireland and support for democratic values (Table A4.1, Appendix 4). The correlation between trust in civic institutions and support for democratic values is not significant (Table A4.1, Appendix 4).

Substantial variations across comparison countries were evident on the attitudes to country, trust in institutions and support for democratic values scales (Figure 4.2). Students in Belgium (Fl.) and England had markedly lower scores on the attitudes towards country scale than students in other comparison countries. In contrast, students in Denmark, Finland and Sweden reported high levels of trust in the civic institutions in those countries. Of the comparison countries, support for democratic values was lowest among students in Belgium (Fl.).

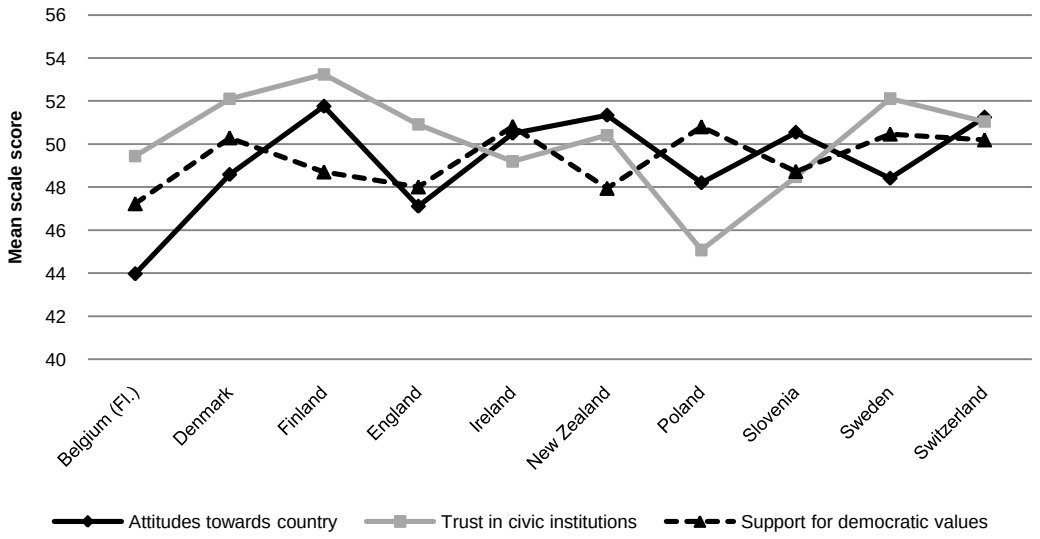

Figure 4.2: Mean scale scores on *attitudes towards country*, *trust in civic institutions* and *support for democratic values*, Ireland and comparison countries

4.4. Citizens and Society

Students were asked to indicate the level of importance they attributed to a number of different behaviours related to being a 'good' adult citizen. From students' responses to these items, two scales were derived: one measuring students' perceptions of the importance of conventional citizenship, and another measuring students' perceptions of the importance of social movement-related citizenship. Taking two examples from the items comprising the conventional citizenship scale (Table 4.5), almost 90% of students in Ireland and 81% internationally indicated that they consider it to be very or quite important to vote in every national election and about three-quarters of students in Ireland and internationally reported that they consider it to be very or quite important to learn about the country's history. Responses on the two example items from the social movement-related citizenship scale (Table 4.5) indicate that over 80% of students in Ireland and internationally agreed on the importance of participating in activities to benefit people in the local community, while over three-fifths of students believed it is important to participate in peaceful protests against laws believed to be unjust.

Table 4.5: Sample items for *importance of conventional citizenship* and *importance of social movement-related citizenship* scales, percentages for combined response categories in Ireland and international averages

Scale / Question wording	Sample item	Ireland		International average	
		+	-	+	-
Student perceptions of the importance of conventional citizenship[1]	Voting in every national election	89.1	10.9	80.9	19.1
Importance of various behaviours for being a good adult citizen	Learning about the country's history	74.0	26.0	77.3	22.7
Student perceptions of the importance of social movement-related citizenship[1]	participating in activities to benefit people in the local community	84.1	15.9	80.5	19.5
Importance of various behaviours for being a good adult citizen	participating in peaceful protests against laws believed to be unjust	64.9	35.1	63.3	36.7

[1]Positive response options: Very or quite important. Negative response options: Not very or not at all important.

Table 4.6: Mean student scale scores (SE, SD) in Ireland for *importance of conventional citizenship* and *importance of social movement-related citizenship*, comparisons with international mean and by student gender and native status, and correlations with student socioeconomic status and ICCS civic knowledge

Scale	International Mean	Ireland								
		Mean	SE	SD	Gender (Male – Female)	Native & language: Native – Migrant, speaks English / Irish	Native & language: Native – Migrant, other language	Native & language: Migrant, English / Irish – Migrant other language	Student SES (r)	ICCS Civic Knowledge (r)
Student perceptions of the importance of conventional citizenship	=	50.1	0.23	9.17	⇓	=	=	=	**.072**	-.004
Student perceptions of the importance of social movement-related citizenship	=	50.3	0.20	10.00	⇓	=	=	=	**.064**	**.150**

Note: Significantly higher ($p \leq .05$) ↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .05$) ↓
Significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) ⇑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .01$) ⇓
No statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) =

Values of r in bold indicate that correlation is significant ($p < .05$)

Shading indicates that the difference between the two groups being compared is statistically significant and at least 2.5 (one-quarter of a standard deviation).

In Ireland, two additional items were presented to students regarding the importance of conventional citizenship. These items related to voting in referenda and taking part in activities relating to global development/justice issues. Four-fifths of students in Ireland (80.8%) indicated that it is very or quite important to vote in referenda in order to be a good adult citizen, while 72.6% reported that taking part in activities relating to global development/justice issues is important for being a good adult citizen.

Mean scores in Ireland on the scales measuring students' perceptions of the importance of conventional citizenship and social movement-related citizenship do not differ significantly from the corresponding international means (Table 4.6). In Ireland, females had a significantly higher score than males on both scales: the difference is small on the conventional citizenship scale but amounts to about three-tenths of a standard deviation on the social movement citizenship scale. Migrant background/home language is not significantly associated with scores on these scales.

There are weak positive correlations between student socioeconomic status and conventional citizenship, and between student socioeconomic status and social movement-related citizenship. There is also a weak to moderate positive correlation between social movement-related citizenship and civic knowledge (Table 4.6). There is a moderate to strong positive correlation between social movement-related citizenship and conventional citizenship (r = .50), so students who indicated support for the importance of conventional citizenship also tended to show support for the importance of social movement-related citizenship (Table A4.1, Appendix 4).

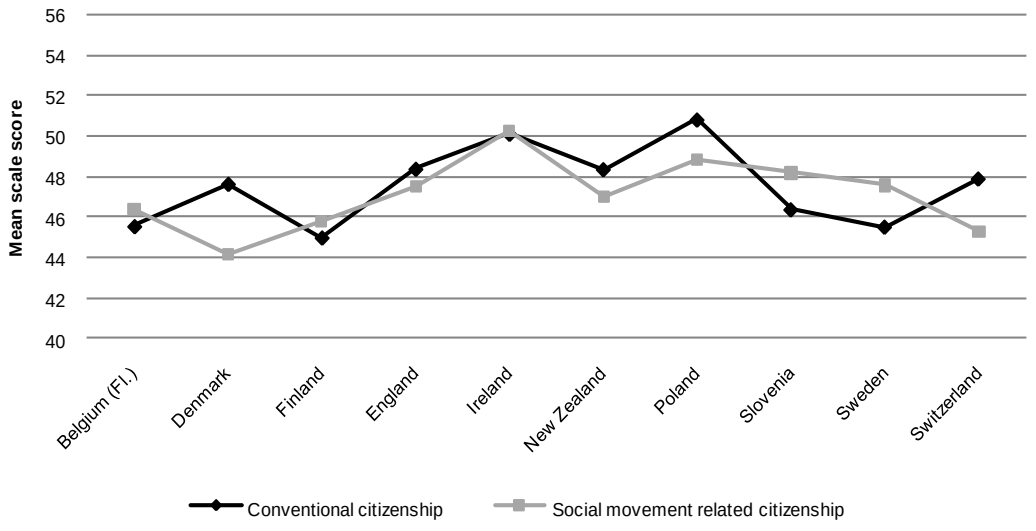

Figure 4.3: Mean scale scores on *importance of conventional citizenship* and *importance of social movement-related citizenship*, Ireland and comparison countries

Mean scores for students' perceptions of conventional citizenship and social movement-related citizenship were comparatively low in the comparison countries and there was relatively little variation in mean scores across countries (Figure 4.3). Although not significantly different to the international average, the mean score in Ireland on the social movement-related citizenship scale was higher than in all comparison countries. The mean score in Denmark on the scale measuring the importance of social movement-related citizenship was almost three-fifths of a standard deviation below the international average. Mean scale scores on the importance of conventional citizenship scale were lowest in Belgium (Fl.), Finland and Sweden.

4.5. Students' Self-efficacy

Students were presented with a number of items related to participating in society and asked to rate how well they felt they could do each of these. The items asked about discussing a newspaper article about a conflict between countries, standing as a candidate in a student council election, following a television debate about a controversial issue, arguing one's point of view, and organising a group of students to achieve change. About 60% of students in Ireland and internationally indicated that they felt very well or fairly well able to argue their point of view about a controversial political or social issue; 61% in Ireland and 65% internationally indicated that they would be very or fairly well able to organise a group of students in order to achieve changes at school (Table 4.7).

Students were also presented with a series of statements about internal political efficacy and asked to rate their level of agreement with each on a four-point scale ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. A higher percentage of students in Ireland (61%) than internationally (54%) agreed or strongly agreed that they had a good understanding of the political issues facing the country, while just over one-quarter of students in Ireland (27%) and internationally (28%) indicated that they knew more about politics than most people their age (Table 4.7).

Table 4.7: Sample items for *citizenship self-efficacy* and *internal political efficacy* scales, percentages for combined response categories in Ireland and international averages

Scale / Question wording	Sample item	Ireland		International average	
		+	–	+	–
Students' citizenship self-efficacy[1]	argue your point of view about a controversial political or social issue	58.9	41.1	61.1	38.9
How well would you…?	organise a group of students in order to achieve changes at school	61.0	39.0	65.3	34.7
Students' sense of internal political efficacy[2]	I have a good understanding of the political issues facing this country	61.4	38.6	53.7	46.3
How much do you agree or disagree…?	I know more about politics than most people my age	26.9	73.1	27.9	72.1

[1]Positive response options: Very well or fairly well. Negative response options: Not very well or not well at all.

[2]Positive response options: Strongly agree or agree. Negative response options: Disagree or strongly disagree.

Efficacy in this context can be understood as a belief in one's own ability to successfully complete a task. While the first measure looks at self-beliefs in efficacy in civil and social contexts more generally, internal political efficacy looks more specifically at self-beliefs about political tasks.

On the overall measure of citizenship self-efficacy, Irish students scored significantly below the international mean (Table 4.8), although the difference amounted to only about one-tenth of a standard deviation. Conversely, on the internal political efficacy scale, Irish students scored significantly above the international mean. Again, though, the magnitude of the difference was small (less than one-tenth of a standard deviation).

Table 4.8: Mean student scale scores (SE, SD) in Ireland for *citizenship self-efficacy* and *internal political efficacy*, comparisons with international means and by student gender and native status, and correlations with student socioeconomic status and ICCS civic knowledge

Scale	International Mean	Ireland								
		Mean	SE	SD	Gender (Male – Female)	Native & language: Native – Migrant, speaks English / Irish	Native & language: Native – Migrant, other language	Native & language: Migrant, English / Irish – Migrant other language	Student SES (r)	ICCS Civic Knowledge (r)
Students' citizenship self-efficacy	🡻	48.9	0.25	10.89	🡻	🡻	=	🡹	**.114**	**.206**
Students' sense of internal political efficacy	🡹	50.7	0.22	10.35	↑	=	=	=	**.148**	**.259**

Note: Significantly higher ($p \leq .05$) ↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .05$) ↓
Significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) 🡹 Significantly lower ($p \leq .01$) 🡻
No statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) =
Values of r in bold indicate that correlation is significant ($p < .05$)
Shading indicates that the difference between the two groups being compared is statistically significant and at least 2.5 (one-quarter of a standard deviation).

Boys in Ireland scored significantly lower on the citizenship self-efficacy scale than girls, but have a significantly higher mean score on the internal political efficacy scale (Table 4.8). In both cases, however, the difference between boys and girls is small (about one-tenth of a standard deviation).

Native students scored significantly lower on the citizenship self-efficacy scale than migrant students who spoke English or Irish at home (Table 4.8). Migrant students who spoke English or Irish at home also had a significantly higher mean score on this scale than migrants who spoke other languages at home. The difference between migrant students who spoke English or Irish and migrant students who spoke other languages is about three-tenths of a standard deviation. No significant differences on the internal political efficacy scale are associated with migrant/language status.

There are weak to moderate positive correlations between student socioeconomic status and scores on these two scales (Table 4.8). Civic knowledge

correlates positively and significantly with citizenship self-efficacy (r = .21) and with internal political efficacy (r = .26) (Table 4.8). There is a strong correlation (r = .57) between citizenship self-efficacy and internal political efficacy (see Table A4.1, Appendix 4).

Students in Belgium (Fl.) and Finland scored well below the international mean on both the citizenship self-efficacy scale and the internal political efficacy scale (Figure 4.4; Tables 5.2, 5.3, Schulz et al, 2010b), despite having high civic knowledge scores (Table 2.5, Chapter 2). On both scales, students in these countries had an average score which was at least three points (three-tenths of a standard deviation) lower than the corresponding international means.

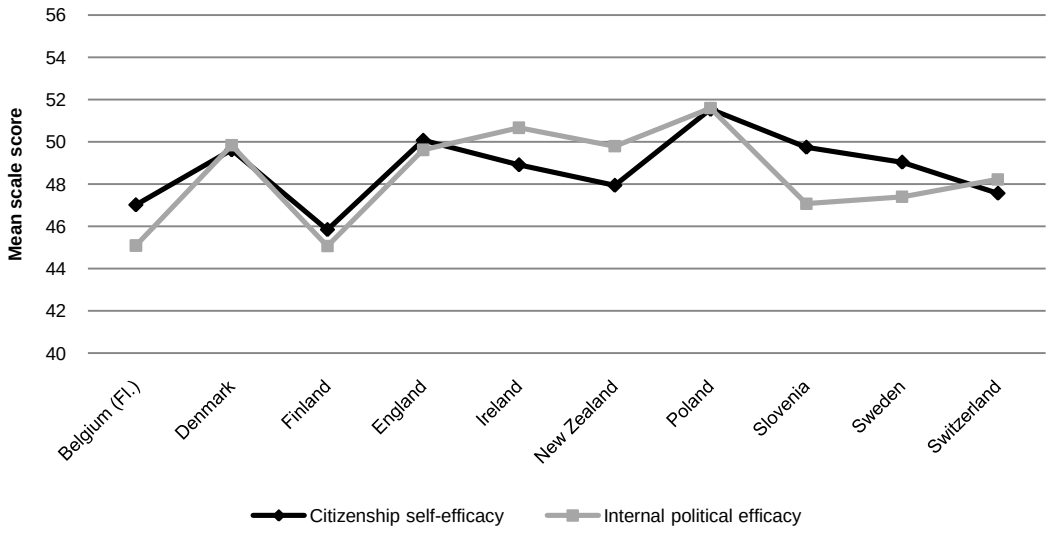

Figure 4.4: Mean scale scores on *citizenship self-efficacy* and *internal political efficacy*, Ireland and comparison countries

4.6. Students' Current and Expected Future Participation in Civic and Citizenship Activities

Six scales examined students' current and expected future participation in various civic- and citizenship-related activities: students' current participation in civic-related activities in the community; participation in discussions on political and social issues outside of school; expected future participation in legal protests; expected future participation in illegal protests; expected future informal political participation; and expected adult participation in political activities. Sample items from each of these scales are presented in Table 4.9.

Half of students in Ireland and one-third internationally indicated that they had been involved, either within the last year or earlier, in a voluntary group doing something to help the community (Table 4.9). In contrast, just 9% of students in Ireland indicated that they had been involved in a Human Rights organisation; this compares to an international average of 16%.

Table 4.9: Sample items for *civic participation in the community*, *discussion of political and social issues outside of school*, *future participation in legal protest*, *future participation in illegal protest*, *expected future informal political participation*, and *expected adult participation in political activities* scales, percentages for combined response categories in Ireland and international averages

Scale / Question wording	Sample item	Ireland		International average	
		+	–	+	–
Students' civic participation in the wider community[1]	a voluntary group doing something to help the community?	49.9	50.1	33.7	66.3
Have you ever been involved in …?	Human Rights organisation (such as Amnesty International)	8.5	91.5	16.0	84.0
Students' discussion of political and social issues outside of school[2]	Talking with friends about what is happening in other countries	16.9	83.1	24.7	75.3
How often are you involved in … outside of school?	Talking with your parent(s) about political or social issues	24.7	75.3	24.2	75.8
Students' expected participation in future legal protest[3]	choosing not to buy certain products	64.3	35.7	55.7	44.3
Would you take part in …?	taking part in a peaceful march or rally	57.4	42.6	54.1	45.9
Students' expected participation in future illegal protest[3]	Occupying public buildings	24.0	76.0	19.7	80.3
Would you take part in…?	Blocking traffic	22.2	77.8	20.2	79.8
Students' expected future informal political participation[4]	Join an organisation for a political or social cause	27.7	72.3	34.2	65.8
What do you expect that you will do?	Write to a newspaper about political and social issues	30.9	69.1	33.7	66.3
Students' expected adult participation in political activities[4]	Join a political party	19.0	81.0	26.9	73.1
What do you think you will do?	Join a trade union	36.5	63.5	31.0	69.0

[1]Positive response options: Yes, I have been involved in this within the last twelve months or yes, I have been involved in this but more than a year ago. Negative response options: No, I have never been involved.

[2]Positive response options: Weekly or daily. Negative response options: Monthly or never/hardly ever.

[3]Positive response options: I would certainly or probably do this. Negative response options: I would probably or certainly not do this.

[4]Positive response options: I will certainly or probably do this. Negative response options: I will probably or certainly not do this.

In addition to the items on participation in the wider community shown in Table 4.9, students were asked about their participation in a youth organisation affiliated with a political party or union, an environmental organisation, an organisation collecting money for a social cause, a cultural organisation based on ethnicity, or a group of young people campaigning for an issue. Low percentages of students in Ireland reported having taken part in a youth organisation affiliated with a political party or union (8%), in an environmental organisation (10%), a cultural organisation based on ethnicity (10%) or a group of young people campaigning for an issue (20%) (Table 5.8, Schulz et al, 2010b). Each of these percentages is significantly below the corresponding international average.

In contrast, a higher percentage of Irish students reported involvement with an organisation collecting money for a social cause (43%); this is significantly above the international average (39%). The percentage of Irish students who reported no involvement in any of these activities (33%) is similar to the international average (35%). High percentages of students in the comparison countries Finland, Denmark and Sweden reported no involvement in any of these activities (64%, 55%, 63% respectively; Table 5.8, Schulz et al, 2010b). Country differences in rates of collecting money for a social cause might be related to the wider cultural and economic traditions associated with this activity.

Students in Ireland only were asked an additional question about their involvement in a sports group or club (e.g. martial arts, swimming or football). Just under 10% of students (9.2%) reported never having been involved in a sports group or club, seven in ten students (71.7%) reported involvement within the last twelve months and about one in five students (19.1%) indicated that they had been involved in a sports club, but that their involvement was more than a year prior to ICCS.

Table 4.9 also shows sample items from the scale measuring students' frequency of involvement in discussion about political and social issues outside of school. Fewer Irish students reported talking with friends on a daily or weekly basis about what was happening in other countries than on average internationally (17% compared to 25%). About one-quarter of students in Ireland and internationally indicated that they talked to their parents about political or social issues once a week or more often.

Sample items comprising expected participation in future legal protest shown in Table 4.9 indicate that higher percentage of students in Ireland (64%) than internationally (56%) reported that they would certainly or probably choose not to buy certain products in the future. Similar percentages of students in Ireland (57%) and internationally (54%) indicated that they would certainly or probably take part in a peaceful march or rally.

In Ireland only, students were asked an additional question in this context; i.e. how likely they were to join a campaign for changing the law on a particular issue. Just under half of students (49.4%) indicated that they would certainly or probably do this in the future.

Students' expected future involvement in illegal protest activities was measured by a set of items asking them about their intentions to be involved in activities such as blocking traffic and occupying public buildings (Table 4.9). About one-quarter of students in Ireland and one-fifth internationally indicated that they would certainly or probably occupy public buildings. Similar percentages indicated that they would certainly or probably block traffic as a form of protest in the future.

Students were presented with a number of actions related to informal political participation which they could take in the next few years and were asked to indicate how likely they were to do these. The actions were 'talking to others about your views on political and social issues', 'writing to a newspaper about political and social issues', 'contributing to an online discussion forum about social and political issues' and 'joining an organisation for a political or social cause'. As examples of responses to these items, almost 28% of students in Ireland indicated that they would certainly or probably join an organisation for a political or social cause and about 31% indicated that they were likely to write to a newspaper about political and social issues. The corresponding international averages were both 34% (Table 4.9).

Regarding expected participation in more formal political activities in the future, a minority of students (19%) in Ireland indicated that they would certainly or probably join a political party; the corresponding international average was 26%. Close to two-fifths of students in Ireland (36%) reported that they would certainly or probably join a trade union in the future, which is a little higher than the corresponding international mean (31%) (Table 4.9).

Table 4.10: Mean student scale scores (SE, SD) in Ireland for *civic participation in the community*, *discussion of political and social issues outside of school*, *future participation in legal protest*, *future participation in illegal protest*, *expected future informal political participation*, and *expected adult participation in political activities*, comparisons with international means and by student gender and native status, and correlations with student socioeconomic status and ICCS civic knowledge

Scale	International Mean	Ireland								
		Mean	SE	SD	Gender (Male – Female)	Native & language: Native – Migrant, speaks English / Irish	Native & language: Native – Migrant, other language	Native & language: Migrant, English / Irish – Migrant other language	Student SES (r)	ICCS Civic Knowledge (r)
Students' civic participation in the wider community	↓	49.5	0.23	8.99	🡻	=	=	=	.032	-.034
Students' discussion of political and social issues outside of school	🡻	48.2	0.21	10.19	🡻	↓	🡻	=	**.143**	**.156**
Students' expected participation in future legal protest	🡹	51.4	0.25	10.66	🡻	=	🡹	🡹	**.107**	**.260**
Students' expected participation in future illegal protest	🡹	51.3	0.23	10.10	🡹	=	=	=	**-.120**	**-.180**
Students' expected future informal political participation	🡻	48.8	0.23	9.89	🡻	=	=	=	**.096**	**.111**
Students' expected adult participation in political activities	=	50.4	0.25	9.52	=	=	=	=	**.045**	.021

Note: Significantly higher ($p \leq .05$) ↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .05$) ↓
Significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) 🡹 Significantly lower ($p \leq .01$) 🡻
No statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) =
Values of r in bold indicate that correlation is significant ($p < .05$)
Shading indicates that the difference between the two groups being compared is statistically significant and at least 2.5 (one-quarter of a standard deviation).

Mean scores in Ireland on a number of the overall measures of students' current and expected future participation differ significantly from the corresponding international means. Irish students scored significantly below the international mean for civic participation in the wider community, for discussion of political and social issues outside of school, and for expected future informal political participation (Table 4.10). In contrast, Irish students have significantly higher mean scores for

expected participation in both legal and illegal protests. In all cases, though, the differences amount to less than one-quarter of a standard deviation.

Males in Ireland reported significantly lower levels of civic participation in the wider community and significantly less frequent discussion of political and social issues outside of school than females (Table 4.10). Males also reported that they were less likely to participate in informal political activities in the future or take part in legal protest in the future. Conversely, males indicated that they were more likely than females to participate in future illegal protests. The largest gender difference was associated with the expected participation in future illegal protest scale, where males had a mean score about two-fifths of a standard deviation higher than that of females.

In general, few differences emerged between native students and migrants on these scales (Table 4.10). However, regarding discussion of political and social issues, native students were significantly less likely to indicate that they discussed these issues outside of school than migrants, regardless of the language spoken at home by migrant students. On the other hand, native students were significantly more likely to indicate that they expect to participate in future legal protests than migrants who speak languages other than English or Irish. Migrants who reported speaking English or Irish reported being significantly more likely to participate in legal protests than migrants who spoke other languages.

There are weak, or weak to moderate significant correlations between student socioeconomic status and five of the six scales examined in this section (Table 4.10). With the exception of expected participation in future illegal protest, where the correlation with socioeconomic status is negative, the associations between socioeconomic status and scores on the other scales are positive. The association between student socioeconomic status was not significant in the case of participation in the wider community.

There is a significant negative correlation between expected participation in future illegal protest and civic knowledge. There are weak to moderate, or moderate, positive correlations between civic knowledge and scores for discussion of political and social issues, expected participation in legal protests, and expected informal political participation.

Scale intercorrelations are presented in Table A4.1 (Appendix 4). Notable in this regard are the strong positive correlations between students' expected future informal political participation and students' expected adult participation in political activities ($r = .59$), and between students' expected participation in legal and illegal forms of protest ($r = .55$).

Students in the comparison countries had lower mean scores than students in Ireland on the expected participation in legal and illegal protest scales (Figure 4.5). With the exception of Poland, country mean scores on these two scales are generally similar. Students in Belgium (Fl.) and Poland had particularly low expectations of participating in legal protests in the future (Table 5.11, Schulz et al., 2010b). Students in Denmark had one of the lowest scores across all ICCS countries for expected participation in illegal protests.

Given the high percentages of students in Denmark, Finland and Sweden that reported not participating in any of the listed civic activities outside of school

(discussed earlier in this section), it is not surprising that those countries had low overall scale scores on the community participation scale (Figure 4.6).

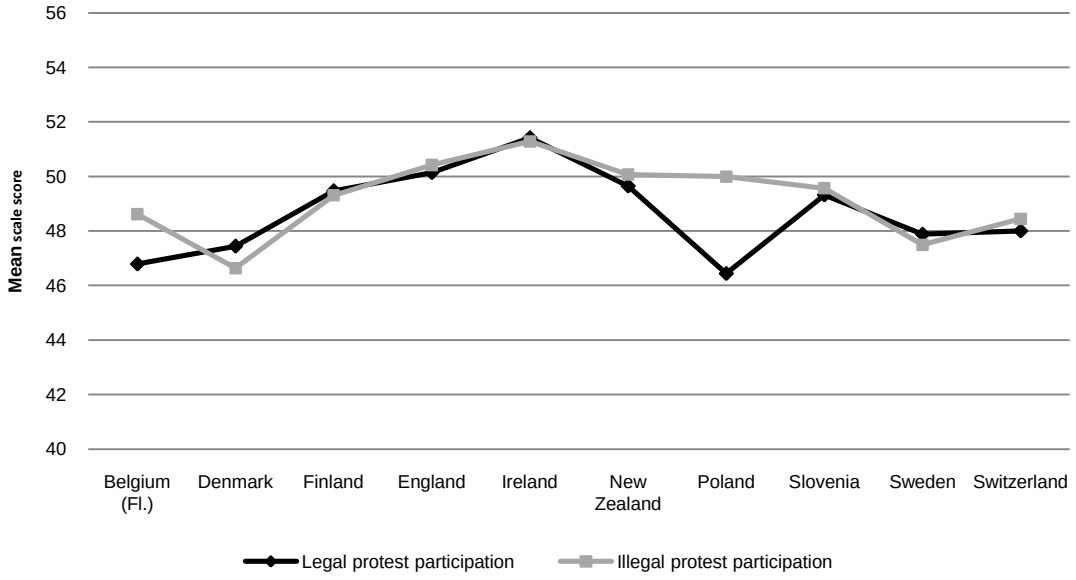

Figure 4.5: Mean scale scores for *expected participation in legal and illegal protests*, Ireland and comparison countries

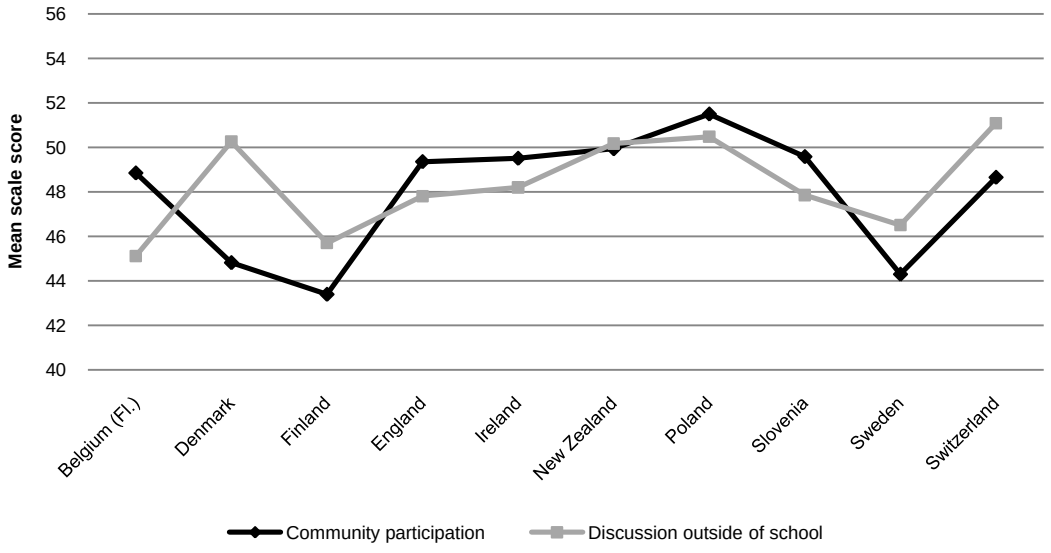

Figure 4.6: Mean scale scores for *civic participation in the wider community* and *discussion of political and social issues outside of school*, Ireland and comparison countries

Students in Finland and Sweden, as well as students in Belgium (Fl.), also reported comparatively less discussion of political and social issues outside of school than students in Ireland and other comparison countries. There is wide variation across comparison countries in the mean scores on these two scales: for example, there is a gap of about four-fifths of a standard deviation between Finland and Poland on the community participation scale and a gap of about three-fifths of a

standard deviation between Belgium (Fl.) and Switzerland on the discussion of political and social issues scale.

Schulz et al. (2010b, Table 5.5) reported on the association between civic knowledge and the frequency of discussion of political or social issues with friends. On average across countries, students who reported discussing these issues with friends at least weekly scored one-tenth of a standard deviation higher than students who reported discussing these activities less than weekly. Although the difference in civic knowledge in Ireland between students who discussed political issues at least weekly and those who discussed them less often was small, the difference in Denmark amounted to almost seven-tenths of a standard deviation and to more than one-third of a standard deviation in Finland, Sweden and Switzerland.

The mean scale score on the expected adult participation in political activities in Belgium (Fl.) was one of the lowest across ICCS countries (Table 5.15, Schulz et al., 2010b): students there scored about half a standard deviation below the corresponding ICCS country average (Figure 4.7). Students in Belgium (Fl.), as well as those in Finland and Switzerland had comparatively low mean scores on the expected informal political participation scale.

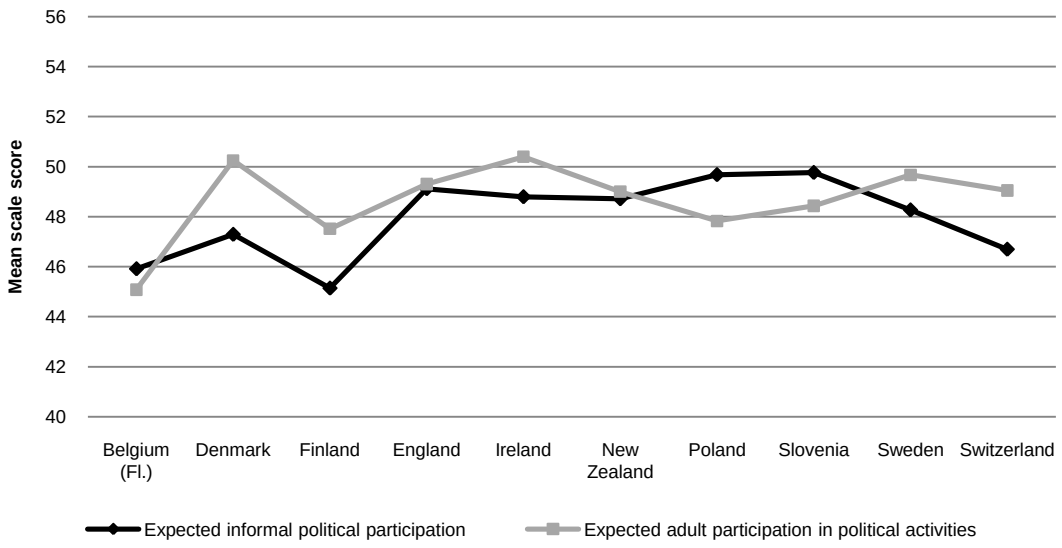

Figure 4.7: Mean scale scores for *expected informal political participation* and *expected adult participation in political activities*, Ireland and comparison countries

4.7. Students' Attitudes Towards, and Participation in, School Life

This section presents the ICCS scales which measure students' civic participation at school, perceptions of openness in classroom discussions, student influence on decisions about school, student-teacher relations, and of the perceived value of participation at school. Some of the items comprising these scales are presented in Table 4.11, along with the percentages of students that responded positively and negatively in Ireland and on average internationally. A number of

these scales are similar to those derived from the teacher and principal questionnaires which are discussed in Chapter 5.

Table 4.11: Sample items for *students' civic participation at school, perceptions of openness in classroom discussions, perceptions of influence on decisions about school*, *perceptions of student-teacher relations* and *perceptions of the value of participation at school* scales, percentages for combined response categories in Ireland and on average internationally

Scale / Question wording	Sample item	Ireland		International average	
		+	–	+	–
Students' civic participation at school[1]	voting for student council representatives?	76.0	24.0	75.8	24.2
At school, have you ever done …?	Becoming a candidate to represent your class or year on the student council	25.0	75.0	42.1	57.9
Student perceptions of openness in classroom discussions[2]	Teachers present several sides of the issues when explaining them in class	69.7	30.3	68.7	31.3
When discussing political and social issues during regular lessons, how often do the following things happen?	Students express opinions in class even when their opinions are different from most of the other students	72.0	28.0	69.8	30.2
Student perceptions of their influence on decisions about school[3]	School rules	34.0	66.0	51.0	49.0
	The way classes are taught	28.7	71.3	55.3	44.7
How much are students' opinions taken into account when decisions are made about …?	Teaching/learning materials	33.4	66.6	49.7	50.3
Student perceptions of student-teacher relations at school[4]	Students get along well with most teachers	69.8	30.2	70.3	29.7
How much do you agree or disagree…?	Most of my teachers treat me fairly	83.5	16.5	82.8	17.2
Students' perceptions of the value of participation at school[5]	Student participation in how schools are run can make schools better	89.8	10.2	86.5	13.5
How much do you agree or disagree…?	All schools should have a student council	91.3	8.7	86.1	13.9

[1]Positive response options: Yes, I have done this within the last twelve months or yes, I have done this but more than a year ago. Negative response options: No, I have never done this.

[2]Positive response options: Sometimes or often. Negative response options: Rarely or never.

[3]Positive response options: To a moderate or large extent. Negative response options: To a small extent or not atall.

[4]Positive response options: Agree or strongly agree. Negative response options: Disagree or strongly disagree.

[5]Positive response options: Agree or strongly agree. Negative response options: Disagree or strongly disagree.

Regarding example items from the student civic participation at school scale, about three-quarters of students in Ireland and on average internationally indicated that they had voted for student council representatives at some point during their schooling (students were advised to think of all schools they attended since they began primary school). The percentage of Irish students (25%) who had been candidates to represent their class or year on the student council is lower than the corresponding international mean (42%) (Table 4.11).

In terms of example items from the openness in classroom discussions scale, similar percentages of students in Ireland and internationally indicated that 'teachers sometimes or often present several sides of the issues when explaining them in class' (70% and 69%, respectively) and that 'students sometimes or often express opinions in class even when their opinions were different from most of the other students' (72% and 70%, respectively).

Smaller proportions of students in Ireland than on average across countries indicated that their opinions were taken into account to a moderate or large extent in decision-making about school rules (34% and 51%, respectively), the way classes were taught (29% and 56%, respectively), or about teaching and learning materials (33% and 50%, respectively) (Table 4.11). These three items are examples of those contributing to the student influence in decisions about school.

Similar percentages of students in Ireland and internationally agreed or strongly agreed that students get along well with most teachers (70%) and that most teachers treat them fairly (83% in Ireland and internationally). These two items are examples from the student-teacher relations scale.

Responses on the two example items from the scale measuring students' perceptions of the value of participation at school indicate that large majority of students in Ireland and on average across ICCS countries agreed or strongly agreed that student participation in how schools are run can make schools better (90% in Ireland and 86% internationally) and that all schools should have a student council (91% and 86%).

The mean scale score in Ireland for students' civic participation at school does not differ significantly from the international average (Table 4.12). Students in Ireland scored significantly above the international average on the perceptions of openness in classroom discussions scale and on the scale measuring students' perceptions of the value of participation at school. Irish students had more negative views of their perceived level of influence on decisions about school and of student-teacher relations at school than their counterparts in other countries, with mean scores below the corresponding international averages on both of these scales. The difference on the scale measuring students' perceptions of their influence on decisions about school is over half a standard deviation, while the difference on the student-teacher relations is around one-tenth of a standard deviation.

Some gender differences were associated with these scales in Ireland. Males scored significantly lower than females for civic participation at school, perceptions of openness in classroom discussions, perceptions of student-teacher relations and value of participation at school (Table 4.12). Notably, Irish males had mean scores which are about two-fifths of a standard deviation lower than those of Irish females on the scales measuring civic participation at school and students' perceptions of openness in classroom discussions.

Few significant differences were associated with native/migrant status, and only one is statistically significant (Table 4.12). On the scale measuring students' perceptions of their influence on decisions about school, native students had significantly lower scores (by almost half a standard deviation) than migrant students who spoke languages other than English or Irish at home.

In general, there are weak to moderate positive associations between student socioeconomic status and the scales discussed in this section: only the student

perceptions of their influence on decisions about school scale has a negative association with socioeconomic status [25] (r = -.12) (Table 4.12).

Table 4.12: Mean student scale scores (SE, SD) in Ireland for *civic participation at school, perceptions of openness in classroom discussions, perceptions of influence on decisions at school*, and *perceptions of the value of participation at school* comparisons with international mean and by student gender and native status, and correlations with student socioeconomic status and ICCS civic knowledge

Scale	International Mean	Ireland								
						Native & language				
		Mean	SE	SD	Gender (Male – Female)	Native – Migrant, speaks English / Irish	Native – Migrant, other language	Migrant, English / Irish – Migrant other language	Student SES (r)	ICCS Civic Knowledge (r)
Students' civic participation at school	=	50.1	0.32	9.36	↓↓	=	=	=	**.132**	**.170**
Student perceptions of openness in classroom discussions	↑↑	52.2	0.29	10.89	↓↓	=	=	=	**.112**	**.273**
Student perceptions of influence on decisions about school	↓↓	44.3	0.30	10.49	=	=	↓↓	=	**-.116**	**-.359**
Student perceptions of student-teacher relations at school	↓↓	48.9	0.28	9.72	↓↓	=	=	=	**.054**	**.109**
Students' perceptions of the value of participation at school	↑↑	51.0	0.24	10.00	↓↓	=	=	=	**.122**	**.287**

Note: Significantly higher ($p \leq .05$) ↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .05$) ↓
Significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) ↑↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .01$) ↓↓
No statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) =

Values of r in bold indicate that correlation is significant ($p < .05$)

Shading indicates that the difference between the two groups being compared is statistically significant and at least 2.5 (one-quarter of a standard deviation).

There is also a moderate negative correlation between students' perceptions of their influence at school and student civic knowledge (r = -.36); the other scales correlate positively with civic achievement.

There are moderate positive associations between openness in classroom discussions and students' perceptions of student-teacher relations at school

[25] Mean scores on the students' perceptions of their influence on decisions about school scale are significantly higher in VEC schools than secondary schools (mean score in secondary schools 43.5; VEC schools 45.8 and community/comprehensive schools 44.6). The mean score in community/comprehensive schools does not differ significantly from that in secondary schools. This may provide some explanation for the negative association between SES and students' perception of their influence on decisions about school.

(r = .37) and between students' perceptions of student-teacher relations and students' perceptions of the value of participation at school (r = .30) (Table A4.1, Appendix 4).

There are some variations across comparison countries in students' participation in school-based civic activities and their views on the value of participation at school. Students in Switzerland had the lowest mean score on the scale measuring students' perceptions of the value of participation at school: their mean is below the international average, by about two-fifths of a standard deviation (Figure 4.8). Mean scores for students' perceptions of the value of participation in school in England, New Zealand and Sweden are also statistically significantly below the international mean; however, differences between the international mean and scores in these countries amount to less than one-fifth of a standard deviation.

Students' civic participation at school was comparatively lower in Belgium (Fl.) and Switzerland than in other comparison countries (Figure 4.8). In contrast, students in Poland reported a comparatively high level of civic participation at school.

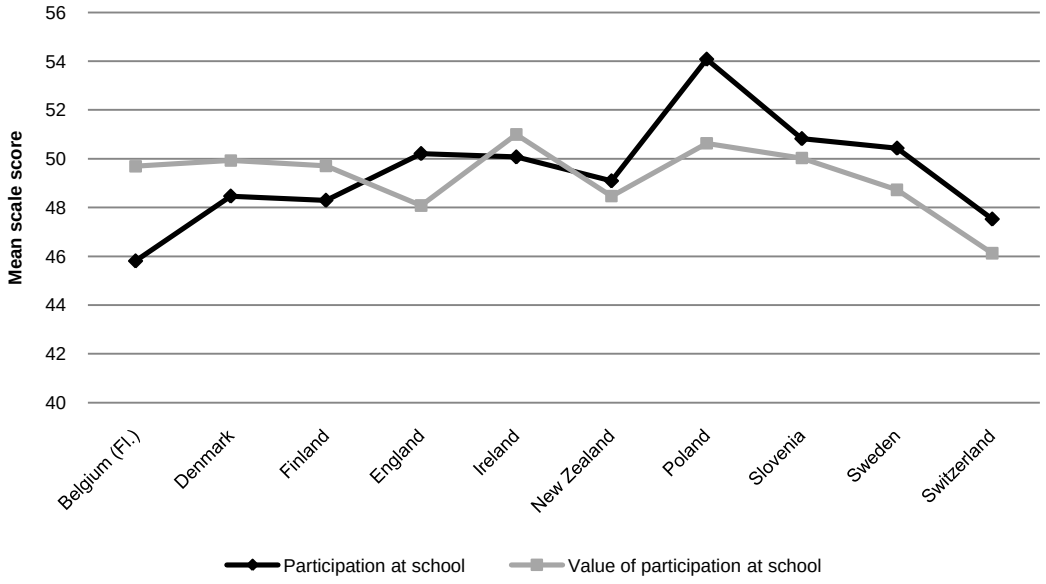

Figure 4.8: Mean scale scores for *students' civic participation at school* and *students' perceptions of the value of participation at school*, Ireland and comparison countries

4.8. Students' Religious Beliefs and Practices

Students in 29 participating countries were asked about their religion and 26 countries asked about the influence and importance of religion in the modern world. Ireland was one of eleven countries where over 90% of students indicated that they identified with a particular religion[26]. Almost all students in Thailand (99.2%),

[26] Students in Ireland were asked to select from: Catholic, Protestant (e.g. Church of Ireland, Presbyterian), another Christian religion (e.g. Orthodox), a non-Christian religion (e.g. Muslim, Jew, Hindu), and no religion. Students in Ireland were not presented with the international questions on the importance of religion. Instead, they were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement that religious beliefs are an important influence in their lives. The results for Ireland on this and other questions related to religion are not published in international reports as this was considered a national option in Ireland.

Cyprus (98.5%), Poland (97.2%), and Malta (97.0%) reported that they identified with a religion and in Greece, Austria, Ireland and Liechtenstein, over 95% of students indicated that they identified with a religion. At the other end of the spectrum, only one-quarter (25.2%) of students in the Czech Republic and just over half of students in England (55.5%) and the Republic of Korea (55.7%) reported identifying with a religion. The breakdown by category in Ireland was: Catholic 86.9%; Protestant: 3.5%; other Christian religions 2.5%; non-Christian religions 2.6%; and, no religion 4.6%[27].

Students in 30 countries including Ireland were asked about the frequency with which they attend religious services[28]. More than half of students in Indonesia (65.5%), Guatemala (55.2%), Poland (56.0%) and Malta (57.0%) reported attending a religious service at least once a week. The corresponding percentage for Ireland was 39% (either inside or outside or school, Table 4.13). When combined with students who attended religious services at least once a month, the figure for Ireland rises to 63%. Not surprisingly given the high percentages of students with no religion in the Czech Republic and in England, high percentages of students in those countries reported never attending religious services (81.3% and 62.9%, respectively).

Table 4.13: Attendance at religious services inside and outside of school, percentages of students in Ireland

	At school		Outside of school		Either inside or outside of school	
	Total % (SE)	Available % (SE)	Total % (SE)	Available % (SE)	Total % (SE)	Available % (SE)
Never	12.8 (0.94)	18.8 (1.42)	9.1 (0.60)	11.1 (0.74)	7.2 (0.59)	8.1 (0.66)
Less than once a year	7.7 (0.58)	11.3 (0.81)	5.5 (0.47)	6.7 (0.57)	4.5 (0.43)	5.1 (0.48)
At least once a year	35.2 (1.45)	51.4 (1.55)	15.8 (0.74)	19.2 (0.89)	21.1 (0.94)	23.5 (1.02)
At least once a month	9.4 (0.79)	13.7 (1.18)	18.9 (0.78)	23.0 (0.86)	22.1 (0.84)	24.6 (0.92)
At least once a week	3.3 (0.49)	4.8 (0.73)	32.9 (1.33)	40.0 (1.50)	34.6 (1.33)	38.7 (1.45)
Missing	31.5 (1.26)	---	17.7 (0.98)	---	10.5 (0.74)	---
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

In Ireland only, students were asked to distinguish between attendance at religious services at school and outside of school. Attendance at religious services outside of school was much more common: 63% of students with available data on this question indicated that they attended services outside of school on a monthly or weekly basis compared to just 19% of students who reported attending services at school with the same frequency (Table 4.13). Conversely, about 30% of students

[27] These percentages are very similar to those found in the 2006 Census of Ireland (http://www.cso.ie/census/census2006_volume_13.htm): Roman Catholic 86.8%; Church of Ireland 3.0%; Presbyterian 0.6%; Methodist 0.3%; Jewish <.1%; Other 3.3%; No religion 4.4%; Not stated 1.7%.

[28] Since the rate of missing data was high (over 30%) for attendance at services outside of school, both percentages of total and percentages of valid cases are given in Table 4.13. Discussion of percentages relates to percentages of valid cases. For comparison, only about 5% of students in Ireland were missing data on the question "What is your religion?".

indicated that they never attended services at school or attended them less than once a year; only 18% of students reported that they never attended services outside of school or attended them only once a year (Table 4.13). Further breakdown of attendance inside and outside of school is provided in Table A4.3 (Appendix 4) but readers are reminded to note the high level of missing data.

Some differences in attendance at services outside of school are evident across school location and school type. Almost half of students (48.4%) who attended rural schools reported weekly attendance at religious services compared to 30% of students in city schools. The percentages of students who reported attending services in school on a weekly basis were approximately the same in rural areas, towns and cities. Just 7% of students who attended all-girls secondary schools reported never attending religious services at school. This contrasts with 23% of students in community/comprehensive schools, 27% of students in VEC schools, 17% of students in boys' secondary schools and 23% of students in mixed secondary schools.

Students in Ireland only were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement that religious beliefs are an important influence in their lives. Over three-quarters of students (76.0%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. Gender differences were small (male 73.5%, female 78.7%). No substantial variations in responses to this question were evident across different school types (74.4% of students in community/comprehensive schools, 76.5% in VEC schools, 72.4% in boys' secondary schools, 79.3% in girls' secondary schools and 75.9% in mixed secondary schools agreed or strongly agreed that religious beliefs are an important influence in their lives). A somewhat greater percentage of students in rural schools (79.6%) indicated that religious beliefs are an important influence in their lives, compared to students in town schools (73.1%) or city schools (72.3%).

Students in Ireland and internationally were also asked about their involvement with religious groups or organisations such as the Young Christian Workers. A high percentage of Irish students (82.6%) indicated that they had never been involved in such a religious group or organisation. The corresponding international average was lower, at 64.0%. Percentages in Finland (82.3%), Denmark (88.4%), and Belgium Fl. (82.8%) were similar to the percentage in Ireland. In Guatemala (80.7%), Indonesia (74.0%) and the Dominican Republic (73.6%), large majorities of students reported that they had been involved in religious groups or organisations. Of the comparison countries, the highest percentage was found in Slovenia (43.2%).

4.9. Key Points Arising From Chapter 4

In this chapter, students' attitudes towards, and participation in, various civic- and citizenship-related themes and activities were examined. Key results are:

- Irish students had significantly higher mean scores on nine of 23 attitudinal/behavioural scales than students on average internationally. These scales were: attitudes towards gender equality; attitudes towards equal rights for all ethnic/racial groups; attitudes towards the country of the test; support for democratic values; internal political efficacy; expected future participation in legal protest; expected future participation in illegal protest; perceptions of openness in classroom discussions; and perceptions of the value of participation at school. However, only the difference on the scale measuring attitudes towards gender equality exceeded one-quarter of a standard deviation.
- Irish students had significantly lower mean scores on seven scales than students on average internationally. These scales were: trust in civic institutions; citizenship self-efficacy; civic participation in the community; discussion of political and social issues outside of school; expected future informal political participation; perceptions of influence on decisions about schools; and perceptions of student-teacher relations. The only difference that exceeded one-quarter of a standard deviation was on the scale measuring students' perceptions of their influence on decisions about school.
- On five scales, the mean scores of students in Ireland did not differ significantly from the corresponding international means. These scales were: attitudes towards equal rights for immigrants; perceptions of the importance of conventional citizenship; perceptions of the importance of social movement-related citizenship; expected adult participation in political activities; and civic participation at school.
- Moderate to strong positive correlations were found between civic knowledge and scores on the following scales: attitudes to gender equality; attitudes towards equal rights for all ethnic groups; support for democratic values; internal political efficacy; expected future participation in legal protest; perceptions of openness in classroom discussions; and perceptions of the value of participation at school.
- A moderate negative correlation was found between civic knowledge and students' perceptions of their influence on decisions about school.
- Only weak or weak to moderate correlations were found between students' socioeconomic status and the scales described in this chapter.
- Significant differences in favour of females which exceeded one-quarter of a standard deviation were found on nine of the 23 scales. These were: attitudes towards gender equality; attitudes towards equal rights for all ethnic groups; attitudes towards equal rights for immigrants; students' perceptions of the importance of social movement-related citizenship; civic participation in the community; expected future participation in legal protest; civic participation at school; perceptions of openness in classroom discussions; and perceptions of the value of participation at school.
- A significant difference in favour of males which exceeded one-quarter of a standard deviation was found on just one scale – expected future participation in illegal protest.
- A significant difference of more than one-quarter of a standard deviation in favour of native students over migrant students who speak English or Irish at home was found on the scale measuring attitudes towards Ireland. On two other scales (attitudes towards equal rights for all ethnic groups and attitudes

towards equal rights for immigrants), native students scored significantly and at least one-quarter of a standard deviation lower than migrant students who speak English or Irish.

- Significant differences of more than one-quarter of a standard deviation in favour of native students compared to migrants who speak other languages were found on the scales measuring the following: attitudes towards gender equality; attitudes towards Ireland; and expected participation in future legal protest.
- On three scales, native students had a significantly lower mean score by at least one-quarter of a standard deviation than migrants speaking languages other than English or Irish. These were: perceptions of influence on decisions about school; attitudes towards equal rights for immigrants; and discussion of political and social issues outside of school.
- Within the group of migrant students, four scales showed significant differences of more than one-quarter of a standard deviation in favour of migrants who speak English or Irish over migrants who speak other languages at home. These were: attitudes towards gender equality; attitudes towards equal rights for all ethnic groups; citizenship self-efficacy; and expected participation in future legal protest.
- Comparisons with results of the 1971 Six-Subject Study indicate that students' attitudes towards gender equality have improved in the intervening period; e.g. a large minority (22%) in 1971 agreed or strongly agreed that women should stay out of politics, while only 7% of students agreed with this statement in 2009.
- Students' knowledge of and support for democratic values have also changed since 1971. At that time, Irish students scored below the international mean on a measure of attachment to democratic values but in 2009, Irish students scored significantly above the international mean on a similar scale.
- A large majority (95%) of Irish students indicated that they identify with a religion. Of the comparison countries where this question was asked, only Poland had a higher percentage (97%). It was also found that 76% of students in Ireland agreed that religion was an important influence in their lives and that attendance by students in Ireland at religious services was comparatively high, with 63% reporting attendance at a service at least once a month. In contrast, participation in religious organisations (such as Young Christian Workers) was comparatively low in Ireland, with 83% indicating that they never participated in such groups (compared with 64% internationally).
- Almost two-fifths (39%) of students in Ireland reported weekly attendance at religious services. Attendance outside of school was much more common than attendance at school. Fewer than one in ten students (8%) in Ireland indicated that they never attend religious services either inside or outside of school.
- Attendance at religious services varied across school locations and school types. Almost half of students in rural schools reported weekly attendance at religious services compared to 30% of students in schools located in cities. Only 7% of students in all-girls' secondary schools indicated that they never attend religious services compared to about one-quarter of students in community/comprehensive schools, VEC schools and mixed secondary schools. About 17% of students in all boys' secondary schools reported never attending religious services.
- Three-quarters of students agreed that religious beliefs are an important influence in their lives and this percentage was similar across student gender, school location and school type.

Chapter 5. ICCS Results in the Context of Schools, Teaching and Learning

5.1. Overview

This chapter aims to consider some of the results from ICCS in the context of schools, teaching, and learning. It should be recalled that students in Ireland were surveyed in the spring of second year and so would have covered about half of the CSPE curriculum at the time ICCS was implemented. At the same time, it is likely that students would have encountered civic and citizenship issues outside of formal school settings, for example in discussions with parents and friends, and via the media and Internet. It is also relevant to note that civic and citizenship knowledge and attitudes could have been influenced through other subject areas at school such as History, Home Economics, Religious Education (RE) and Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE).

This chapter presents results arising from analyses of the school principal and teacher questionnaires. As noted in Chapter 1, teachers and principals completed questionnaires on general demographics, resources, management, etc., as well as issues relating to the teaching and learning of civic and citizenship education (CCE).

While all teachers completed a 'core' section of the teacher questionnaire, teachers of CCE completed a focused section of the same questionnaire on the teaching and learning of CCE. In Ireland, these were teachers of CSPE. Some of the focused questions represent national additions that are unique to Ireland and hence can inform policy in the absence of international comparisons. Also, some of the questions in the core part ask about CCE-related issues. The reason for this is that CCE is not generally considered as being confined to one or more discrete subject areas, and students can encounter CCE topics on a more experiential level, as part of the whole-school experience or otherwise (e.g. extra-curricular activities, or participation in the Student Council).

It can be recalled from Chapter 1 (Table 1.1) that eleven countries (Austria, Belgium (Flemish), Denmark, England, Greece, Hong Kong SAR, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland) did not meet the teacher participation rate requirements in order to reliably compare their results with other countries. Of these countries, five are 'comparison' countries that were selected so their results could be compared with the Irish results (see Chapter 2, Section 2.1) and since the teacher data of these five countries are not sufficiently reliable to make comparisons, we do not make specific reference to them in this chapter.

This chapter begins with a description of the demographic characteristics of participants (age and gender distribution; programmes and subjects taught; qualifications held; Section 5.2).

Then (Section 5.3), we describe the views of teachers and principals in Ireland and internationally on the most important aims of CCE (both in Ireland and internationally), and compare the views of teachers in Ireland who teach CSPE with the views of teachers who do not. Section 5.4 examines the extent to which teachers report participating in various community activities with their second year students.

In Section 5.5, we describe the levels of confidence reported by teachers in various general teaching activities, as well as their confidence in teaching CCE-specific topics. Section 5.6 examines some of the teaching and assessment practices of CCE teachers, while Section 5.7 discusses the views of CCE teachers in terms of the types of improvements that, in their view, would be needed to enhance the teaching and learning of CCE.

Section 5.8 draws on questions specific to Ireland. These address the levels of perceived interest and enjoyment by CSPE teachers and students (as rated by teachers) in the teaching and learning of the seven key concepts underpinning the CSPE curriculum, teachers' participation in continuing professional development (CPD), and the means by which teachers are generally assigned to teaching CSPE in schools.

The latter sections in this chapter (Sections 5.9 to 5.13) examine variation in seven school questionnaire scales (indicators) and 11 teacher scales across key school characteristics. (Table A5.1, Appendix 5 shows the reliabilities for these scales for Ireland and the corresponding international averages.) We include a comparison of national and international means on each of these 18 scales, and the extent to which scale scores are associated with student achievement on the ICCS civic knowledge test. The associations between these scales and school average socioeconomic composition, participation in the School Support Programme (SSP) under DEIS, school sector and gender composition, and school location, as well as teacher gender, are also examined (Section 5.11). As with the scales described in Chapters 3 and 4, these were computed to have an international mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10. Prior to examining variations in scale scores and their associations with achievement, we provide sample questions for each scale to give a concrete idea of what the scales measure (Sections 5.9 and 5.10). We also compare the Irish means on these scales with those in the comparison countries (Section 5.12) and examine scale intercorrelations (Section 5.13).

The chapter concludes with a concise summary of findings based on these analyses (Section 5.14).

Some of the variables analysed here (such as school sector and gender composition) were derived from sources outside of the ICCS database. Also, the analyses reported here are bivariate in that they examine the associations between two variables at a time. This approach does not take into account whether characteristics covary; e.g. school average socioeconomic composition is very likely to be related to school participation in the SSP. Multivariate analyses in Chapter 6 address this by examining multiple background characteristics simultaneously in terms of their associations with two student scales (civic knowledge and interest in political and social issues).

Readers are referred to Box 1.4 (Chapter 1) for further information on how to interpret the results in this chapter.

Finally, readers with a particular interest in the national context for the teaching and learning of CCE are referred to Chapter 7, which compares CSPE with the ICCS assessment, as well as an analysis of the broader context of CCE in Ireland.

5.2. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

In Ireland, 63% of participating school principals were male, and 37% were female. Across all countries, 56% of principals were male and 43% were female. The average age of school principals in Ireland was 52.7 years (SD=6.39) and this is similar to the international average of 50.8 years (SD=7.14). On average in Ireland, school principals reported 8.9 years' experience as a principal (SD=7.92) compared with 11.2 years internationally (SD=8.52).

Of teachers, 67% were female and 33% were male in Ireland compared with international percentages of 66% and 34%, respectively. Teachers in Ireland reported an average age of 39.8 (SD=10.96) compared with 42.5 (SD=10.08) internationally. Also, teachers in Ireland reported an average number of years of teaching experience of 15.3 (SD=10.84) compared with an international average of 16.2 (SD=10.19). In Ireland, the largest percentage of teachers (26%) were teaching in VEC schools, 24% in girls' secondary schools, and 15% in boys' secondary schools; a further 18% of teachers were in mixed secondary schools and 17% in community or comprehensive schools.

Male teachers tended to be more concentrated in boys' secondary schools (where 54% of the teaching staff was male) and female teachers in girls' secondary schools (88% female). In the other three school types (mixed secondary, VEC, community/comprehensive), the distributions of male and female teachers were similar to the overall national averages.

Of the subset of teachers in Ireland that reported teaching CSPE within the past three years (i.e. 26.5% of all participating teachers), 71% were female. The average age of CSPE teachers was 38.2 (SD=11.1). These teachers reported an average of 13.5 years' teaching experience in total (SD=10.80).

Teachers were asked what their main subject area was. In Ireland, 35.5% indicated that it was languages (e.g. English, Irish, French), 16% human sciences (e.g. history, geography, CSPE), 14% mathematics, 11% science, and 34.5% other (e.g. music, art, PE, RE). The respective international average percentages are 33% (languages), 16% (human sciences), 16% (mathematics), 16.5% (science), and 33.2% (other). Therefore, the international and national percentages are highly similar except that, internationally, more teachers indicated that their main subject was science compared to Ireland. Note that across all countries, 10% of teachers picked more than one subject as their main one, so the percentages do not sum to 100.

In Ireland only, teachers were asked which programmes they taught at the time of the ICCS survey (Table 5.1). As expected, majorities of teachers taught the Junior Certificate (97.1%) and the Leaving Certificate Established (80%), and 53.5% taught Transition Year students. Also, well in excess of 10% taught the Junior Certificate School Programme (12%) and Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (17%). Smaller percentages reported teaching the Leaving Certificate Applied (8%) or a Post-Leaving Certificate course (4%). These figures are consistent with the take-up of the various programmes nationally.

Table 5.1: Percentages of teachers teaching various year levels/programmes

Level/Programme	%	SE
Junior Certificate	97.1	0.51
Junior Certificate Schools Programme	12.4	1.71
Transition Year	53.5	2.32
Leaving Certificate (General)	80.1	1.11
Leaving Certificate Applied	8.1	0.70
Leaving Certificate VEC Programme	16.6	1.84
A PLC Course	4.3	0.73

This is a national question unique to Ireland.

Teachers in Ireland were also asked whether their qualification included several areas relevant to the teaching of CCE (CSPE), i.e. politics, citizenship or social justice, sociology, psychology, economics, social policy, and cultural or developmental studies (Table 5.2). Note that the question did not ask teachers about the level of emphasis that was given to each topic area within a specific qualification (e.g. whether it was part of an undergraduate or postgraduate degree; whether it was a major or minor component of the qualification). Also, the percentages are lower than one might expect for some of the areas, so teachers may have varied with respect to how they interpreted this question.

Table 5.2: Percentages of teachers indicating whether they hold a qualification in seven areas, overall and for CSPE teachers and non-CSPE teachers

	All		CSPE teachers (past 3 years)		Non-CSPE teachers	
Area	%	SE	%	SE	%	SE
Politics	16.0	1.03	20.1	2.44	14.5	1.10
Citizenship or Social Justice	17.1	1.25	**24.9**	3.05	13.4	1.77
Sociology	42.1	1.81	42.7	3.01	41.4	2.11
Psychology	32.3	1.56	35.0	2.75	39.2	2.11
Economics	29.4	1.57	23.6	2.53	**32.1**	1.78
Social Policy	11.0	1.30	**15.2**	1.83	8.9	1.42
Cultural or Developmental Studies	28.6	1.53	31.9	2.83	26.6	1.78

This is a national question unique to Ireland.

Percentages that are significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) are in **bold.**

Percentages that are significantly higher ($p < .01$) and differ by more than ten percentage points are shaded in grey.

26.5% of the sample indicated that they taught CSPE within the past three school years.

Across the sample of teachers as a whole, the four most commonly-held of these qualifications were in the areas of sociology (42%), psychology (32%), economics (29%) and cultural or developmental studies (29%). CSPE teachers were significantly more likely than non-CSPE teachers to have a qualification in citizenship or social justice and in social policy, and significantly less likely to have a qualification in economics.

Table 5.3 shows that overall, 47% of teachers reported that their qualifications did not cover any of the areas specified in Table 5.2 while 27.5% held a qualification covering one area, and the remaining 25.5% held qualifications covering two or more areas. On average, CSPE teachers had qualifications in 1.2 of these areas and non-CSPE teachers had qualifications in 0.9 of them.

Table 5.3: Numbers of qualifications held by teachers in seven specified areas, overall and for CSPE teachers and non-CSPE teachers

	All		CSPE teachers (past 3 years)		Non-CSPE teachers	
Number	%	SE	%	SE	%	SE
None	47.0	1.45	37.6	2.48	50.6	1.55
One	27.5	1.25	31.1	2.19	26.1	1.42
Two	14.6	0.85	15.1	1.66	14.2	0.98
Three	5.3	0.59	7.7	1.16	4.5	0.70
Four	3.1	0.43	4.8	0.92	2.5	0.53
Five	1.5	0.31	2.5	0.80	1.3	0.34
Six	0.8	0.33	0.7	0.37	0.8	0.43
Seven	0.2	0.09	0.4	0.32	0.1	0.06

This is a national question unique to Ireland.

26.5% of the sample indicated that they taught CSPE within the past three school years.

5.3. Principals' and Teachers' Views on Key Aims of Civic and Citizenship Education

In ICCS, teachers were asked to indicate what they felt were the three most important aims of CCE from a list of ten possible aims. Some variation between Irish average ratings and the international average ratings are apparent (Table 5.4). Irish ratings for promoting knowledge (42%) were significantly higher than the international average (33%), and Irish teachers were also significantly more inclined to pick promoting student participation in the community (40%) than their counterparts internationally (16%). In contrast, international ratings were significantly higher for promoting the capacity to defend one's own point of view (20% internationally compared with 13.5% in Ireland) and also significantly higher for developing competencies in conflict resolution (41% compared with 20%). In all, for four of these aims, the difference is significant ($p < .01$). There are no significant differences for the remaining six aims shown in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: Percentages of teachers indicating the three most important aims of civic and citizenship education, Ireland and international averages

	Ireland		International	
Aim	%	SE	%	SE
Promoting knowledge of social, political and civic institutions	**41.9**	1.49	33.2	0.38
Promoting respect for and safeguard of the environment	39.2	1.38	41.2	0.36
Promoting the capacity to defend one's own point of view	13.5	0.91	**20.2**	0.28
Developing students' skills and competencies in conflict resolution	21.7	1.09	**40.8**	0.38
Promoting knowledge of citizens' rights and responsibilities	55.5	1.29	60.0	0.33
Promoting students' participation in the community	**40.2**	1.31	15.7	0.24
Promoting students' critical and independent thinking	49.2	1.55	52.3	0.34
Promoting students' participation in school life	18.9	1.00	18.7	0.27
Supporting the development of effective strategies for the fight against racism and xenophobia	11.9	1.01	9.5	0.25
Preparing students for future political participation	7.2	0.66	7.0	0.23

Percentages that are significantly higher ($p \leq .05$ but $> .01$) are in ***bold italics.***

Percentages that are significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) are in **bold.**

Percentages that are significantly higher ($p < .01$) and differ by more than ten percentage points are shaded in grey.

School principals were also asked the same question and Irish responses can be compared with the international averages (Table 5.5). The most marked difference, perhaps, is the higher emphasis given by Irish principals to promoting knowledge (72% compared with 42% internationally; $p < .01$). Principals in Ireland also gave significantly higher ratings to promoting respect for the environment (41% compared with 31.5%), and to promoting knowledge of citizens' rights and responsibilities (75% compared with 65%), though in these two cases, the differences were significant at the .05 level rather than the .01 level. In contrast, internationally, higher emphasis was placed on promoting the capacity to defend one's own point of view (15.5% compared with 3% nationally; $p < .01$) and developing skills in conflict resolution (33% compared with 12% in Ireland; $p < .01$). To a lesser degree, internationally, a higher emphasis was placed on community participation, promoting critical and independent thinking, promoting participation in school life and promoting strategies to tackle racism and xenophobia (for each of these four aims, the difference has a p-value $< .05$ but $> .01$).

It is also possible to compare the views of CSPE and non-CSPE teachers in Ireland with respect to the three most important aims of CCE (Table 5.6). Although the relative rankings of the aims are similar across the two groups, non-CSPE teachers accorded a significantly higher emphasis to conflict resolution, and a somewhat higher emphasis to the promotion of critical and independent thinking (for both of these, $p < .05$ but $> .01$). In contrast, CSPE teachers accorded a significantly higher emphasis to promoting knowledge of rights and responsibilities ($p < .01$) than teachers who had not taught CSPE in the past three school years. In other respects, the ratings of CSPE and non-CSPE teachers were similar.

Table 5.5: Percentages of school principals indicating the three most important aims of civic and citizenship, Ireland and international averages

	Ireland		International	
Aim	%	SE	%	SE
Promoting knowledge of social, political and civic institutions	**72.0**	4.91	41.9	1.00
Promoting respect for and safeguard of the environment	***40.9***	4.54	31.5	0.97
Promoting the capacity to defend one's own point of view	3.2	2.03	**15.5**	0.67
Developing students' skills and competencies in conflict resolution	11.8	2.93	**33.4**	0.96
Promoting knowledge of citizens' rights and responsibilities	***74.6***	4.40	64.6	0.96
Promoting students' participation in the community	32.9	5.70	***48.0***	1.31
Promoting students' critical and independent thinking	41.1	5.52	***55.4***	0.96
Promoting students' participation in school life	8.6	2.68	***18.2***	0.74
Supporting the development of effective strategies for the fight against racism and xenophobia	3.8	1.91	***8.2***	0.53
Preparing students for future political participation	9.3	3.21	12.0	0.78

Percentages that are significantly higher ($p \leq .05$ but $> .01$) are in ***bold italics.***

Percentages that are significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) are in **bold.**

Percentages that are significantly higher ($p < .01$) and differ by more than ten percentage points are shaded in grey.

Table 5.6: Percentages of teachers in Ireland indicating the three most important aims of civic and citizenship, CSPE teachers and non-CSPE teachers

	CSPE teachers (past 3 years)		Non-CSPE teachers	
Aim	%	SE	%	SE
Promoting knowledge of social, political and civic institutions	40.5	2.84	42.1	1.66
Promoting respect for and safeguard of the environment	42.2	2.72	38.0	1.79
Promoting the capacity to defend one's own point of view	10.7	1.51	13.9	1.17
Developing students' skills and competencies in conflict resolution	16.7	1.77	**23.8**	1.33
Promoting knowledge of citizens' rights and responsibilities	**64.7**	2.41	52.5	1.64
Promoting students' participation in the community	40.5	2.50	40.4	1.65
Promoting students' critical and independent thinking	44.2	2.73	***51.2***	1.68
Promoting students' participation in school life	17.0	1.68	19.3	1.13
Supporting the development of effective strategies for the fight against racism and xenophobia	14.3	1.72	11.2	1.15
Preparing students for future political participation	9.6	1.66	6.5	0.68

26.5% of the sample indicated that they taught CSPE within the past three school years.

Percentages that are significantly higher ($p \leq .05$ but $> .01$) are in ***bold italics.***

Percentages that are significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) are in **bold.**

Percentages that are significantly higher ($p < .01$) and differ by more than ten percentage points are shaded in grey.

The responses of principals in Ireland (Table 5.5) can also be compared with the responses of CSPE teachers in Ireland (Table 5.6). Figure 5.1 shows this comparison. The most marked difference can be observed with respect to the higher levels of emphasis given by principals to promoting knowledge of institutions and of rights and responsibilities, while CSPE teachers gave somewhat higher levels of emphasis to defending one's own point of view, participating in school life, and developing strategies against racism/xenophobia.

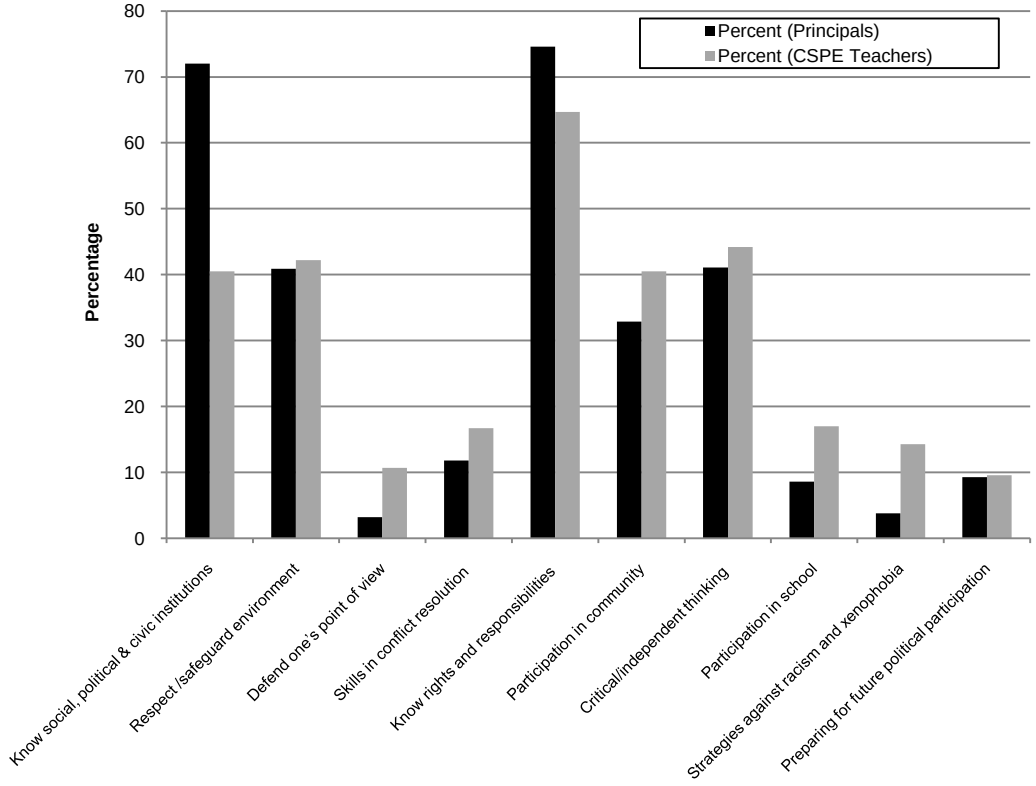

Figure 5.1: Comparisons of Irish principals' and Irish CSPE teachers' ratings of the ten most important aims of CSPE (percentages; respondents select three of the ten)

5.4. Teachers' and Students' Participation in Civic and Citizenship Education Activities

In the previous section, it was noted that in Ireland, teachers reported placing a relatively high emphasis on students' participation in the local community as one of the three most important aims of CCE. This section examines the frequency with which teachers reported participating in various community activities with their second year students.

Table 5.7 shows the percentages of teachers in Ireland (across all subject areas) who reported participating in a range of community activities with their second years in the past school year (response options were 'yes' or 'no' rather than frequencies), compared to the international averages. For the eight activities shown in the table, there is a consistent tendency for rates of participation in Ireland to be significantly below the international averages (in all cases, $p < .01$). Also, while 10% of teachers internationally indicated that they had not had their second years participate in any activity, this figure was close to one-quarter (24%) in Ireland

(p < .01). In Ireland, the most common activities were sports events (57%) and cultural activities (41%).

Table 5.7: Percentages of teachers in Ireland indicating participation in a range of community activities with their second years in the current school year with international averages

	Ireland		International	
Activity	%	SE	%	SE
Activities related to the environment, geared to the local area	28.8	1.30	**48.5**	0.39
Human rights projects	24.0	1.23	**30.3**	0.36
Activities related to underprivileged people or groups	24.6	1.15	**32.5**	0.40
Cultural activities (e.g. theatre, music cinema)	41.4	1.32	**68.4**	0.38
Multicultural and intercultural activities within the local community	13.0	0.94	**36.0**	0.35
Campaigns to raise people's awareness, e.g. World AIDS Day, International Women's Day	20.8	1.08	**49.0**	0.37
Activities related to improving facilities for the local community	12.1	0.78	**32.1**	0.34
Participating in sports events	56.9	1.41	**70.5**	0.33
Not in any of these activities	**24.2**	1.23	9.8	0.24

Percentages that are significantly higher (p≤.05 but > .01) are in ***bold italics.***

Percentages that are significantly higher (p≤.01) are in **bold.**

Percentages that are significantly higher (p<.01) and differ by more than ten percentage points are shaded in grey.

Table 5.8 compares the responses of teachers in Ireland who taught CSPE in the past three years with those of non-CSPE teachers on the same set of activities shown in Table 5.7. CSPE teachers reported significantly higher participation rates for five of the eight activities than non-CSPE teachers (p < .01), with no significant differences for cultural activities, multicultural activities, and sports events, and about twice as many non-CSPE teachers indicated not having participated in any of the eight activities (28.0%) compared with CSPE teachers (13.5%) (p < .01).

Table 4.9 in Chapter 4 indicated that the average Irish student score on a scale measuring students' participation in the local community is marginally below the international average (p < .05 but > .01), which contrasts somewhat with the very low participation rates reported by teachers in Table 5.8. An examination of the individual items comprising this scale (Schulz et al., 2010b, Table 6.1) shows that Irish students reported significantly lower participation rates than students internationally in youth organisations with a political affiliation, environmental organisations, human rights organisations, and cultural organisations. In contrast, significantly higher rates of participation were reported by Irish students in voluntary work and collecting money for a social cause. Therefore, even though the national mean is close to the international one on this student scale, there are variations in rates of participation on the individual activities, with more of an emphasis on voluntary activities and fundraising than on more active forms of

participation. Note that the specific activities in Tables 4.9 and 5.8 overlap, but the wording of the questions is different.

Table 5.8: Percentages of CSPE and non-CSPE teachers in Ireland indicating participation in a range of community activities with their second years in the current school year

	CSPE teachers (past 3 years)		Non-CSPE teachers	
Activity	%	SE	%	SE
Activities related to the environment, geared to the local area	**36.2**	2.55	25.8	1.37
Human rights projects	**42.1**	2.44	17.5	1.19
Activities related to underprivileged people or groups	**36.7**	2.68	20.1	1.21
Cultural activities (e.g., theatre, music, cinema)	43.6	2.34	40.6	1.57
Multicultural and intercultural activities within the local community	13.8	1.48	12.5	1.14
Campaigns to raise people's awareness, such as World AIDS Day, International Women's Day	**31.0**	2.67	16.9	1.18
Activities related to improving facilities for the local community	**16.2**	1.38	10.2	0.94
Participating in sports events	59.0	2.53	56.6	1.70
Not in any of these activities	13.5	1.96	**28.0**	1.47

Percentages that are significantly higher ($p \leq .05$ but $> .01$) are in ***bold italics.***

Percentages that are significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) are in **bold.**

Percentages that are significantly higher ($p < .01$) and differ by more than ten percentage points are shaded in grey.

26.5% of the sample indicated that they taught CSPE within the past three school years.

5.5. Confidence in Teaching

All teachers were asked to rate the level of confidence they felt in undertaking various classroom activities (Table 5.9). In Ireland, relatively high levels of confidence (with between 45% and 65% of teachers indicating they felt 'very confident') were associated with classroom discussion, didactic teaching, working from a textbook, group work, problem solving, and research work. Lower levels of confidence were associated with role play/simulation and ICT-supported activities. Lower levels of confidence were also associated with laboratory activities but this is likely to be due to the fact that many of the teachers surveyed taught subjects that do not involve laboratory work.

Higher percentages of teachers in Ireland compared with teachers internationally expressed themselves to be 'very confident' with respect to problem solving, classroom discussion, research work, and didactic teaching.

Table 5.9: Percentages of teachers indicating various levels of confidence in various activities, Ireland and international averages

Aspect	International	Ireland			
	% Very confident (SE)	% Very confident (SE)	% Quite confident (SE)	% Not very confident (SE)	% Not at all confident (SE)
Group work	47.2 (0.37)	48.9 (1.33)	42.8 (1.20)	7.2 (0.64)	1.15 (0.27)
Problem solving	35.6 (0.36)	47.0 (1.39)	46.2 (1.37)	6.1 (0.56)	0.72 (0.20)
Role playing, simulation	24.9 (0.32)	28.0 (1.00)	38.9 (1.21)	26.0 (1.14)	7.1 (1.60)
Classroom discussion	48.2 (0.38)	63.8 (1.25)	32.2 (1.20)	3.2 (0.39)	0.9 (0.22)
Research work	30.7 (0.32)	44.6 (1.57)	42.2 (1.69)	11.0 (0.85)	2.2 (0.33)
Lecturing (didactic teaching)	52.9 (0.38)	62.8 (1.22)	30.2 (1.18)	5.4 (0.48)	1.6 (0.37)
Laboratory activities	25.5 (0.32)	26.8 (0.98)	18.2 (1.01)	23.7 (1.09)	31.3 (1.00)
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) supported activities	27.7 (0.30)	32.1 (1.16)	34.1 (1.08)	24.8 (1.05)	9.0 (0.85)
Working mainly from a textbook*	N/A	60.6 (1.09)	30.3 (1.22)	7.3 (0.59)	1.8 (0.34)

*This is a national question unique to Ireland.

Civic and Citizenship Education (CCE) teachers (CSPE, in the case of Ireland) rated the level of confidence they felt in teaching a number of CCE-relevant topics (Table 5.10). The international percentages in the 'very confident' category are shown in the first column of the table. In Ireland, the highest confidence levels were associated with teaching about the environment, citizens' rights and responsibilities and rights and responsibilities at work, human rights, and voting and elections, where 45% or more of teachers in Ireland indicated that they felt 'very confident' teaching these topics. In contrast, 30% or fewer of teachers in Ireland indicated that they felt 'very confident' teaching the topics of legal institutions and courts, economy and business, and the EU. Moderate levels of confidence were associated with teaching about the global community, equal opportunities for men and women, political systems, emigration/immigration, contemporary/controversial issues, volunteering, the media, and different cultures. Generally, Irish teachers' confidence ratings were higher than the international averages, with the exceptions of media communication, equal opportunities for men and women, and citizens' rights and responsibilities, which were similar to the corresponding international averages.

Table 5.10: Percentages of CCE teachers indicating various levels of confidence in teaching various aspects of CCE, Ireland and international averages

Aspect	Int'l	Ireland			
	% Very confident (SE)	% Very confident (SE)	% Quite confident (SE)	% Not very confident (SE)	% Not at all confident (SE)
Human rights	42.3 (0.89)	55.2 (3.14)	39.1 (2.91)	4.9 (1.74)	0.7 (0.50)
Different cultures and ethnic groups	29.9 (0.78)	32.6 (3.20)	45.9 (3.39)	20.7 (2.92)	0.8 (0.49)
Voting and elections	42.4 (0.89)	45.3 (3.06)	40.2 (3.36)	13.6 (2.39)	0.8 (0.49)
The economy and business	18.5 (0.67)	29.7 (3.18)	39.0 (3.28)	28.4 (3.01)	3.0 (1.21)
Rights and responsibilities at work	36.5 (0.83)	52.5 (3.86)	39.9 (3.73)	7.3 (1.39)	0.3 (0.33)
The global community and international organisations	24.8 (0.82)	41.6 (3.31)	46.8 (3.55)	10.9 (1.94)	0.7 (0.50)
The environment	42.4 (0.88)	59.1 (3.19)	37.4 (3.07)	3.24 (1.12)	0.3 (0.29)
Emigration and immigration	30.7 (0.79)	36.9 (3.03)	49.6 (3.04)	12.8 (2.01)	0.6 (0.44)
Equal opportunities for men and women	45.2 (0.83)	41.6 (3.17)	51.5 (2.83)	6.3 (1.72)	0.6 (0.44)
Citizens' rights and responsibilities	53.2 (0.86)	56.6 (3.10)	39.5 (3.02)	3.3 (1.13)	0.6 (0.44)
The constitution and political systems	38.8 (0.90)	40.1 (3.26)	39.5 (3.36)	16.6 (2.36)	3.9 (1.33)
Media communication	36.5 (0.90)	33.8 (3.30)	54.3 (3.37)	10.7 (2.13)	1.27 (0.79)
Volunteering	22.7 (0.67)	34.5 (3.96)	46.7 (3.98)	17.7 (1.95)	1.2 (0.74)
Legal institutions and courts	19.2 (0.67)	25.3 (2.74)	42.4 (4.20)	28.8 (3.43)	3.51 (1.05)
The European Union*	24.4 (0.89)	29.8 (3.00)	46.0 (4.03)	21.7 (3.04)	2.6 (0.99)
Contemporary, controversial political issues**	N/A	36.6 (3.63)	44.7 (3.96)	16.3 (2.16)	2.3 (1.10)

*This item was only administered in 21 EU countries.

**This is a national question unique to Ireland.

The international questions in this table were used to construct a scale which is described later in this chapter.

5.6. Teaching and Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education

The tables in this section apply to teachers currently teaching Civic and Citizenship Education (CCE); in the case of Ireland, this comprises 13% of the teacher sample who indicated that they were teaching CSPE during the school year in which ICCS was administered (2008-2009). In three of the 27 countries with satisfactory teacher participation rates, this part of the questionnaire was not administered, since in these countries (Estonia, Guatemala, and Luxembourg) there is no separate CCE subject taught to second years; and in Liechtenstein, there was not a sufficient number of responses to report results. In the remaining 23 countries, an average of 22% of all teachers indicated that they had taught a CCE-related subject in the current school year. Colombia represents an outlier since 99% of teachers indicated having taught a CCE-related subject during the current school year. Without Colombia, the average across the remaining countries is 18.5%.

Table 5.11 shows the frequency with which CCE teachers reported using various methods of assessment with their second years in Ireland during CCE class

(CSPE class). For comparative purposes, the international average percentage of CCE teachers indicating 'often' or 'very often' is shown in the last column. In Ireland, the most common forms of assessment are written tests, homework, project work and student observation, where at least 40% of teachers indicated that they did these activities 'often' or 'very often'. Achievement tests and oral tests were used 'often' or 'very often' by about one-third of teachers in Ireland. The least common forms of assessment were student self-assessment and peer assessment, which were 'never' used by 50% or more of teachers in Ireland. Relative to the international averages, Irish teachers used projects to assess students relatively more frequently. Student observation, self-assessment, peer assessment, and achievement and oral tests were used relatively less frequently in Ireland than internationally.

Table 5.11: Percentages of CCE teachers indicating frequencies of various methods of assessment of CCE, Ireland and international averages

Assessment activity	Ireland			Int'l
	% Never (SE)	% Sometimes (SE)	% Often / Very Often (SE)	% Often / Very Often (SE)
Written test/exam (e.g. essay)	3.0 (1.11)	43.8 (3.53)	53.2 (3.77)	48.5 (0.85)
Achievement test (e.g. multiple choice)	16.8 (3.27)	48.8 (3.78)	34.4 (3.81)	45.7 (0.93)
Oral test	36.4 (3.48)	30.2 (2.83)	33.4 (3.14)	41.5 (0.88)
Observe students	23.7 (3.74)	34.5 (3.94)	41.8 (3.76)	63.4 (0.91)
Written homework	14.0 (2.70)	34.6 (2.80)	51.4 (2.98)	48.6 (1.00)
Student self-assessment	50.0 (3.55)	40.1 (4.15)	9.9 (3.01)	36.5 (0.89)
Peer assessment	62.9 (3.71)	29.2 (4.27)	7.9 (2.02)	24.8 (0.79)
Projects	8.4 (1.87)	46.5 (3.82)	45.0 (3.73)	35.4 (0.88)

CCE teachers were asked how often they had their second year students engage in a variety of classroom activities during CCE (CSPE) lessons (Table 5.12). Again, the international percentages indicating 'often' or 'very often' for each activity are shown in the last column in Table 5.12 for comparative purposes. In Ireland, the most common activities, carried out 'often' or 'very often' by 60% or more of teachers, were the teacher asking questions and students answering, discussion of controversial issues, and students studying textbooks. Between 35% and 45% of teachers in Ireland indicated that they did the following classroom activities 'often' or 'very often': have students work on drill/work sheets, work in groups and prepare presentations, research information from different sources, and work on projects that involve collecting information outside of school. Less common activities included the teacher lecturing and having students take notes, engaging students in role play and simulations, and having students work individually to prepare presentations.

Table 5.12: Percentages of CCE teachers indicating frequencies of various classroom activities

Classroom activity	Ireland			Int'l
	% Never (SE)	% Sometimes (SE)	% Often / Very Often (SE)	% Often / Very Often (SE)
Students work on projects that involve gathering information outside of school	8.8 (1.93)	55.9 (3.33)	35.4 (2.95)	27.4 (0.75)
Students study textbooks	6.2 (1.84)	33.4 (3.15)	60.3 (3.03)	68.1 (0.75)
Students work on drill sheets or work sheets	10.0 (1.67)	45.0 (3.30)	45.0 (3.11)	57.9 (0.79)
Students work in groups on different topics and prepare presentations	9.8 (1.71)	46.9 (3.40)	43.4 (3.18)	51.3 (0.85)
Students work individually on different topics and prepare presentations	22.0 (2.76)	50.0 (3.81)	27.9 (3.70)	39.6 (0.85)
Students participate in role play and simulations	36.4 (3.26)	42.2 (3.26)	21.4 (2.94)	26.7 (0.75)
The teacher asks questions and the students answer	0.8 (0.46)	25.6 (3.16)	73.6 (3.15)	74.4 (0.74)
The teacher lectures and the students take notes	41.8 (3.44)	43.1 (3.07)	15.3 (2.17)	40.7 (0.72)
The teacher includes discussion on controversial issues in class	3.6 (1.13)	29.6 (3.44)	66.8 (3.49)	59.0 (0.84)
Students research and analyse information from different sources	12.4 (2.14)	50.0 (3.76)	37.6 (3.55)	50.7 (0.85)

Comparisons with the international averages do not indicate marked differences; however teachers in Ireland asked students to gather information outside school and have class discussion of controversial issues somewhat more often than internationally. In contrast, teachers in Ireland had students work on drill/work sheets, prepare presentations, research information from different sources, and lecture while students took notes somewhat less frequently than internationally. Generally, Table 5.12 indicates the use of a wide range of classroom activities in CCE both in Ireland and internationally.

Another aspect of teachers' work is planning lessons. CCE teachers were asked about the extent to which they drew on a variety of resources in their planning for CCE (CSPE) classes (Table 5.13). The percentages of teachers across countries indicating that they draw on each resource 'to a large extent' are shown in the first column in Table 5.13 for comparative purposes. In Ireland, the three most common resources used for planning were official curricula and guidelines, CCE (CSPE) requirements, and textbooks. These were used to 'a large extent' by over 50% of teachers. Teachers' self-produced materials, original sources and media were used 'to a large extent' by between 33% and 38% of teachers in Ireland. Materials produced by commercial and non-commercial sources, the Internet, and the CSPE Support Services were the least used[29]. Relative to the international averages, the differences are not that marked, though internationally, the use of the Internet was relatively

[29] The question did not distinguish between Support Services personnel and Support Services resource materials and was asked in Ireland only.

more common than in Ireland, while use of CCE requirements was relatively less common compared to Ireland.

Table 5.13: Percentages of CCE teachers indicating they extent to which they use various resources in planning CCE classes, Ireland and international averages

Resource for planning	Int'l % (SE)	Ireland % (SE)			
	Large extent	Large extent	Moderate extent	Small extent	Not at all
Official curricula, curricular guidelines or frameworks	58.9 (0.83)	54.4 (3.03)	35.2 (2.78)	7.8 (1.80)	2.7 (1.21)
Official requirements (standards) in the area of CSPE	50.7 (0.79)	59.2 (3.22)	31.4 (2.93)	7.9 (1.63)	1.5 (0.77)
Your own ideas or self-produced materials	40.8 (0.88)	38.2 (3.68)	45.3 (3.64)	14.7 (2.53)	1.9 (0.79)
Original sources (e.g. constitutions, human rights declarations)	46.5 (0.84)	34.5 (3.08)	32.5 (2.90)	26.1 (2.95)	6.6 (1.80
Textbooks	57.4 (0.85)	53.3 (3.23)	31.2 (3.40)	13.2 (2.13)	1.8 (0.88)
Teaching/learning materials published by commercial companies, public institutes, or non-governmental organisations (NGOs, e.g. Amnesty)	16.1 (0.72)	25.2 (3.21)	47.5 (3.35)	19.9 (2.46)	7.4 (1.62)
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) (Internet, websites, etc.)	39.8 (0.82)	22.9 (2.76)	34.5 (3.01)	31.9 (2.84)	10.3 (1.93)
Media (newspapers, magazines, television, etc.)	41.0 (0.81)	33.0 (2.88)	44.1 (2.79)	17.9 (2.46)	5.1 (1.21)
CSPE Support Services*	N/A	18.5 (2.56)	38.9 (3.63)	28.8 (2.63)	13.8 (2.45)

*This is a national question unique to Ireland.

5.7. Improving Civic and Citizenship Education

ICCS provided information on resourcing issues by asking CCE teachers which aspects of CCE, in their view, need improvement to enhance teaching and learning. Table 5.14 shows the national and international percentages of CCE teachers indicating that improvements were needed to nine areas (respondents were instructed to select three of the nine areas). In Ireland, around half of the teachers indicated that improvements were needed in the following: additional training in both teaching methods and subject matter knowledge; more instructional time for CSPE; and better textbooks and teaching materials. Almost four in ten (38.5%) wanted more opportunities for projects. Between 20% and 27% of teachers in Ireland indicated that they wanted more co-operation between teachers of different subjects, more materials and textbooks, and specific assessment of CSPE. A small minority (just over 2%) indicated that they wanted external school/curriculum evaluation. Contrasting the Irish percentages with the international ones, the most notable difference is that teachers in Ireland were more likely to select additional training as an aspect of CCE in need of improvement than teachers internationally, and in

Ireland, teachers were less inclined to indicate a need for more co-operation between teachers of different subjects compared to the international average.

Table 5.14: Percentages of CCE teachers in Ireland and internationally selecting the three most important aspects that need to improve in order to enhance the teaching and learning of CCE

Aspect	Ireland % Yes (SE)	International % Yes (SE)
More materials and textbooks	21.3 (3.81)	28.6 (0.75)
Better materials and textbooks	47.0 (3.86)	45.2 (0.84)
Additional training in teaching methods	52.2 (3.61)	38.9 (0.87)
Additional training in subject matter knowledge	50.3 (3.53)	40.8 (0.84)
More cooperation between teachers in different subject areas	26.8 (2.90)	39.2 (0.86)
More instructional time allocated to the teaching of civic and citizenship education	47.5 (3.37)	44.8 (0.86)
More opportunities for special projects	38.5 (3.70)	35.2 (0.82)
Specific assessment of civic and citizenship education	20.6 (1.63)	15.7 (0.65)
External school and curriculum evaluation	2.4 (0.95)	6.0 (0.46)

5.8. Teaching of Civic and Citizenship Education in National Perspective

This section draws on information asked of CSPE teachers and principals in Ireland only in order to provide a more nuanced national context in which to interpret the ICCS results. It examines teachers' views of the CSPE curriculum in terms of interest/enjoyment, participation in continuing professional development (CPD), and factors influencing the assignment of teachers to teach CSPE.

Table 5.15 shows the average rankings given by CSPE teachers (i.e. those teaching CSPE within the three years of the ICCS survey) to the seven key concepts underpinning the CSPE syllabus with respect to relative levels of enjoyment/interest in teaching and learning these concepts from their own point of view and from the point of view of their students. Rankings range from 1 to 7 with lower values indicating higher levels of interest/enjoyment. The rankings for teachers and students are quite similar, with ratings from low (high interest/enjoyment) to high (low interest/enjoyment) as follows:

- Rights and responsibilities (highest level of interest/enjoyment)
- Human dignity
- Democracy
- Stewardship
- Interdependence
- Development
- Law (lowest level of interest/enjoyment).

Table 5.15: Average rankings assigned by teachers (of CSPE, past three years) according to the level of interest and enjoyment in the seven key concepts underlying the CSPE syllabus, for themselves and their students

Key concept	Teachers Mean (SE)	Students Mean (SE)
Rights and responsibilities	2.54 (0.09)	2.30 (0.08)
Human dignity	2.95 (0.09)	2.92 (0.08)
Democracy	3.57 (0.11)	4.14 (0.10)
Stewardship	4.11 (0.12)	3.91 (0.14)
Interdependence	4.65 (0.09)	4.72 (0.09)
Development	4.67 (0.08)	4.70 (0.08)
Law	5.05 (0.10)	4.99 (0.11)

This is a national question unique to Ireland. Lower figures indicate higher average perceived interest/enjoyment levels. Concepts are ordered from low to high teachers' ratings.

Table 5.16: Participation by teachers (of CSPE, past three years) in various forms of CPD relevant to CSPE over the past three years

Type of CPD	% Yes (SE)
Cluster Inservice:	
Induction for teachers new to CSPE	45.4 (2.77)
Organising and Managing Action Projects and Assessment	30.9 (2.57)
Managing and Co-ordinating CSPE	13.0 (1.74)
The use of active learning methodologies and resources	28.7 (2.66)
Tackling controversial issues	8.3 (1.35)
Using drama in education techniques	8.8 (1.64)
Using film as a teaching and learning tool	7.9 (1.47)
Stewardship and sustainable development	6.3 (1.25)
School-based Inservice	27.3 (3.49)
Local Education Centre evening workshops	17.7 (2.41)
The Association of CSPE Teachers (ACT) Annual Conference	6.5 (1.97)
Mentoring from another teacher of CSPE	42.2 (2.97)
Other	7.7 (1.49)
Total number of CSPE-related CPD activities over the past three years	
None	1.7 (1.45)
One	32.3 (2.72)
Two	26.6 (2.63)
Three	17.4 (1.80)
Four	8.8 (1.66)
Five or more	13.2 (2.33)

This is a national question unique to Ireland.

26.5% of the sample indicated that they taught CSPE within the past three school years.

Table 5.16 shows the percentages of CSPE teachers (i.e., those teaching it within the past three years) who attended various forms of continuing professional development (CPD) relevant to CSPE over the past three years (at the time ICCS was conducted, in spring 2009). About 98% of teachers had attended some form of CSPE-related CPD. One-third (32%) attended one CSPE-related CPD activity (see the

bottom half of the table), 27% attended two, 26% attended three or four, and 13% attended five or more CSPE-related CPD activities. Thus, there is considerable variation in the extent to which CSPE teachers engaged in CSPE-related CPD during the period examined.

Table 5.16 also shows the type of CPD attended. The top portion of the table lists eight areas of CPD that were offered as cluster inservice[30]. The most commonly-attended of these were induction (45%), organising and managing action projects (31%), and use of active learning methodologies and resources (29%). Somewhat less frequent (13%) was attendance at cluster inservice on the management and co-ordination of CSPE. Fewer than 10% of teachers indicated that they had attended inservice on controversial issues, using drama, using film, or on stewardship or sustainable development.

Other than cluster inservice, the most common types of CPD were mentoring[31] (42%) and school-based inservice (27%). In addition, about 18% of CSPE teachers had attended evening workshops in their local Education Centre, and 6.5% had attended the annual conference of the Association of CSPE Teachers (ACT).

Principals were asked whether the same teacher tended to teach CSPE to the same class throughout the junior cycle. A majority (58%) indicated that generally, this was the case, 40% indicated that this was preferably the case but not always possible due to other constraints, and just 2% indicated that this was generally not the case.

Table 5.17 provides information on the factors that influence the assignment of teachers to CSPE according to principals.

Table 5.17: Principals' reports on factors influencing the assignment of teachers to CSPE

Factor	% Yes (SE)
On the basis of teaching another subject to the class	46.1 (4.38)
On the basis of being the year head	4.0 (1.92)
On the basis of being the class tutor	12.3 (2.88)
On the basis of personal preference/interest in CSPE	75.4 (4.95)
On the basis of timetabling constraints	70.6 (4.23)
On the basis of their overall workload	27.5 (4.89)
On the basis of relevant qualifications	53.7 (5.17)
On the basis of seniority	0.0 (0.00)
On some other basis	1.3 (0.94)

This is a national question unique to Ireland.

[30] This is CPD offered to teachers in a number of schools located close together.
[31] Mentoring can be considered a less formal form of CPD than the others listed in Table 5.16.

The most common factors were teachers' interest in CSPE, timetabling constraints, teacher qualifications, and teaching another subject to the class. The table suggests that both enablers (e.g. teachers' qualifications, teachers' interest) and constraints (e.g. timetable, teachers' workload) act in tandem when decisions are made about assigning teachers to teach CSPE.

5.9. Overview of School Questionnaire Scales

Table 5.18 lists the seven school scales that are examined in subsequent sections of this chapter, and the wording of example questions that make up the scales. The first (S1), teachers' participation at school, summarises principals' views on the extent to which teachers actively contribute to the running of the school. National and international percentages on the example question are similar: for example, 67% of principals in Ireland, and 71% internationally, indicated that most or all of teachers contribute to solving problems at school.

Table 5.18: Sample items for each school questionnaire scale and percentages for each response category in Ireland and international averages

Scale / Question wording	Sample item	Ireland		International average	
		+	–	+	–
S1. Teachers' participation at school *In your opinion, how many teachers in this school…*	make their own contributions to solving school problems?	66.6	33.5	70.9	29.1
S2. Parents' participation at school *In your opinion, how many parents of students in this school participate in the following…*	support school projects within the local community	31.4	68.6	38.3	61.7
S3. Student influence at school *In this school, how much are students' opinions taken into account when decisions are made about the following…*	school rules	69.9	30.1	84.7	15.3
S4. Teachers' sense of belonging *In your opinion, to what extent do…*	teachers feel like they belong to the school community	100.0	0.0	97.8	2.2
S5. Students' sense of belonging *In your opinion, to what extent do…*	students enjoy being in school	100.0	0.0	97.8	2.2
S6. Resources in the local community *Are the following available in the local area…*	museum or art gallery	46.4	53.6	39.4	60.6
	public garden or park	79.8	21.2	77.3	22.7
S7. Social tension in the local community *To what extent are any of the following issues a source of social tension in the area in which this school is located…*	extensive poverty	12.2	87.8	28.3	71.7
	unemployment	47.4	52.6	23.4	76.6

See Appendix 5, Table A5.2, for details of response options for each scale.

The second scale (S2) is a measure of parents' participation at school, and the example question, the proportions of parents that support school projects within the local community, shows a somewhat lower rate of parental participation in Ireland (with 31% of principals indicating that most or all parents do this) compared to the international average of 38%).

The third scale (S3) describes students' influence at school, i.e. the extent to which their views are taken into account in establishing various procedures and policies. In the example question shown in Table 5.18, the Irish percentage of principals who indicate that students have an input into school rules to a large or moderate extent (70%) is lower than the international average (85%).

The next two scales shown in Table 5.18 measure teachers' (S4) and students' (S5) sense of belonging in the school. Both in Ireland and internationally, all or a large majority of principals report that that the teaching staff and students feel that they belong in the school to a large or a moderate extent, i.e. responses to items that form this scale show a strong positive skew.

The last two scales in Table 5.18 concern characteristics of the local community. The first (S6) summarises the availability of a range of local resources such as playing fields, parks, museums or art galleries. In Ireland, museums or art galleries are somewhat more widely available (46%) compared with the international average (39%), while the availability of parks is similar in Ireland (80%) to internationally (77%). The second scale that examines characteristics in the local community (S7) concerns the perceived existence of problems that can serve to act as a source of social tension. For example, in Ireland, 12% of principals indicated that extensive poverty was a problem 'to a moderate extent' or 'to a large extent', which is lower than the international average of 28%. In contrast, 47% of principals in Ireland indicated that unemployment was a problem 'to a moderate extent' or 'to a large extent', which is higher than the international average (23%).

5.10. Overview of Teacher Questionnaire Scales

Table 5.19 lists the 11 teacher scales that are examined in this chapter, and the wording of example questions that make up the scales. The first scale (T1) is a measure of teachers' confidence in a range of teaching methods (see also Table 5.9), and for both examples, problem solving and classroom discussion, 90% or more of teachers in Ireland and internationally were 'very confident' or 'quite confident' in engaging in such activities. The second scale (T2) measures the extent to which teachers use assessment of their students for a variety of purposes (see also Table 5.11). For both examples (providing feedback and planning future lessons) about three-fifths of teachers in Ireland and internationally indicated that they did this 'to a large extent'.

Table 5.19: Sample items for each teacher questionnaire scale and percentages for each response category in Ireland and international averages

Scale / Question wording	Sample item	Ireland		Int'l average	
		+	–	+	–
T1. Teachers' confidence in teaching methods~	problem solving	93.2	6.8	90.0	10.0
How confident do you feel about using the following teaching methods and approaches…	classroom discussion	95.9	4.1	91.3	8.7
T2. Teachers' use of assessment~	providing feedback to your students	58.8	41.2	63.9	36.1
To what extent do you use the performance of your second year students on assessment tasks for the following purposes…	planning future lessons	57.3	42.7	57.4	42.6
T3. Teachers' personal participation in activities outside school	cultural and/or educational organisations (e.g. UNESCO, An Taisce)	4.5	95.5	5.5	94.5
How often in the last twelve months have you personally taken part in activities promoted by the following organisations/groups…					
T4. Teachers' participation in school governance	actively take part in school development/ improvement activities	69.2	30.8	69.9	30.1
With reference to the current school year, how many teachers in this school…					
T5. Teachers' reports on CCE activities in class*~	students work on projects that involve gathering information outside of school	35.3	64.7	27.9	72.6
How often do (did) the following activities occur during your civic and citizenship education classes for second years…					
T6. Teachers' confidence in CCE teaching*~	human rights	94.4	5.6	92.5	7.5
How confident do you feel about teaching the following topics…	voting and elections	85.6	14.4	86.1	13.9
T7. Teachers' perceptions of classroom climate	respect their classmates even if they are different	89.3	10.7	86.5	13.5
In your opinion, how many of your second year students…					
T8. Teachers' perceptions of social problems at school	bullying	29.0	71.0	17.9	82.1
Please indicate how frequently each of the following problems occurs among students at this school…					
T9. Teacher reports of student participation in class activities	negotiate the learning objectives with the teacher	89.3	10.7	80.2	19.8
In your second year classes, how many students…					
T10. Teachers' perceptions of student behaviour at school	have a good relationship with the school teachers and staff	95.0	5.0	93.8	6.2
In your opinion, how many students in this school…					
T11. Teachers' perceptions of student activities in the community~	activities related to disadvantaged people or groups	24.6	75.4	32.1	67.9
During the current school year, have you and any of your second year classes taken part in any of these activities…					

*Asked to CCE teachers only.
~The individual items on this scale were reported on earlier in this chapter.
See Appendix 5, Table A5.3 for details of response options for each scale.

The next scale (T3) examines teachers' own participation in community-based activities outside of school time. For many of the items that form this scale, rates of participation were low. For example, only around 5% of teachers both nationally and internationally reported that they had participated in activities relating to a cultural/educational organisation once a month or more.

The fourth scale (T4) examines teachers' participation in school governance. One of the items on this scale asks how many teachers actively take part in school development/improvement activities. In Ireland and internationally, about 70% of teachers indicated that most or all teachers in their school did this.

The fifth and sixth scales in Table 5.19 were included in the section of the teacher questionnaire that was targeted at CCE teachers. The fifth measures the frequency of various CCE activities during class time (T5) (see also Table 5.12), and the sixth measures teachers' level of confidence in teaching various CCE topics (T6) (also Table 5.10). The example question for the CCE activities asks about the frequency with which teachers ask students to work on projects outside of school. Frequencies for this question are on the low side with 35% of teachers in Ireland and 28% internationally indicating that they asked their students to do this 'often' or 'very often'. Note, however, that the frequency of project work could well have been higher, had teachers been asked about their work with third years. In contrast, confidence in teaching about human rights and voting and elections was quite high – in excess of 85% of teachers in Ireland and internationally indicated that they were 'quite confident' or 'very confident' about teaching these two topics.

Teachers' responses to questions forming a scale measuring their perceptions of classroom climate (T7) also tended to be positively skewed. For example, over 85% agreed nationally and internationally that most or all students respected their classmates even if they are different. Teachers were also asked about their perceptions of problems at school (T8). The example item in Table 5.19 asks them the frequency with which bullying occurs in the school. In Ireland, 29% indicated that this 'often' or 'very often' happens which is one-and-a-half times higher than the international average of 18%.

Teachers were also asked about the extent to which their second years participated in a variety of activities in class (T9). The example question in Table 5.19 asks how often students negotiate learning objectives with the teacher. In Ireland, 89% of teachers indicated most or all of students did this, which is a little higher than the international average of 80%.

The tenth scale examines teachers' perceptions of student behaviours (T10), and again responses to questions forming this scale are highly positively skewed. For example, 95% of teachers in Ireland (and 94% of teachers internationally) indicated that most or all students have a good relationship with the staff in the school. Chapter 4 reported on a similar question asked of students: 70% of students in Ireland agreed or strongly agreed that students get along well with most teachers.

The final scale shown in Table 5.19 (T11) describes the extent to which teachers and their second year students jointly participated in activities in the local community during the current school year (see also Table 5.7). Participation was

lower for these activities in Ireland; for example, 25% of teachers in Ireland indicated that they and their second years had participated in activities related to disadvantaged people or groups compared with 32% internationally.

5.11. Analyses of School and Teacher Questionnaire Scales

Table 5.20 shows, for each school and teacher scale, the Irish mean, standard error and standard deviation; comparisons with the international mean overall and by teacher gender (in the case of the teacher questionnaire scales); participation in the School Support Programme (SSP) under DEIS; and correlations between each scale and achievement on the ICCS test and with school average socioeconomic composition[32]. As with the scales reported in Chapters 3 and 4, these have been scaled to have an international average of 50 and a standard deviation of 10 (see Box 1.4, Chapter 1).

Taking the school scales first, it can be seen that the Irish scale means vary with respect to whether they are significantly higher or lower than the corresponding international means. Principals' reports of teachers' and students' sense of belonging are significantly higher (and more than half of a standard deviation above) the international means, and resources in the local community is also significantly higher in Ireland (by about one quarter of a standard deviation). Means on two scales are not significantly different to the corresponding international ones, i.e. teachers' participation at school and social tension in the local community. Two scales are significantly below the international averages (by about one-sixth of a standard deviation), i.e. parents' participation at school and student influence at school.

Three of the seven school scales vary significantly by SSP status, i.e. parents' participation, teachers' and students' sense of belonging are all significantly lower in SSP schools compared with non-SSP schools, and social tension in the local community is significantly higher in SSP schools relative to non-SSP schools.

Correlations between the school scales and school average socioeconomic composition tend to be higher between these scales than school average achievement on the test of civic knowledge, and are significant for five of the seven scales. There is a moderate to strong negative correlation (-.42) between school socioeconomic composition and social tension in the local community (a high the score on the social tension scale indicates high social tension, which can be viewed as negative); the correlation between this scale and achievement is weaker, at -.24. There are moderate correlations between both teachers' and students' sense of belonging and school socioeconomic composition (.26 and .30, respectively), and again the relationship between these scales and achievement is weaker (.18 and .21, respectively).

[32] This is the school average of the SES index described in Section 3.2 in Chapter 3.

Table 5.20: Mean school and teacher scale scores (SE, SD) in Ireland, comparisons with international means and by teacher gender and school SSP status, and correlations with school average socioeconomic status and achievement

Scale	International mean	Ireland						
		Mean	SE	SD	Teacher gender (Female – Male)	School is in SSP under DEIS (Yes – No)	ICCS test (r)**	School SES (r)**
School Questionnaire								
S1. Teachers' participation at school	=	50.3	0.75	8.47	N/A	=	.073	.099
S2. Parents' participation at school	⇓	48.6	0.57	7.37	N/A	⇓	**.157**	**.296**
S3. Student influence at school	↓	48.6	0.79	9.00	N/A	=	-.018	-.070
S4. Teachers' sense of belonging	⇑	55.7	0.66	7.37	N/A	↓	**.182**	**.263**
S5. Students' sense of belonging	⇑	55.4	0.79	9.09	N/A	⇓	**.206**	**.303**
S6. Resources in local community	⇑	52.4	0.75	8.56	N/A	=	**.100**	**.247**
S7. Social tension in local community	=	50.0	0.80	9.00	N/A	⇑	**-.236**	**-.423**
Teacher Questionnaire								
T1. Teachers' confidence in teaching methods	⇑	51.1	0.24	9.93	=	⇓	.077	.165
T2. Teachers' use of assessment	⇓	48.2	0.35	11.12	↑	=	.030	.103
T3. Teachers' personal participation in activities outside school	⇓	48.2	0.36	10.04	↑	=	.063	-.031
T4. Teachers' participation in school governance	=	50.7	0.36	9.99	↑	=	.151	**.225**
T5. Teachers' reports on CCE activities in class*	↓	47.9	0.68	9.77	↑	=	.029	-.004
T6. Teachers' confidence in CCE teaching*	⇑	53.3	0.71	11.03	⇓	=	.059	.187
T7. Teachers' perceptions of classroom climate	⇑	51.6	0.41	10.01	=	↓	**.217**	**.293**
T8. Teachers' perceptions of social problems at school	⇑	55.2	0.48	8.79	⇓	⇑	**-.247**	**-.397**
T9. Teacher reports of student participation in class activities	⇓	47.7	0.31	9.92	⇑	=	.100	.191
T10. Teachers' perceptions of student behaviour at school	=	50.9	0.54	10.48	=	⇓	**.311**	**.550**
T11. Teachers' perceptions of student activities in the community	⇓	43.4	0.24	9.30	=	=	-.052	-.063

Note: Significantly higher ($p \leq .05$) ↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .05$) ↓
Significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) ⇑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .01$) ⇓
No statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) =

Values of r in bold indicate that correlation is significant ($p < .05$)

Shading indicates that the difference between the two groups being compared is at least 2.5 (one-quarter of a standard deviation).

*Scale applies to teachers currently teaching CSPE only (12.6% of the total sample)

**Correlations computed on the basis of school averages in the case of the teacher scales

There is also a moderate correlation between parental participation and school socioeconomic composition (.30); the correlation between parental participation and achievement is again lower (.16). Resources in the local community are also moderately related to the socioeconomic composition of schools (.25), and the relationship between this scale and achievement is weak, at .10. Teacher participation and student influence are not associated with either school mean achievement or with school mean socioeconomic composition.

Turning to the teacher scales in Table 5.20, there is again variation in the national scale means compared with the international ones. Four scales are significantly higher in Ireland than internationally, five are significantly lower, and two are the same as the corresponding international ones. Higher mean national scores were found for perceptions of social problems at school (with the Irish mean about half a standard deviation above the international one), teachers' confidence in CCE teaching (one-third of a standard deviation above the international average), perceptions of classroom climate (one-sixth of a standard deviation above the international average), and teachers' confidence in teaching methods (about one-tenth of a standard deviation above the international average)[33].

Teachers' participation in school governance and perceptions of student behaviour at school do not differ from the international averages.

The teacher scale showing the largest difference between the Irish and international means is teachers' perceptions of student participation in activities in the local community, where the Irish mean is two-thirds of a standard deviation below the international one. Teachers' perceptions of student participation in class activities is also significantly below the international average by about one-quarter of a standard deviation, and the Irish mean for the CCE-related activities in class scale is below the international one by one-fifth of a standard deviation. Teachers' use of assessment and teachers' participation in the local community are also below the corresponding international means, by about one-sixth of a standard deviation in both cases.

There are some differences associated with teacher gender. Female teachers reported significantly lower scale scores on the confidence in CCE teaching scale and perceptions of social problems at school ($p < .01$). Females also had significantly higher scores on five of the scales: student participation in class activities ($p < .01$), use of assessment, own participation in community-based activities, participation in school governance, and CCE activities in class (all $p < .05$ but $> .01$).

Just four of the teacher scales varied significantly across SSP and non-SSP schools. Confidence in teaching methods and perceptions of student behaviour were significantly lower in SSP schools ($p < .01$), as were perceptions of classroom climate ($p < .05$ but $> .01$). Perceptions of social problems at school were significantly higher in SSP schools ($p < .01$).

Turning to the correlations between the teacher scales and school average achievement on the ICCS test and school average socioeconomic composition, it can

[33] Note that the reliability of this scale is low in Ireland, at 0.645 (Table A5.1, Appendix 5).

be seen, consistent with the school scales, that where correlations are significant, they tend to be more strongly related to school socioeconomic composition compared with school average achievement. Significant correlations were found between four of the teacher scales and school socioeconomic composition, and between three of the scales and average achievement.

Table 5.21: Comparison of school and teacher scale scores in Ireland, by school location and school-type/gender composition

Scale	Location (Reference group = town)		School type and gender composition (Reference Group = mixed secondary)			
	Rural (<3,000)	City (>100,000)	All boys secondary	All girls secondary	VEC	Community / Comprehensive
School Questionnaire						
S1. Teachers' participation at school	=	=	=	=	=	=
S2. Parents' participation at school	=	=	=	=	=	=
S3. Student influence at school	=	=	↓	=	=	=
S4. Teachers' sense of belonging	=	=	=	=	=	=
S5. Students' sense of belonging	=	=	=	↟	=	=
S6. Resources in local community	↡	=	=	=	=	=
S7. Social tension in local community	=	=	=	=	=	=
Teacher Questionnaire						
T1. Teachers' confidence in teaching methods	=	=	↓	=	=	=
T2. Teachers' use of assessment	=	=	=	=	=	=
T3. Teachers' personal participation in activities outside school	=	=	=	=	=	=
T4. Teachers' participation in school governance	=	=	=	=	=	=
T5. Teachers' reports on CCE activities in class*	=	=	↡	=	=	=
T6. Teachers' confidence in CCE teaching*	=	=	=	=	=	=
T7. Teachers' perceptions of classroom climate	=	=	=	=	=	=
T8. Teachers' perceptions of social problems at school	=	=	=	↓	↑	=
T9. Teacher reports of student participation in class activities	=	=	=	=	=	=
T10. Teachers' perceptions of student behaviour at school	=	=	=	=	↓	=
T11. Teachers' perceptions of student activities in the community	=	=	↡	=	=	=

Note: Significantly higher ($p \leq .05$) ↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .05$) ↓
Significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) ↟ Significantly lower ($p \leq .01$) ↡
No statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) =

Shading indicates that the difference between the two groups being compared is at least 2.5 (one-quarter of a standard deviation).

*Scale applies to teachers currently teaching CSPE only (12.6% of the total sample)

A moderate to strong positive association was found between school socioeconomic composition and teachers' perceptions of student behaviour (.55); the relationship between this scale and achievement is moderate (.31). There are also moderate negative correlations between teachers' perceptions of social problems at school and both school socioeconomic composition (-.40) and achievement (-.25). The scale measuring teachers' perceptions of classroom climate shows a moderate correlation with socioeconomic composition (.29); the correlation between this scale and achievement is .22. Finally, teacher participation in school governance is significantly and positively associated with school socioeconomic composition (.23), but is not associated with achievement.

Table 5.21 examines the seven school scales and the 11 teacher scales with respect to whether scale means vary significantly across school location[34] and school sector/gender composition. The first observation that can be made from the table is that few significant differences emerge.

With respect to the school scales and variation by location, the only significant difference is for resources in the local community, which is significantly lower in rural compared with urban and suburban schools. None of the 11 teacher scales vary significantly by school location.

With respect to school sector/gender composition, there were only two significant differences found for the school scales, i.e., for students' sense of belonging which was significantly higher in all girls' secondary schools compared with mixed secondary schools ($p < .01$), and for student influence at school which was lower in all boys' secondary schools compared to mixed secondary schools ($p < .05$ but $> .01$).

Five of the teacher scales varied significantly across school sector/gender composition. Relative to teachers in mixed secondary schools, teachers in all boys' secondary schools had significantly lower mean scores on student activities in the local community ($p < .01$), CCE activities during class ($p < .01$) and confidence in teaching activities ($p < .05$ but $> .01$). Teachers' perceptions of social problems at school were lower in all girls' secondary schools ($p < .05$ but $> .01$) and higher in VEC schools ($p < .05$ but $> .01$) relative to mixed secondary schools. Teachers' perceptions of student behaviour at school were lower in VEC schools ($p < .05$ but $> .01$) compared to mixed secondary schools.

5.12. School and Teacher Scales – Ireland and Comparison Countries

In this section, we compare the mean scores of the seven school scales with the averages of the nine comparison countries. In the case of the 11 teacher scales, comparisons are limited to four comparison countries due to the fact that five of the nine comparison countries did not meet the teacher participation rate requirements

[34] As described in Section 3.3 of Chapter 3, schools were split into three categories depending of the population of the surrounding community: rural (<3,000), town (3,000 up to 100,000) and city (>100,000).

(see Section 5.1). (Table 5.18 describes the content of the school scales and Table 5.19 describes the teacher scales.)

Figure 5.2 shows the average (school) scale scores for teachers' participation at school, parents' participation at school, and student influence at school. In Belgium (Fl.), Denmark and Ireland, the means on each of these scales are quite close together, while in others, including England, Finland, and Switzerland, there are large differences in the means. Low average scores on all three scales are found in Belgium (Fl.) and Switzerland stands out as having a particularly low score for student influence at school – over 15 points (1.5 standard deviations) lower than in Poland, which has the highest score on this scale.

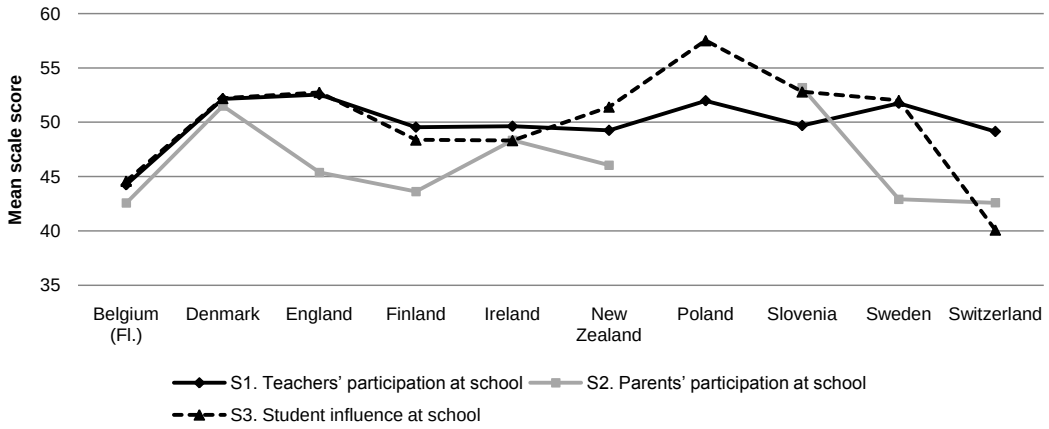

Figure 5.2: Mean scale scores for teacher participation, parent participation, and student influence (principals' reports), Ireland and comparison countries

In Poland, questions on parental participation were not administered.

Figure 5.3 shows the mean scores for students' and teachers' sense of belonging (as reported by school principals) for Ireland and the nine comparison countries (Table 5.18 describes these scales). Generally, the averages are close together, with the exceptions of Switzerland and Finland, where students' sense of belonging is markedly lower than teachers' sense of belonging, and also England, where the reverse is the case. The Irish averages on these two scales compare favourably with the comparison country averages and are very similar to those of Denmark.

Figure 5.4 shows the averages of the final two school scales – resources in the local community, and social tension in the local community. Generally, the mean scores on the social tension scale are lower than on the resources scale. The Irish averages on these two scales are around the middle of the comparison countries. New Zealand stands out as a country with particularly high levels of resources in the local community – seven score points (0.7 standard deviations) higher than Poland, the country with the lowest levels of resources. In Belgium (Fl.), Finland, Sweden and Switzerland, comparatively low levels of social tension in the local community were reported by school principals.

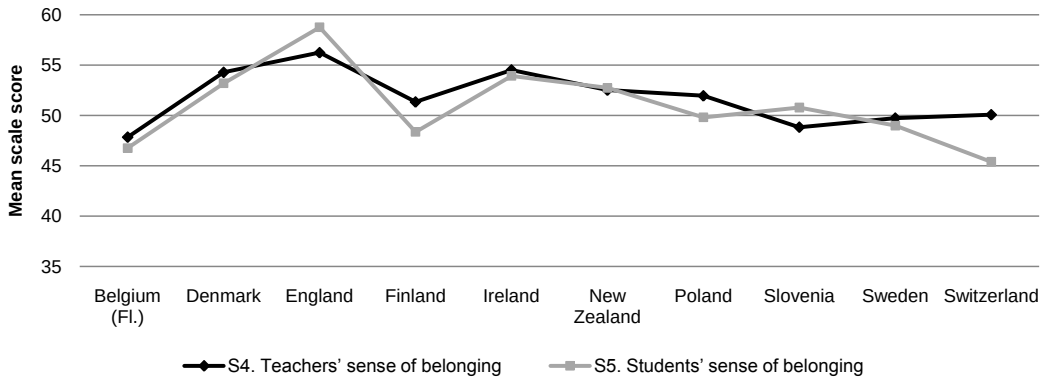

Figure 5.3: Mean scale scores for teachers' and students' sense of belonging (principals' reports), Ireland and comparison countries

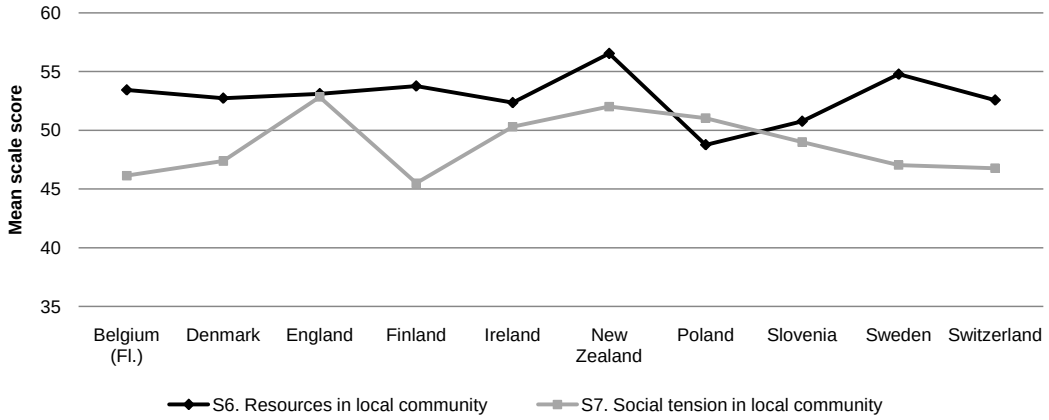

Figure 5.4: Mean scale scores for resources and social tension in the local community (principals' reports), Ireland and comparison countries

Figure 5.5 shows the first two teacher scales for Ireland and four comparison countries – confidence in teaching methods and use of assessment. The averages tend to vary within countries. For example, in Sweden, there is a comparatively high score for confidence in teaching, coupled with a comparatively low score for use of assessment, while in Poland, the reverse is the case. In Ireland, confidence in teaching methods and use of assessment are in the mid-range of the five countries shown in Figure 5.5.

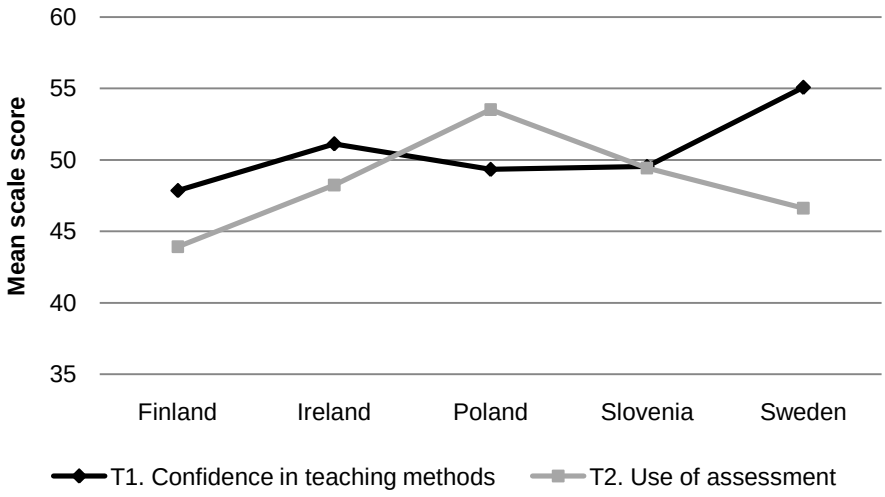

Figure 5.5: Mean scale scores for teachers' confidence in teaching methods and use of assessment (teachers' reports), Ireland and comparison countries

Figure 5.6 shows country averages for teachers' participation in community activities and in school governance for Ireland and the four comparison countries that have satisfactory teacher response rates. There is more variation in the mean scores on the teacher participation in school governance scale compared to the participation in community activities scale. Teachers' participation in school governance is lowest in Finland and Sweden and highest in Poland. The Irish means on both of these scales are again in the mid-range of the five countries.
Figure 5.7 shows the averages for teachers' reports of student participation in activities in the local community and in participation in class activities. Ireland has the lowest score on student participation in activities in the local community, while the Irish average for student participation in class activities is in the mid range of the five countries. The variation between countries on the participation in the community scale is larger compared to the participation in class scale.

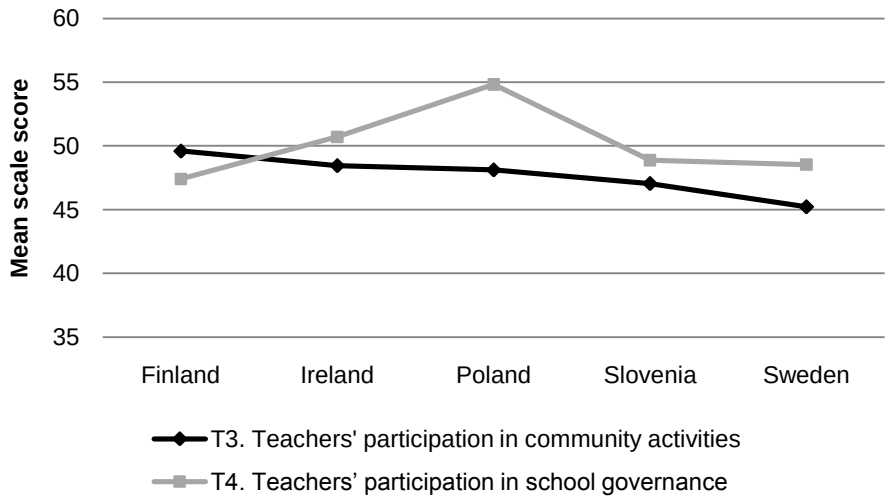

Figure 5.6: Mean scale scores for teachers' participation in community activities and school governance (teachers' reports), Ireland and comparison countries

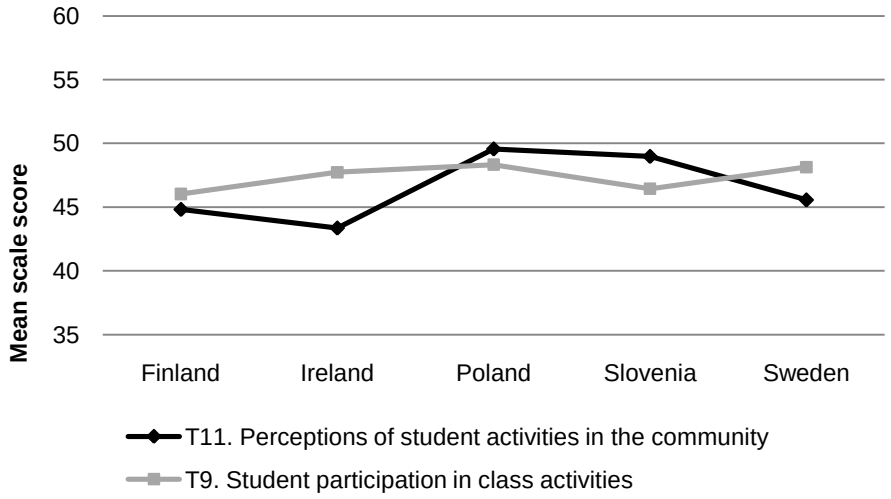

Figure 5.7: Mean scale scores for students' participation in community activities and participation in class (teachers' reports), Ireland and comparison countries

Figure 5.8 shows the mean scores for Ireland and the four comparison countries for the two CCE-specific teacher scales – CCE activities in class, and confidence in teaching CCE topics. There is considerable variation in the mean scores on both scales, particularly confidence in CCE teaching, which ranges from 45 (Finland) to 54 (Poland). The Irish mean for confidence in CCE teaching is similar to those of Poland and Sweden, while the Irish mean on CCE activities in class is lower than those of Poland and Slovenia but similar to that of Sweden, and ahead of Finland.

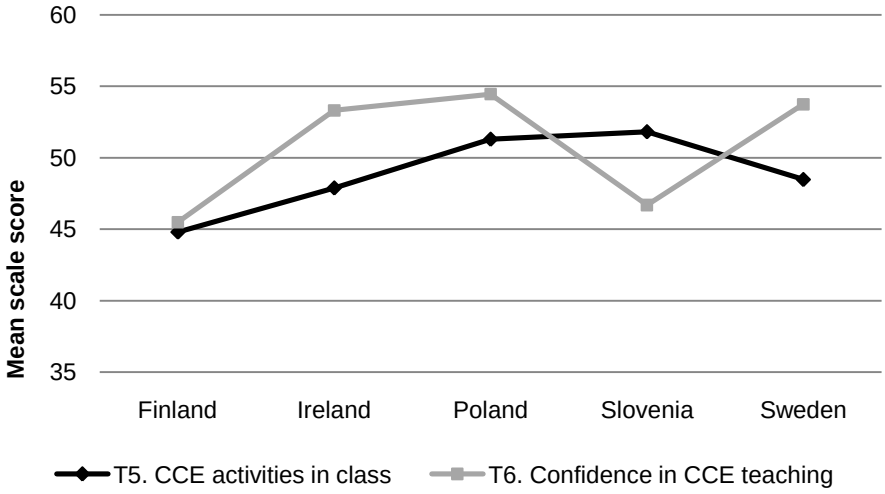

Figure 5.8: Mean scale scores for confidence in teaching CCE topics and CCE activities in class (teachers' reports), Ireland and comparison countries

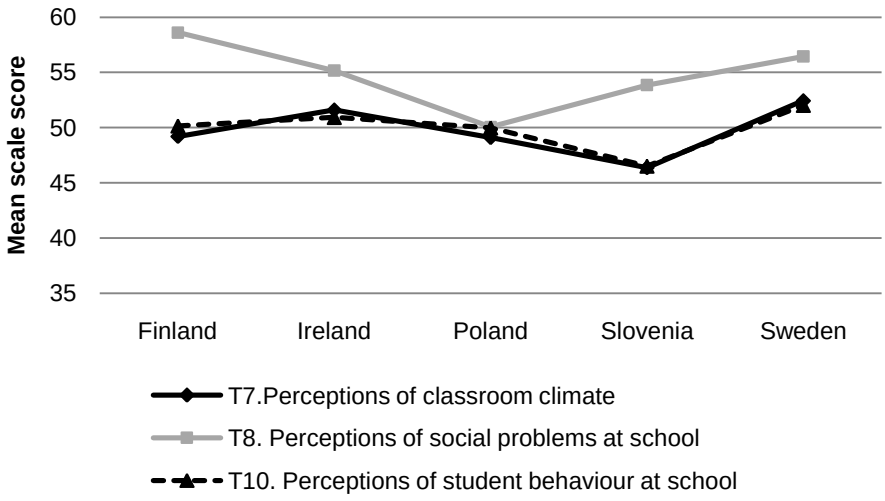

Figure 5.9: Mean scale scores for social problems at school, class climate, and student behaviour (teachers' reports), Ireland and comparison countries

Figure 5.9 shows the means of the remaining three of the 11 teacher scales for Ireland and the four comparison countries. The three scales relate to school climate – i.e. teachers' perceptions of classroom climate, student behaviour, and social problems at school. Generally, higher scores on the social problems at school scale are associated with lower scores on the other two scales (with the exception of Poland, where the averages on all three scales are similar). The average score on the social problems scale was highest in Finland and Sweden, while average scores on the class climate and student behaviour were lowest in Slovenia.

5.13. Relationships among the School and Teacher Scales

Table A5.4 (Appendix 5) shows, for the 18 scales examined in this chapter, the Pearson's correlation for each pair of scales for Ireland. In order to compute these, the teacher scales were aggregated (averaged) to the level of the school.

Four of these correlations are strong, exceeding |.55|. There are two strong positive correlations, i.e. between school principals' reports of teacher and student sense of belonging (.67), and between teachers' ratings of classroom climate and student behaviour (.64). There are also two strong negative correlations. The first is between teachers' ratings of student behaviour and the extent of social problems in the school (a negative scale) (-.83) and the second is between classroom climate and the extent of social problems in the school (-.58).

A further eight correlations are moderate to strong, i.e. between |.41| and |.55|. These are as follows:

- Teachers' participation in school governance and student behaviour (.47)
- Student participation in class activities and student behaviour (.46)
- Student sense of belonging and student behaviour (.43)
- Teacher participation in community activities and student participation in community activities (.42)

- Student participation in class activities and student participation in community activities (.42)
- Social tension in the local community and student behaviour (-.45)
- Social problems in the school and teacher participation in school governance (-.42)
- Social problems in the school and student sense of belonging (-.40).

5.14. Key Points Arising From Chapter 5

This chapter described characteristics of teachers and schools in Ireland and aspects of teaching and learning of CCE, drawing on both international and national data. The chapter also provided a comparison, on a number of teacher and school indices (scales), between the Irish and the international averages. Relationships between these scales and other relevant characteristics (e.g. school sector/gender composition, school SSP status) were also explored, as were the association between the scales and student achievement on the ICCS test. Key results are summarised in the following bullet points.

- The demographic characteristics of teachers and school principals are similar to the international averages. In Ireland, 63% of principals are female, while 33% of teachers are male. Principals reported an average age of 53 and teachers reported an average age of 40. Demographics of CSPE and non-CSPE teachers were similar, except that CSPE teachers were more likely to report having a qualification relating to citizenship or social justice / social policy than non-CSPE teachers.
- Teachers (in general) were asked what, in their view, were the three most important aims of CCE, given a list of 10 possible aims. Compared with the international averages, teachers in Ireland placed a higher importance on promoting student participation in the community (40% compared with 16%) and on promoting knowledge of social, political and civic institutions (42% compared with 33%). Lower emphasis was placed in Ireland than internationally on developing skills in conflict resolution (22% compared with 41%) and on promoting the capacity to defend one's own point of view (14% compared with 20%).
- Irish teachers' reports of actual participation with their second year students in a range of community-related activities were all significantly lower than the corresponding international averages. While 90% of teachers internationally had participated in one or more activities during the past school year, just 76% of teachers in Ireland had done so.
- In indicating which aspects of CCE would need improvement to enhance the teaching and learning of CCE (picking three out of a possible nine aspects), CCE (CSPE) teachers in Ireland emphasised training needs (both in methodologies and in content) to a greater extent than internationally.
- In Ireland only, CSPE teachers rated the seven key concepts underpinning the CSPE curriculum in terms of interest and enjoyment. The order of the rankings from most interesting/enjoyable to least interesting/enjoyable is: rights and responsibilities, human dignity, democracy, stewardship, interdependence, development, and law.
- There was significant variation in rates of attendance at CPD by CSPE teachers over the previous three years (this question was asked in Ireland only). While 98% of teachers had attended some CPD, 32% attended one

CPD event, 27% two events, and the remaining 39% attended three or more. The three most common types of cluster inservice attended were induction, organising/managing action projects and assessment, and use of active learning methodologies. The other more common forms of CPD were mentoring from another teacher of CSPE and attending school-based inservice.

- A majority of principals (58%) indicated that generally, the same CSPE teacher taught the class for the entire junior cycle, 40% indicated that while this was preferable it was not always possible due to other constraints, and 2% indicated that this was generally not the case. Again, this was a national question specific to Ireland. The assignment of teachers to CSPE may be driven by both enabling and constraining factors. For example, a majority of principals indicated that teachers were assigned on the basis of personal preference/interest in CSPE (75%), and a majority also indicated that teachers were assigned on the basis of timetabling constraints (71%).
- School principals' reports of teachers' and students' sense of belonging in school and of resources in the local community are significantly higher in Ireland than the international averages, while principals' reports of teacher participation at school and the perceived existence of social tension in the local community are no different to the international averages. Parents' participation at school and student influence in school (again as reported by principals) are significantly below the international averages.
- Associations between the school scales and school average socioeconomic composition, and between SSP and non-SSP schools, were generally consistent with one another. Correlations between these scales and achievement on the ICCS test were generally smaller than those between the scales and school socioeconomic composition. The strongest correlations with school SES were found for social tension (-.42), students' sense of belonging (.30), parents' participation (.30), teachers' sense of belonging (.26) and resources in the local community (.25). In the case of achievement, only two of the correlations exceeded .20 – social tension (-.24) and students' sense of belonging (.21).
- Mean scores on seven of the teacher questionnaire scales that are not targeted specifically at CCE teachers are significantly higher than the corresponding international averages. These are: perceptions of social problems in school, perceptions of classroom climate, and confidence in teaching methods. Four are significantly lower: student activities in the community, student participation in class activities, teachers' participation in community activities, and use of assessment. The remaining two do not differ from the international averages (participation in school governance and perceptions of student behaviour).
- Two of the three teacher scales asked specifically of CCE (CSPE) teachers differed significantly from the corresponding international averages. These were confidence in CCE teaching (significantly higher in Ireland) and participation in CCE activities in class (significantly lower). It is of note that confidence in CCE teaching was higher than internationally given the low rates of participation in CPD reported by some CSPE teachers.
- Associations with school socioeconomic composition and the teacher scales were significant in four cases: student behaviour (.55), social problems at school (-.40), classroom climate (.29) and participation in school governance (.23). Again, correlations between these scales and achievement tended to be weaker albeit significant in three instances: student behaviour (.31), social problems at school (-.25), and classroom climate (.22).

- The averages of the school and teacher scales varied very little across location (rural, town and city communities) and school sector/gender composition. Some differences, e.g. significantly lower levels of resources in the local community reported by school principals in rural schools are readily interpretable, while others, such as the somewhat broader use of a range of assessment modes students in community/comprehensive schools, are more difficult to interpret.

Chapter 6. Civic Knowledge and Interest in Political and Social Issues: A Synthesis

6.1. Overview

Previous chapters have examined ICCS results with respect to various school, teacher and student characteristics, but these were examined one at a time. This chapter attempts to provide a synthesis of previous analyses by examining two key student indicators (scales) – civic knowledge and interest in political and social issues – with respect to a number of background characteristics simultaneously.

The chief advantage of examining how multiple characteristics are related to an indicator at the same time is that it reduces the chances of misinterpreting a relationship between just one characteristic and the indicator. For example, the relationship between student behaviour and achievement is likely to be mediated by (related to) the socioeconomic context of the school. A second advantage of this approach is that it allows for the identification of characteristics that may be relevant for policy interventions. For example, if it were the case that students' participation in civic and citizenship community activities is significantly associated with their civic knowledge even after adjusting for gender and socioeconomic background, there are potential implications for promoting opportunities for such activities.

The particular characteristics that have been selected for inclusion in these analyses showed significant relationships with the two indicators examined in previous chapters of this report and/or are considered to be of policy interest.

Section 6.2 provides an overview of the statistical techniques used in the analyses in a non-technical manner designed to assist the reader in the interpretation of results. It also includes some limitations or caveats that should be considered in the interpretation of the results. Section 6.3 describes the particular variables (characteristics) selected for inclusion in the analyses and provides a broad description of the strategy used in conducting the analyses.

Section 6.4 presents the results of the analysis of civic knowledge, while Section 6.5 presents the results of the analysis of interest in political and social issues. Section 6.6 provides a summary of key findings, commentary on the similarities and differences in the results pertaining to these two measures, and some policy implications.

6.2. Background to the Analyses

The analyses presented in this chapter take one of two forms – multilevel modelling and linear regression. The former approach was used to analyse ICCS civic knowledge, while the latter was used to analyse interest in political and social issues. Both techniques are similar in that we model the outcome measure (scale) on a continuous variable while adjusting for multiple background characteristics. The reason for having two different approaches relates to the manner in which the two measures vary or differ across schools. It was noted in Chapter 2 that in Ireland, a substantial amount of variation in achievement – 35% – is attributable to schools/classes. In contrast, just 4.6% of variation in interest in political and social

issues is attributable to schools/classes so, consistent with other studies, linear regression is used to analyse interest in political and social issues (see for example Gilleece et al., 2009; OECD, 2009b).

Multilevel models (also referred to as hierarchical linear or mixed models) provide a flexible approach to the analysis of 'clustered' data such as students grouped within schools or classes. Multilevel models are explicitly designed to analyse clustered data structures and can incorporate individual-level predictors (e.g. student socioeconomic status), group-level predictors (e.g. school sector), within-group interactions (e.g. an interaction term for gender and socioeconomic status) and individual-by-group-level interactions (e.g. between student gender and school type) (see Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002; Raudenbush et al., 2004; Snijders & Bosker, 1999 for technical details on this technique).

Regression analysis is similar to multilevel modelling except that it does not adjust for the clustered nature of the sample. However, given that preliminary analyses indicated that no school-level variables are significantly related to interest in politics and social issues and that the between-school variation on this scale is less than 5%, regression analysis was deemed to be appropriate.

A common approach in model-building, whether multilevel or single-level regression (e.g. OECD, 2008; Smyth, 1999) is to compare models of socioeconomic and/or demographic variables with a subsequent model or models which include additional variables. Raudenbush and Bryk (2002) recommend, particularly for the purposes of exploratory models, dividing predictors into conceptually distinct subsets and running submodels, then taking the best predictors from each set and combining the models. In the model-building strategy employed in the present study, a combination of both strategies is employed.

Four caveats/limitations should be kept in mind in interpreting results:

1. The between-school variance associated with achievement in Ireland is related to the fact that intact classes were sampled; hence, between-class and between-school variance cannot be disentangled in the analysis of civic knowledge.
2. As with all cross-sectional surveys, we cannot infer causality from the findings, even if they are presented within a framework that models several characteristics simultaneously.
3. Indicators derived from questionnaires may not be specific or precise enough to capture the underlying construct in an optimal manner (especially if it is process-based; e.g. a measure of classroom climate).
4. Many attitudinal/engagement measures are prone to socially desirable responding, peer effects, and other student background effects, and these are not well understood (e.g. Assor & Connell, 1992; 2et al., 2005; OECD, 2008). It has been hypothesised that self-efficacy plays a complex mediating role in its influence on achievement (Pintrich & deGroot, 1990; Schunk, 1985). Some authors have suggested a circular or mediating relationship between engagement and achievement, and a call for a re-appraisal of the assumptions underpinning definitions and supposed meaning of engagement (Guthrie &

Wigfield, 2000; McMahon & Portelli, 2004; Sofroniou, Shiel, & Cosgrove, 2002; Williams & Williams, 2010).

6.3. Variables and Respondents

A review of the available data and the results of analyses presented earlier in this report suggested a list of candidate variables, selected on the basis of policy relevance and where possible, their direct relevance to the two measures considered (Tables 6.1 and 6.2). Variables are organised into seven conceptual blocks. At the student level these are (a) demographic and socioeconomic variables, (b) home climate variables, (c) self-concept/self-efficacy, (d) engagement in school and (e) engagement in homework and reading. At the school level these are (f) structural and socioeconomic features and (g) features of school climate.

Variables with low rates of missing data were preferred over those with higher levels of missing data since the software packages used, HLM 6.0® and SPSS 15.0®, employ listwise deletion for missing cases. However, when it was felt important to include a variable for policy or other reasons, cases were retained by recoding the original variable's missing values to the mean (in the case of continuous variables) or to zero (in the case of binary indicator variables), along with a dummy indicator with values 0 = non-missing and 1 = missing. Missing indicators were included for three variables at the student level and two at the school level (Tables 6.1 and 6.2). Readers are advised to pay less attention to the missing indicators since their interpretation is not clearcut in terms of policy etc.

Initially, each variable was tested separately. Non-significant variables were removed and each block of remaining variables was then evaluated simultaneously. Finally, all blocks were entered simultaneously, and non-significant variables removed until all variables retained significance at the .05 level.

Each continuous variable is grand centred on its mean and standardised (transformed) to have a mean of 0 and standard deviation of 1. This facilitates interpretation since the intercept corresponds to the expected change in the civic knowledge score of a student with an average score on each continuous variable, and the parameter estimate of each continuous variable corresponds to the expected score increase associated with a one standard deviation increase in the explanatory variable. Time spent on reading and homework are exceptions: their parameter estimates correspond to the expected change in civic knowledge scores for every extra hour of reading or homework.

The multilevel models are weighted by the school and student sampling weights at the school and student levels, respectively (cf. Rabe-Hesketh & Skrondal, 2006); in the regression analyses of interest in political and social issues, a combined student weight that incorporates school and student components was applied.

Explained variance was computed on the basis of the residual variance of the final or comparison model compared with the total variance of the unconditional model. It is possible to describe total variation, as well as partitioning it into between- and within-school components in the case of the model of civic knowledge In the case of interest in political and social issues, overall variation only is described.

Table 6.1: Student-level variables considered in the models of civic knowledge and interest in political and social issues

Variable name	Values	Block	Type
Gender	0=male, 1=female	A	Categorical
Age in years	Mean=14.3; SD=0.43	A	Continuous
Migrant/language status*	Two dummy variables - migrant speaks English/Irish; migrant speaks another language, with native as the reference category	A	Categorical
Family structure*	Two dummy variables - single parent family; mixed family, with nuclear family as the reference category	A	Categorical
Number of siblings	Two dummy variables - none; four or more, with one, two or three as the reference category	A	Categorical
Socioeconomic status	Combined parental education and occupation; Mean = 0.0; SD=1.00	A	Continuous
Parental interest in social and political issues*	0=not interested, 1=quite or very interested	B	Categorical
Books in the home	Two dummy variables - less than 25 books and more than 200 books, with 26-200 books as the reference group	B	Categorical
Frequency of discussion of political and social issues with parents	Two dummy variables - never and weekly, with monthly as the reference group	B	Categorical
Internal political efficacy**	Mean=0.00; SD=1.00	C	Continuous
Civic participation at school**	Mean=0.00; SD=1.00	D	Continuous
Student perceptions of influence in decision-making in school**	Mean=0.00; SD=1.00	D	Continuous
Student perceptions of the value of participation in school**	Mean=0.00; SD=1.00	D	Continuous
Student perceptions of openness in classroom discussion**	Mean=0.00; SD=1.00	D	Continuous
Time spent on homework in a typical day (hours)	Mean=1.11; SD=0.66	E	Continuous
Time spent on leisure reading in a typical day (hours)	Mean=0.41; SD=0.61	E	Continuous

*Variable has a missing indicator to preserve more cases in the dataset.

**Variable has been re-scaled for the Irish sample.

Table 6.2: School-level variables considered in the model of civic knowledge

Variable name	Values	Block	Type
School average socioeconomic composition	School average of combined parental education and occupation; Mean = 0.0; SD=1.00	F	Continuous
Participation in the School Support Programme (SSP) under DEIS	0=not in SSP, 1=in SSP	F	Categorical
School sector/gender composition	Four dummies - community/comprehensive, VEC, girls' secondary, boys' secondary, with mixed secondary as the reference group	F	Categorical
School location	Two dummies - rural community (<3,000 people) and large town or city (>100,000) with town as the reference group	F	Categorical
School size	Two dummies - small (<40 second years) and large (more than 81 second years) with medium (41-80 second years) as the reference group	F	Categorical
Principals' perceptions of parental participation in school**	Mean=0.00; SD=1.00	G	Continuous
Principals' perceptions of resources in the local community**	Mean=0.00; SD=1.00	G	Continuous
Principals' perceptions of social tension in the local community**	Mean=0.00; SD=1.00	G	Continuous
Students' sense of belonging**	Mean=0.00; SD=1.00	G	Continuous
Teachers' perceptions of student behaviour**	Mean=0.00; SD=1.00	G	Continuous
Teachers' participation of school governance**	Mean=0.00; SD=1.00	G	Continuous
Missing school questionnaire*	0=has school questionnaire, 1=does not have school questionnaire	N/A	Categorical
Missing teacher questionnaire*	0=has teacher questionnaire, 1=does not have teacher questionnaire	N/A	Categorical

*Variable has a missing indicator to preserve more cases in the dataset.

**Variable has been re-scaled for the Irish sample.

Before finalising the models for both the multilevel and regression analyses, the following tests (taking a p-value of $\leq .05$ as the criterion) were conducted:

- Tests for significant interactions between student gender (if still in the model) and all other variables at the student level through the addition of each interaction term to the model and an evaluation of improvement of model fit.
- Tests of significance of non-linear relationships between each continuous variable and the outcome variable through the addition of its squared term and evaluation of improvement of model fit.

And, in the case of the multilevel model only:

- Tests for significance of cross-level interactions between each school- and student-level variable.
- Tests for significance of random slopes for each student-level variable (note that the final model was established on the basis of the model with fixed slopes).

After listwise deletion of cases missing one or more of the school/student variables, a total of 2838 students in 144 schools remained. This represents 84.6% of the original sample of 3355 students in 144 participating schools. The reduced dataset is evenly balanced by gender (with 49.5% female).

6.4. Model of Achievement on the ICCS Test of Civic Knowledge

Table 6.3 presents the final model of civic knowledge in Ireland[35]. Readers interested in the parameter estimates and significance tests for variables added separately to the null (empty) model are referred to Tables A6.1 and A6.2 (Appendix 6). These tables include the variables which were dropped from the final model; not all of these are referred to in the main body of this chapter. Box 6.1 is intended to serve as a guide to the interpretation of the model presented in Table 6.3.

Box 6.1: Interpreting the multilevel model of civic knowledge

- A variable which is included in the final model is statistically significantly associated with civic knowledge achievement after controlling for the other variables in the model.
- The intercept (552 points) corresponds to the expected civic knowledge score of a native student with an average socioeconomic background; from a home with between 26 and 200 books; who discusses political and social issues on a monthly basis with his/her parents; who has average scores on the scales measuring sense of internal political efficacy, perception of student influence on decision-making at school, perception of the value of participation at school and perception of openness in classroom discussion; who spends about 25 minutes reading for fun on a normal school day; and who attends a school where school socioeconomic composition is average.
- Continuous predictor variables (except hours spent on leisure reading) have been standardised to have a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one. Therefore, the parameter estimate associated with a continuous variable corresponds to the change in civic knowledge associated with a one standard deviation increase in the predictor variable.
- For categorical variables, the parameter estimate (PE) corresponds to the difference in civic knowledge scores between the two groups being compared; e.g. in the model presented in Table 6.3, a difference of 43 points is found between native students and migrant students who speak languages other than English or Irish at home.
- A 95% confidence interval can be constructed around the parameter estimate by taking the parameter estimate ± (1.96 * standard error). For 95% of students, the change in civic knowledge score associated with the predictor will lie in this range. The 95% confidence interval is useful in determining the significance of individual dummy variables in a variable set which is significant overall.
- The inclusion in the model of a significant curvilinear term indicates that the association between the predictor variable and civic achievement is not linear. The interpretation of the curvilinear term depends on whether the parameter estimate is positive or negative but commonly, the parameter estimate for the predictor variable is positive while the parameter estimate for the curvilinear term is negative. In this case, the dependent variable (e.g. civic knowledge) increases as the predictor variable (e.g. hours spent reading for fun) increases but at higher levels of the predictor variable, the association between the predictor and the dependent variable is weaker than at lower levels.

[35]The slopes of student-level variables were not allowed to vary in establishing the final model as this causes difficulties in estimating explained variances. The random-slope model, i.e. the model where student-level effects *are* allowed to vary across schools, is discussed later in this chapter, since each student variable was assessed for significant slope variation.

The only school-level variable to remain significant in the model of civic knowledge is school average socioeconomic status (Table 6.3). The parameter estimate (18.9) associated with school average socioeconomic status indicates that a one standard deviation increase in school average socioeconomic composition corresponds to an increase of about 19 points (or about one-fifth of a standard deviation) in civic knowledge. School average socioeconomic status also interacts with students' sense of internal political efficacy; this is discussed below.

Table 6.3. Final multilevel model of civic knowledge – Ireland

Variable	PE	SE	Test stat	df	p
Intercept	551.58	5.019			
School-level					
School average socioeconomic status	18.85	3.696			
Student-level					
Migrant/language status					
Migrant, speaks English or Irish – native	-12.20	6.742			
Migrant, speaks other language – native	-43.29	10.372	Ddiff=82.929	3	<.001
Missing migrant/language status	-51.02	12.768			
Socioeconomic status: zscore	9.71	2.310	t=5.526	2819	<.001
Books at home					
0 to 25 books – 26 to 200 books	-11.24	4.557	Ddiff=36.219	2	<.001
201 or more books – 26 to 200 books	14.81	4.156			
Frequency of discussing political or social issues with parents					
Never – monthly	-16.41	5.096	Ddiff=31.577	2	<.001
Weekly or daily – monthly	-0.02	4.606			
Sense of internal political efficacy: zscore	9.47	1.979			
Perception of student influence on decision-making at school: zscore	-25.39	1.712			
Perception of student influence on decision-making at school, squared	-4.76	1.463	t=-4.105	2819	<.001
Perception of the value of participation at school: zscore	10.65	2.116	t=6.646	2819	<.001
Perception of openness in classroom discussion: zscore	12.53	1.746			
Perception of openness in classroom discussion, squared	-2.47	1.085	t=-2.439	2819	.015
Hours spent reading for fun on a normal school day	33.79	10.567			
Hours spent reading for fun on a normal school day, squared	-7.27	4.651	t=-2.182	2819	.029
Cross-level interactions					
School socioeconomic status X sense of internal political efficacy	4.80	1.606	t=3.335	2819	.001

Significance levels are not provided for variables that have significant interactions or curvilinearity.

At student level, at least one variable from each of the blocks examined (demographic/socioeconomic, home climate, self-concept (efficacy), student engagement in school, and reading and homework activities) remains significant in the final model (Table 6.3). In the demographic block, both migrant/language status and student socioeconomic status are significantly associated with civic knowledge, although interestingly, student gender is not. Follow-up analyses indicate that the unadjusted gender difference in achievement of 22 points observed in Chapter 2 (Section 2.5) is related to differences in rates of leisure reading by boys and girls. Looking firstly at migrant/language status, it can be seen that while this variable[36] is significant overall (i.e. the deviance difference is significant), the 95% confidence interval for the difference between native students and migrants who speak English or Irish indicates that there is no significant difference between the two groups. On the other hand, the difference between native students and migrants who speak languages other than English or Irish at home is statistically significant and amounts to about two-fifths of a standard deviation in favour of native students. The inclusion of a missing indicator in the model was designed to preserve as many cases as possible and while students who were missing information for migrant/language status (about 2% of the dataset) scored significantly lower than students who weren't, this is of unquantifiable policy relevance.

Student socioeconomic status is positively associated with achievement: a one standard deviation increase in student socioeconomic status is associated with a 10-point (one-tenth of a standard deviation) increase in civic knowledge scores (Table 6.3).

The home climate experienced by students is also significantly associated with civic achievement. Students with few books at home (between zero and 25) scored on average one-tenth of a standard deviation lower than students with between 26 and 200 books at home (Table 6.3). Conversely, students with over 200 books at home achieved an average score about 15 points (approximately one-seventh of a standard deviation) higher than students with 26 to 200 books at home.

Students who reported never discussing political or social issues with their parents have a predicted civic knowledge score that is one-sixth of a standard deviation lower than students who reported engaging in such discussions on a monthly basis (Table 6.3). No substantive difference was found between students who reported discussing political or social issues with their parents on a weekly or daily basis and those who discussed these issues monthly.

Although in bivariate analyses (i.e., one variable or characteristic at a time; Chapter 3), a significant association was found between civic knowledge and parental interest in politics, this association is no longer significant once the other home climate variables in the model are considered.

Students with higher levels of internal political efficacy achieved higher civic knowledge scores: a one standard deviation increase on the internal political efficacy scale is associated with almost one-tenth of a standard deviation increase on the civic knowledge scale (Table 6.3).

[36] See Chapter 3, Section 3.2, for a description of native/migrant classification.

Students' scores on three scales pertaining to their participation at school are significantly associated with civic achievement (Table 6.3). The first, students' perceptions of their influence on decisions at school, is negatively associated with achievement. A significant curvilinear effect was found for this variable. Figure 6.1 illustrates the association between students' perceptions of their influence on decisions at school and civic knowledge scores. It should be noted that the estimates in Figures 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4 are after adjusting for the other variables in the model. Students who scored one standard deviation below the mean on the scale measuring perceptions of influence on decisions at school achieved average civic knowledge scores which were about 20 points (two-fifths of a standard deviation) higher than students who scored at the mean on the perceptions of influence scale, all other things being equal. Conversely, students who scored one standard deviation above the mean on the perceptions of influence scale achieved average civic knowledge scores which were about 30 points (three-tenths of a standard deviation) lower than students who scored at the mean on the perceptions of influence scale. Similar findings of a negative association between achievement and students' perceptions of influence at school have been noted elsewhere (see e.g. Schulz et al, 2010b; Almgren, 2006).

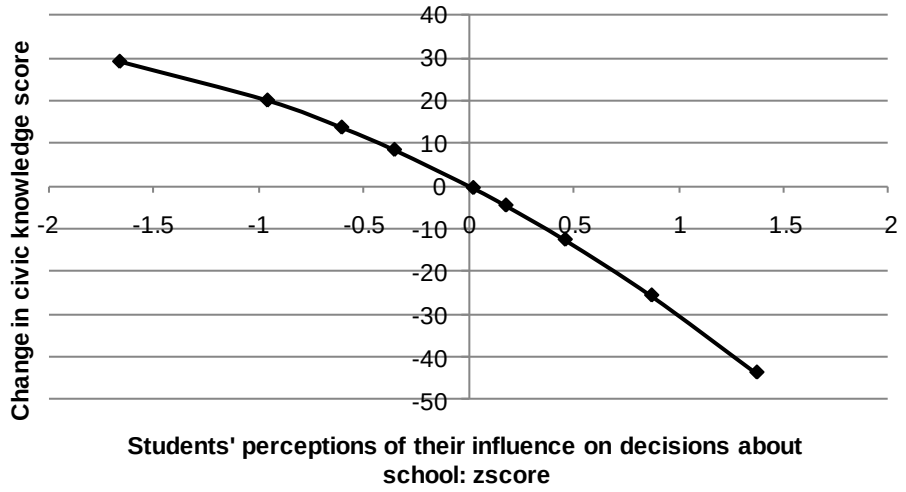

Figure 6.1. Association between students' perceptions of influence on decisions about school and civic knowledge

Students' perceptions of the value of participation at school and their perceptions of the openness of classroom discussions are both positively associated with civic achievement. Looking firstly at the perceptions of openness in classroom discussions scale, it can be seen that a significant curvilinear term is also associated with this variable (Table 6.3). As the parameter estimate for the curvilinear term is negative, the association between achievement and perception of openness is not as strong at higher values on the perceptions of openness scale; e.g. students with a mean score on the perceptions of openness scale are predicted to have an average civic knowledge score which was about 15 points higher than students whose score on the perceptions of openness scale was one standard deviation below the mean (Figure 6.2). In contrast, students who scored one standard deviation above the mean on the openness scale are estimated to have an average civic knowledge score which

was a little over 10 points higher than that of students who scored at the mean on the openness scale.

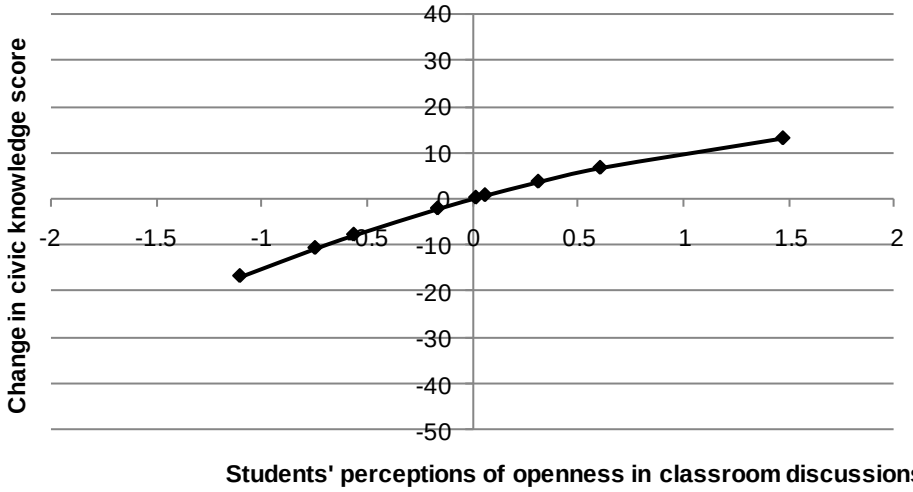

Figure 6.2. Association between civic knowledge and students' perceptions of openness in classroom discussions

Students who attributed higher levels of importance to the value of participation at school achieved higher average civic knowledge scores than those who attributed lower levels of importance to the value of participation at school (Table 6.3). A one standard deviation increase on the scale measuring students' perceptions of the value of participation at school was associated with about one-tenth of a standard deviation increase in civic knowledge scores.

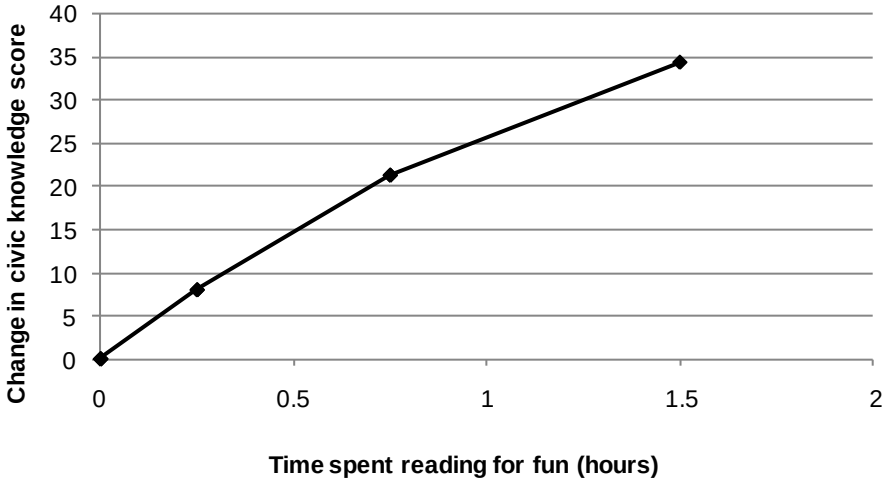

Figure 6.3. Association between civic knowledge and time spent reading for fun

Looking at students' activities outside of school, a significant positive association was found between civic knowledge and the time students reported reading in their spare time (Table 6.3). Time spent on homework is not significantly associated with achievement once the other variables in the model are considered. Figure 6.3 illustrates the association between hours spent reading for fun and civic

achievement. The relationship is not linear. Students who reported spending half an hour reading for fun on a normal school day are estimated to have a civic knowledge score about 15 points higher than those of students who indicated that they spend no time reading for fun. Students who reported spending an hour a day on leisure reading have a predicted score about 25 points (one-quarter of a standard deviation) higher than students who reported that they spend no time reading for fun.

A significant cross-level interaction was found between school socioeconomic status and students' sense of internal political efficacy. As noted above, students with higher levels of internal political efficacy achieved higher civic knowledge scores than students with lower levels of internal political efficacy. However, the effect was greatest for students in schools with a high average socioeconomic score (in Figure 6.4, schools at the 75th percentile on the school average socioeconomic status measure are classified as 'high SES') where a difference of about 12 points was found between the average civic knowledge score of students with high and low levels of internal political efficacy. In schools where the average SES was low (at the 25th percentile), the difference in average civic knowledge score between students with high and low levels of internal political efficacy was just 6 points or half of what it was in high SES schools.

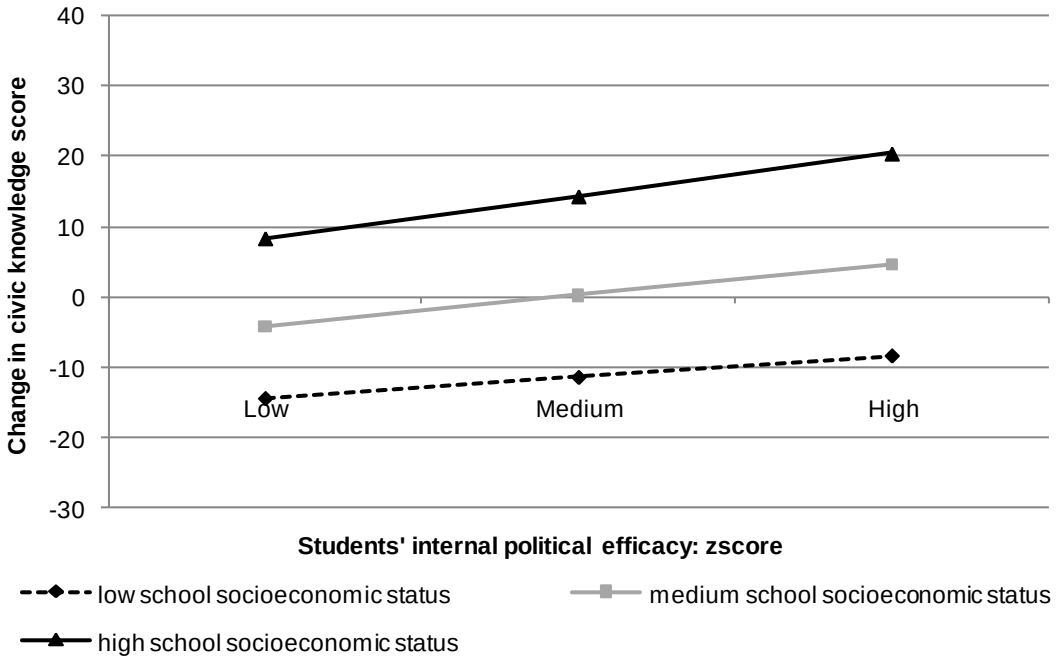

Figure 6.4. Cross-level interaction: School socioeconomic status and change in civic knowledge

As noted in the introduction to this section, the model presented in Table 6.3 did not consider whether or not the effects of student-level variables varied across schools. The inclusion of random slopes in the model allows this possibility to be examined. The effects of two student-level variables (migrant/language status and discussion of political and social issues with parents) were found to vary significantly across schools. Across 95% of schools, the difference between native

students and migrants who spoke languages other than English or Irish was found to range between 14 and 72 points in favour of native students. The association between civic achievement and discussion of political and social issues with parents was also found to vary across schools. The decrease in civic achievement associated with never discussing political or social issues with parents compared to discussing these issues at least monthly varied from 5 points to 28 points in favour of students who discussed these issues with their parents at least monthly.

Table 6.4: Percentage of variance in civic knowledge explained by combinations of variable blocks

	% Variance explained		
	Between schools	Within schools	Total
Blocks added one by one to null model			
A. Student demographics[1]	30.1	7.4	15.0
B. Home climate[2]	29.3	10.2	16.5
C. Self-beliefs[3]	9.8	7.2	8.1
D. Student engagement at school[4]	42.7	19.3	27.1
E. Activities outside school[5]	16.1	7.1	10.1
F. School-level socioeconomic status	53.9	0.2	18.1
G. School climate	--	--	--
A + F together	55.9	7.5	23.6
Over and above variance explained by school SES and student demographics, variance explained by block…			
B	7.5	7.8	7.8
C	1.2	5.9	5.0
D	32.0	17.9	20.6
E	5.2	6.5	6.2
Blocks together			
A + B + D + E + F	71.8	31.2	44.7
A + B + C + D + E + F	71.2	32.6	45.5

[1]Migrant/language status, socioeconomic status; [2]Books at home, frequency of discussing political and social issues with parents; [3]Sense of internal political efficacy; [4]Perception of student influence on decision-making at school and squared term, perception of the value of participation at school, perception of openness in classroom discussion and squared term; [5]Hours spent reading for fun on a normal school day and squared term

Estimates were computed without the interaction term between school average SES and internal political efficacy and also without allowing for random slopes.

Of the variance in civic achievement, about 33% is between schools and the remainder (67%) is between students within schools. This is not identical to the figure of 35% between schools reported in Chapter 2 (Section 2.3), and is due to the fact that the estimate in Chapter 2 was made on the basis of all students, while the 33% reported here is based on a dataset that excluded 15.4% of students due to missing data.

The model presented in Table 6.3 explains 46% of the total variance in civic achievement (between and within schools). A greater proportion of between-school than within-school variance is explained by the model, since 71% of between-school variance is explained, compared to 33% of within-school variance. Table 6.4 shows the variance explained by various combinations of blocks of variables. Note that

these were computed omitting the interaction term between school socioeconomic composition and internal political efficacy.

The table indicates that 18% of all variation is due to school average socioeconomic status, and that student demographics account for 15% of all variation. When these two blocks are considered together, they explain 24% of the total variation. Considered on its own, home climate explains 17% of the total variation in achievement, and explains 8% of variation in achievement over and above school socioeconomic composition and student demographics. Similarly, student self-beliefs on their own explain 8% of the total variation in achievement, and 5% over and above school socioeconomic composition and student demographics. The largest portion of additional explained variance arises from the student engagement at school block – 27% considered on its own and 21% over and above school socioeconomic composition and student demographics. Activities outside school explain 10% of variation in achievement considered on its own and 6% over and above school socioeconomic composition and student demographics. Finally, given the recursive (circular) nature of the relationship between indicators of self-efficacy and achievement, the variance explained by the model with and without block C is compared in the lower portion of Table 6.4. In fact, the addition of this variable adds only a small amount of explained variance – just under 1%.

6.5. Model of Interest in Politics

Table 6.5 presents the final model of interest in politics. Parameter estimates and significance tests for variables added separately to the null model are shown in Table A6.3 (Appendix 6). Box 6.2 is provides some information to guide interpretation of the results shown in Table 6.5.

At least one variable from each of the blocks examined (demographic/socioeconomic, home climate, self-beliefs, student engagement in school, and reading and homework activities) remains significant in the final model. As noted previously, no school-level variables are significant. Table 6.5 indicates that females have higher interest in politics than males (by just under one-tenth of a standard deviation) after adjusting for the other variables in the model. However, gender interacts with internal political efficacy, which is discussed further below. The only home climate variable to remain is frequency of discussing political or social issues with parents, and the expected difference between students who never discuss these issues compared to those discussing these issues weekly or daily is close to half of a standard deviation (0.45 scale points), although it should be noted that the relationship between interest and discussion might well be a circular one.

Three of the 'student engagement in school' variables remain significant, though their effects tend to be small (Table 6.5). For example, there is only a 0.05 standard deviation increase in interest in politics associated with a one standard deviation increase both in civic participation and perception of openness in classroom discussion; the effects associated with perception of influence on decision-making (0.11 standard deviations) are somewhat stronger.

The model also indicates that for every additional hour spent on homework, students' interest in politics score is expected to increase by 0.08 standard deviations

(Table 6.5). The self-belief variable, internal political efficacy, shows a strong association with interest in politics – a 0.52 standard deviation increase is expected in the interest in politics score with a one standard deviation increase in the efficacy score. Again, however, the interaction with gender should be considered.

Box 6.2: Interpreting the regression model of interest in politics

- A variable included in the final model is statistically significantly associated with interest in politics after taking the other variables in the model into account.
- The intercept (0) corresponds to the expected interest in politics score of a male student who discusses political issues with his parents monthly, with average internal political efficacy, average civic participation in school, average perception of student influence in decision-making, average perception of openness in classroom discussion, and who spends no time on homework on a typical school day.
- Continuous variables (with the exception of hours spent on homework) have a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one. Therefore, the parameter estimate (PE) associated with these variables corresponds to the change in interest in politics associated with a one standard deviation increase in the predictor variable. In the case of hours spent on homework, the parameter estimate corresponds to the expected change in interest in politics associated with a one-hour increase in homework.
- For categorical variables, the parameter estimate is the difference in interest in politics between the two groups being compared. For example, students who report never discussing political or social issues with their parents have an expected interest in politics score that is 0.33 of a standard deviation below students that discuss political or social issues with their parents once a month.
- A 95% confidence interval can be constructed around the parameter estimate by taking the parameter estimate ± (1.96 * standard error). This interval contains the expected change in interest in politics for 95% of students.
- The model in Table 6.5 includes an interaction between gender and internal political efficacy. This is explored further in Figure 6.5.

Table 6.5: Final regression model of interest in politics – Ireland

Variable	PE	SE	Test stat	df	p
Intercept	0.000	0.045			
Gender (female – male)	0.090	0.032			
Frequency of discussing political or social issues with parents					
Never – monthly	-0.330	0.033	F=52.916	2, 2817	<.001
Weekly or daily – monthly	0.120	0.031			
Sense of internal political efficacy: zscore	0.520	0.023			
Civic participation at school: zscore	0.050	0.018	t=2.910	73	.005
Perception of student influence on decision-making at school: zscore	0.110	0.019	t=5.788	73	<.001
Perception of openness in classroom discussion: zscore	0.050	0.018	t=2.994	73	.004
Hours spent on homework on a normal school day	0.080	0.026	t=3.008	73	.004
Gender X sense of internal political efficacy	-0.070	0.030	t=-2.301	73	.024

Significance levels are not provided for variables that have significant interactions.

It is also interesting to note that although bivariate analysis (Section 3.4, Chapter 3) found that native students had a significantly lower average score on the interest in political and social issues scale than migrant students, this difference is no longer significant in multivariate analysis.

Figure 6.5 shows the expected interest in politics scores of males and females for low, medium and high levels of internal political efficacy, based on the parameter estimates shown in Table 6.5. The graph indicates that, overall, the gender difference associated with the expected change in the interest in politics score is not noticeable for students with average and high levels of internal political efficacy; however the expected score change in interest in politics for males with low efficacy (-0.52) is about one-sixth of a standard deviation lower than for females with similar (low) levels of political efficacy (-0.38).

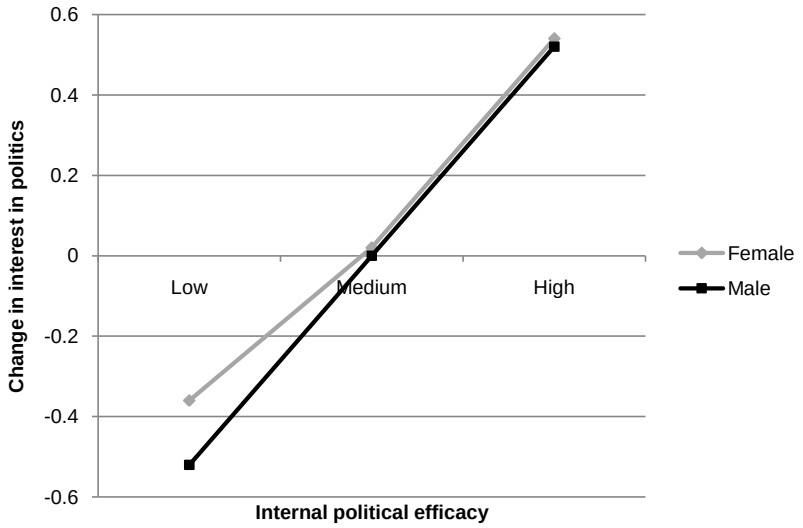

Figure 6.5: Interaction between gender and internal political efficacy

Table 6.6 shows the variance explained by various combinations of blocks of variables. Overall, the model in Table 6.5 explains 44.5% of the variance, and, when internal political efficacy is omitted from the final model, this reduces to 26.2%. Considered as separate blocks, self-beliefs (i.e. internal political efficacy) explain the largest portion of variance in interest in politics (37.3%), followed by home climate (i.e. frequency of discussing political and social issues with parents; 20.2%), and student engagement at school (i.e. civic participation, perception of student influence, and openness of classroom discussion; 11.0%). Student engagement in activities outside school (time spent on homework) and demographics (gender) explain smaller portions of the variation in interest in politics (4.7% and 0.4%, respectively). There is little if any covariation between demographics (gender) and the other variables in the model, as indicated by comparing the percentages of variance explained by blocks B to E in the first and second portions of the table. Note that the estimates in Table 6.6 are made on the basis of the final model without the interaction term for gender and internal political efficacy.

Table 6.6: Percentage of variance in interest in politics explained by combinations of variable blocks

Blocks added one by one to null model	% Variance explained
A. Student demographics[1]	0.4
B. Home climate[2]	20.2
C. Self-beliefs[3]	37.3
D. Student engagement at school[4]	11.0
E. Activities outside school[5]	4.7
Over and above variance explained by student demographics, variance explained by block…	
B	20.2
C	37.3
D	11.0
E	4.7
Blocks together	
A + B + D + E	26.2
A + B + C + D + E	44.5

[1]Gender; [2]Fequency of discussing political and social issues with parents; [3]Sense of internal political efficacy; [4]Civic participation at school, perception of student influence on decision-making at school, perception of openness in classroom discussion; [5]Hours spent on homework on a normal school day

The gender interaction term has been removed from the model in order to compute explained variance.

6.6. Key Points and Conclusions Arising From Chapter 6

Given the very low between-school variance in interest in politics, this measure was analysed using single-level regression, while civic knowledge was found to vary significantly across schools (see Chapter 2, Section 2.3), so it was modelled using multilevel regression, which takes account of the clustered nature of the data.

The two models explain similar portions of variance in the two measures considered (45.5% in the case of civic knowledge, and 44.5% in the case of interest in politics). However, the variables in the models differ to one another.

Perhaps the most striking difference is the significant influence of demographic and socioeconomic variables in the model of civic knowledge compared to the model of interest in politics. In the former model, school and student socioeconomic status, books at home, frequency of discussing political and social issues with parents, and migrant/language status were all significant, while in the model for interest in politics, only gender and frequency of discussing political and social issues with parents were significant.

It is of interest that gender does not remain in the model of civic knowledge and it was noted that the unadjusted gender difference (22 points in favour of females; see Chapter 2, Section 2.5) appears to be accounted for by gender differences in frequency of engagement in leisure reading. In contrast, the final model of interest in politics retains gender, with females having an expected score about a tenth of a standard deviation higher than males (the unadjusted gender difference is 0.13 standard deviations; Table A6.3).

Both models show significant effects for internal political efficacy, and the effect of this variable is stronger in the model of interest in politics than for civic knowledge. Over and above the other variables in the model, efficacy explains 17% of variance in interest in politics, while this figure is just 0.8% in the model of civic knowledge.

Together, the models indicate that both knowledge and interest are associated with characteristics relating to the students' experiences in school, i.e., in both models, characteristics relating to perceived influence of decision-making and openness in classroom discussion and participation showed significant effects. However, while perceived influence on decision-making was positively associated with interest in politics, this association was negative in the case of civic knowledge. Schulz et al. (2010b) have noted that this negative association is evident in several other countries participating in ICCS. In still other countries, no association was found. They suggest that this negative association merits further investigation.

In the analysis of civic knowledge, one significant interaction was found, whereby the achievement differences of students in high-SES schools varied more by internal political efficacy than in medium- or low-SES schools (i.e. the relationship between knowledge and efficacy is stronger in high-SES schools).

An interaction was also found in the analysis of interest in politics, i.e. between gender and internal political efficacy. The interaction suggests that boys with low internal political efficacy have relatively lower interest in politics scores than girls with similarly low levels; the gender differences are not notable at medium and high levels of efficacy.

The results presented in this chapter, and previous research, indicate that there would be merit in further considering the following issues. Some are generic while others are specific to civic and citizenship education.

- Specifically relating to civic and citizenship education, it is of note that students' perceptions of school processes relating to participation and an open class climate contribute both to civic knowledge and to interest in politics. In the case of knowledge, this is so over and above socioeconomic and demographic characteristics. There would be merit in examining this further, perhaps by identifying characteristics of schools that are successful in their efforts to promote a participatory and open school climate, and also examining whether these characteristics are related to achievement in other subject areas.
- The role of parents was found to be important. The frequency with which students reported discussing political or social issues with their parents was significantly associated with civic knowledge, and even more so, interest in politics. However, the association between interest and discussion might be circular (two-way) in nature. Nonetheless, this points to intergenerational effects in the transmission of civic and citizenship knowledge and attitudes. It would be of interest to examine whether other attitudinal measures (e.g. expected electoral participation) are also associated with parental behaviours or attitudes.
- The socioeconomic gap (both at school and student level) is large and significant in achievement in civic knowledge, as in many other studies of achievement, and confirms and underlines the continued need for efforts to

target and ameliorate educational disparities arising from socioeconomic disadvantage at both school and student levels.

- The finding that the gender difference in civic knowledge is likely to be accounted for by different rates of leisure reading by boys and girls is consistent with previous research and again confirms the need to enhance the engagement of boys in reading within the wider context of enhancing their reading literacy levels more generally.
- Consistent with existing research as well, newcomer students with a language other than English/Irish are at a disadvantage in terms of their performance on the civic knowledge test. This confirms the continued need for appropriate supports for these students.

Chapter 7. A Comparison of CSPE and ICCS

7.1. Overview

Chapter 1 included a brief description of the general context of the ICCS study in Ireland. This chapter aims to broaden our understanding of ICCS in the Irish context through an examination of the CSPE syllabus and assessment. It provides a description of the CSPE syllabus in terms of the ICCS assessment framework (the latter is discussed in detail in Chapter 1).

Section 7.2 provides an overall context for the CSPE-ICCS comparison study, including a description of the aims and scope of the CSPE syllabus and assessment. Readers should bear in mind that students are likely to encounter content relevant to the ICCS assessment in other subject areas (such as SPHE and RE) as well as outside the context of schools (e.g. discussing political and social issues with parents or friends). This is consistent with the structure of the ICCS assessment framework, which specifies four contextual levels that are relevant to considering student outcomes with respect to civic and citizenship education (i.e. community, schools and classrooms, home environment, and individual characteristics).

Section 7.3 provides a description of the methodology underlying the comparison of CSPE examination papers and the ICCS assessment framework, while Section 7.4 presents the results of a comparison of the content of the CSPE examination papers for 2007, 2008 and 2009 with the ICCS assessment.

Section 7.5 outlines the methodology used to classify Reports on Action Projects (RAPs) conducted by Wilson (2008) and also presents the results of this analysis. Section 7.6 considers the results of Sections 7.4 and 7.5 in their broader context, including some of the key findings in previous chapters of this report. Section 7.7 provides a summary of the main findings in this chapter.

7.2. Context for Comparing CSPE and ICCS

In Chapter 1, it was noted that Ireland is one of 18 of 38 participating countries in which civic and citizenship education (CCE) is a specific, compulsory subject at lower secondary level (see also Chapter 2, Table 2.5). In Ireland, CCE is, consistent with a majority of other countries, also integrated into the school experience as a whole. A recent development that may affect the content and delivery of CSPE in the future is the likely introduction of a new subject – Politics and Society – at Senior Cycle. A draft syllabus on this topic was recently published for consultation (NCCA, 2009, 2010a).

The two questions that this chapter aims to address are:

1. What are the similarities and differences between the CSPE examinations and Reports on Action Projects and the ICCS assessment in terms of the content (concepts) and reasoning processes assessed?
2. In the wider context of the findings of this report and the teaching and learning of CSPE, are there policy issues that merit further consideration?

CSPE, which aims 'to prepare students for active participatory citizenship' (NCCA, 1996, p. 11), was examined as part of the Junior Certificate for the first time in 1999 (Jeffers, 2008; see also Gleeson, 2008 for an historical context for CSPE). It is viewed as a subject that aims to assist students to be better prepared in a world where traditional structures and values are challenged and when being faced with conflicting interests is becoming more common. The syllabus distinguishes between concepts, values and attitudes (consistent with the ICCS framework), i.e. the subject is not solely knowledge-driven. Examples of attitudes and values included in the syllabus are: a commitment to active, constructive, participatory citizenship; an appreciation of critical awareness and independence of thought; respect for differing viewpoints, ideas and cultures; respect for non-violent ways of resolving conflict; and developing a commitment to oppose prejudice, discrimination and social injustice.

The syllabus explicitly acknowledges that CSPE is not the only source of civic, social and political education in schools, and lists other subjects, school ethos, and extra-curricular activities as examples of other important sources of education in this area (NCCA, 1996).

The syllabus is structured in terms of content units, i.e. the individual and citizenship, the community, the State – Ireland, and Ireland and the world (ibid.), such that students move from more immediate, concrete contexts to more global and abstract ones as they progress through the syllabus. In doing so, they cover seven key concept areas – democracy, rights and responsibilities, human dignity, interdependence, development, law, and stewardship. However, the units are not intended to be taught in a strictly sequential and mutually exclusive manner.

The emphasis in the teaching and learning of CSPE is active and participatory, with a focus on learning by doing. Research/discovery activities, group-work/discussion activities, simulation activities, and action activities are all emphasised in the syllabus (ibid.).

There has been considerable discussion in the Dublin-based Citizenship Education Network (CEN) about the relative advantages and disadvantages of having a rather open, broad and flexible CSPE curriculum. Some commentators have argued that it gives it the potential to be responsive and developmental (i.e. capable of incorporating contemporary political and social change), while others were of the view that it runs the risk of a minimalist approach to the teaching of the curriculum (Jeffers, 2008). Others have criticized the CSPE syllabus for being too 'safe': for example, Jeffers (2008) and Lynch (2000) argue that the omission of power as a key concept is symptomatic of political consensualism and the perpetuation of the political status quo and its associated inequalities. Jeffers (2008) also notes a lack of cross-curricular work in schools (i.e. which would serve to reinforce and enhance CSPE) and argues that this is primarily a cultural issue (e.g. relating to the strong focus on the Junior Certificate Examination in general) that needs to be addressed.

It is specified in the syllabus that one class period per week should be allocated to CSPE during first, second and third year, so that a 45-minute weekly class period would result in 70 hours of CSPE over the course of the Junior Cycle. It has been argued, though, that this is insufficient for students and teachers to engage

in meaningful teaching and learning, and that it also serves to marginalize the subject. Jeffers (2008), for example, maintains that there should be three to four class periods a week. Again, this may be symptomatic of an examination-driven system that emphasizes academic achievement, although the NCCA's Junior Cycle review (NCCA, 2010b) seeks to address some of these difficulties. Having said this, the marginalization of the subject is further compounded by lack of initial and on-going teacher development, and the 'uninvited guest' of CSPE on many teachers' timetables which results in high teacher turnover in this subject area (Redmond & Butler, 2003; NCCA, 2003; see also Murphy, 2008).

CSPE differs from other Junior Certificate subjects in two important respects. First, as already noted, it is taught during just one class period per week and second, it is examined using a common level examination paper (which accounts for 40% of the total marks for CSPE Junior Certificate results) plus a Report on an Action Project (RAP[37]) that contributes 60% of the total marks (State Examinations Commission, 2009). Some aspects of the assessment may be viewed as problematic. For example, CSPE is associated with a very high pass rate with close to 90% of students achieving a grade A, B or C (State Examinations Commission, 2009). Jeffers (2008, p. 15) has noted, referring to Wilson's (2008) analysis of Reports on Action Projects (RAPs), that 'the trend [towards having visiting speakers and fundraising] may be indicative of a tendency to adopt a safe, minimalist approach… rather than a creative, developmental one.' Also, whether whole-class, small-group group or individual work are optimal in achieving the aims of the RAP is a matter that could merit further consideration. The Chief Examiner's report on the 2009 CSPE examinations and project work (State Examinations Commission, 2009, p. 23) notes that

> While some candidates undertook individual action projects with great enthusiasm and success, the most popular type of action project undertaken, as in previous years, was the single action project done by an entire class.

However, no comment is made in that report with respect to whether this format is viewed as optimal for the teaching and learning of important components of the CSPE syllabus. Having made these points, that the action project is in place for CSPE must be viewed as a significant development in what is otherwise a system driven by terminal examinations.

7.3. Comparison of ICCS and CSPE Examinations – Methodology

Because of variations in the content of the CSPE examinations across individual years, it was decided, in consultation with the ICCS national advisory committee, to classify CSPE examination papers from multiple years, i.e. 2007, 2008 and 2009. It was also agreed that the CSPE syllabus was too broad to achieve a backward-mapping of ICCS test items onto the CSPE syllabus. Therefore the focus of the comparison study was on classifying CSPE examination questions within the ICCS assessment framework rather than *vice versa*.

[37] In a small minority of cases (less than 3%), students complete a Course-Work Assessment Booklet (CWAB) rather than a RAP (Wilson, 2008).

Two experts[38] conducted the rating exercise together. They were provided with a concise version of the ICCS assessment framework in order to do so.

Each question was classified as follows:

- Coverage: 0 = not covered in the ICCS framework; 1 = covered in the ICCS framework.
- Content (if coverage =1): 1 = civic society and systems; 2 = civic principles, 3 = civic participation, 4 = civic identities.
- Sub-content: each content area was further classified as follows (if coverage = 1):
    - Civic society and systems: 1 = citizens, 2 = State institutions, 3 = civil institutions
    - Civic principles: 1 = equity, 2 = freedom, 3 = social cohesion
    - Civic participation: 1 = decision-making, 2 = influencing, 3 = community participation
    - Civic identities: 1 = civic self-image, 2 = civic connectedness
    - Process: 1 = knowing, 2 = reasoning and analysing.
- Likely time of coverage (if coverage = 1): 1 = first year, 2 = second year, 3 = third year; 4 = unknown or covered at multiple points in the Junior Cycle

Some limitations with the comparison study should be noted. First, it is possible that a somewhat different classification would have resulted had different CSPE curriculum experts completed the exercise. Second, although the method of rating the CSPE examination questions attempts to be reasonably complete, it is possible that there are additional aspects of the ICCS framework (e.g. affective-behavioural domains) or CSPE examination questions that might have been included in the classification scheme. Third, it should be recalled that the written examination for CSPE only covers 40% of the total marks. We consider the Report on the Action Project in Section 7.5 in order to provide a more complete picture of the CSPE syllabus in the broader context of ICCS and civic and citizenship education more generally. Fourth, although not formally assessed, the comparisons do not explicitly capture those relating to attitudes and values as described in the CSPE syllabus so in this sense the comparisons are somewhat incomplete and focus on the knowledge component of the CSPE syllabus.

7.4. Comparison of ICCS and CSPE Examinations – Results

Table 7.1 shows the classification of the 2007, 2008 and 2009 CSPE examination papers and the ICCS test items in terms of the four overarching content areas and the two cognitive processes. In total, 151 CSPE questions were classified (i.e. an average of about 50 items per examination paper). Results in the tables in this section are weighted by the total number of marks given to each question on the

[38] The DES and ERC are indebted to Conor Harrison (Second Level Support Service) and Máirín Wilson (Church of Ireland College of Education) for their participation in classifying the CSPE examination papers in the context of the ICCS assessment framework.

CSPE paper. It will be recalled from Chapter 1 that there were 80 questions in the ICCS test of civic knowledge.

In terms of content (focusing on the average CSPE classification for the three years, in the second-last column of Table 7.1), it can be seen that there is a similar level of emphasis on civic society and systems in both assessments (with 41% of CSPE items and 40% of ICCS items classified under this content area), a lower emphasis on civic principles in the CSPE examinations (16% compared with 31%), and a somewhat higher emphasis in the CSPE examinations on civic participation (34% compared with 23%). Both assessments place a very low emphasis on topics relating to civic identity. The relative emphasis given to civic participation is similar across the three examination years for CSPE; in contrast, there has been a downward emphasis on civic societies and systems and an upward trend in civic principles.

Table 7.1: Classification of CSPE Junior Certificate Examination questions and ICCS test items by ICCS framework content and process areas

Content	CSPE 2007	CSPE 2008	CSPE 2009	CSPE Average	ICCS
Not applicable	0.0	8.1	6.3	4.8	0.0
Civic society and systems	50.2	46.9	25.9	41.0	40.0
Civic principles	12.1	13.4	23.4	16.3	31.3
Civic participation	37.7	30.3	34.2	34.1	22.5
Civic identities	0.0	1.3	10.3	3.8	6.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Process	**CSPE 2007**	**CSPE 2008**	**CSPE 2009**	**CSPE Average**	**ICCS**
Knowing	42.2	50.6	45.9	46.2	23.7
Reasoning and analysing	57.8	49.4	54.1	53.8	76.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

CSPE questions are weighted according to the total number of marks on the examination paper for that year.

The lower portion of Table 7.1 shows the percentages of questions classified under the two ICCS cognitive processes. The assessment places a higher emphasis on reasoning and analysing processes (76% compared with 54% on the CSPE examination papers on average across the three years), but it should be recalled that a majority of marks awarded to students (60%) are for completing their Report on an Action Project, which is likely to draw considerably on analytic reasoning processes. (Section 7.5 discusses this further.)

Table 7.2 shows a classification of CSPE examination questions by sub-domain. Classification by multiple sub-domains is possible and in fact applies in the majority of cases. Also, the area of civic identities is not included in the table as there are very few items – just under 4% in this content area on average across 2007, 2008 and 2009.

In the first content area, civic society and systems, in which 41% of CSPE examination questions were classified (on average across the three years), the tendency was for these items to tap State institutions only (48% on average across the three years), although this varied somewhat across examination papers. For example, in 2009, 27% of questions were on the topic of State institutions only, while the corresponding figures for 2007 and 2008 are 57% and 61% respectively. None of the questions in the previous two years addressed civil and State institutions combined, while in 2009, 34% of questions addressed these two areas combined.

In the second content area, civic principles (16% of questions on average across the three years), the most common sub-content areas assessed were equity and freedom combined, although in 2009, there was a shift away from assessing these two sub-content areas towards equity and social cohesion, toward equity, freedom, *and* social cohesion.

Table 7.2: Classification of CSPE Junior Certificate Examination questions by ICCS framework content and sub-content areas

Content	Sub-content	CSPE 2007	CSPE 2008	CSPE 2009	CSPE Average
Civic society and systems	Citizens	16.8	8.0	7.2	10.7
	Civil institutions	26.1	10.0	19.9	18.7
	State institutions	57.1	60.7	27.1	48.3
	Citizens and civil institutions	0.0	16.0	8.4	8.1
	Citizens and State institutions	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Civil institutions and state institutions	0.0	0.0	33.7	11.2
	Citizens, civil institutions and State institutions	0.0	5.3	3.6	3.0
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Civic principles	Equity	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Freedom	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Social cohesion	25.9	0.0	10.0	12.0
	Equity and freedom	63.8	69.8	13.4	49.0
	Equity and social cohesion	0.0	0.0	33.4	11.1
	Freedom and social cohesion	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Equity, freedom and social cohesion	10.3	30.2	43.2	27.9
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Civic participation	Community participation	0.0	0.0	18.8	6.3
	Decision-making	0.0	0.0	19.5	6.5
	Influencing	5.0	0.0	0.0	1.7
	Community participation and decision-making	0.0	6.2	0.0	2.1
	Community participation and influencing	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Decision-making and influencing	5.0	6.2	0.0	3.7
	Decision-making, influencing and community participation	90.1	87.6	61.7	79.8
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

CSPE questions are weighted according to the total number of marks on the examination paper for that year.

The third content area considered in Table 7.2 concerns civic participation (34% of all CSPE examination questions across the three years considered). Across all three years, by far the most common combination of sub-content areas assessed were decision-making, influencing and community participation combined (80% on average).

On average across the three CSPE examination papers, the expert raters judged that 51% of the material was likely to have been covered prior to the time of the ICCS assessment; 20.5% somewhat likely to have been covered, and 16.9% unlikely to have been covered.

7.5. Analysis of Action Projects – Methodology and Results

This section draws on research conducted by Wilson (2008), who developed a database that holds the titles of action projects for the years 2001 to 2004 inclusive.[39] During this time period, the titles of some 12,500 action projects were recorded. Each title was classified under one of the seven CSPE key concept areas (see Section 7.2) with the necessary addition of an eighth category, community. Two other categories were also used for a small number of the Action Projects (6.2%) – Outside the Syllabus and not classifiable.

Table 7.3 shows the percentages of Action Projects falling under each of these ten categories for 2001-2004 along with the average percentage across the four years.

Table 7.3: Classification of Action Projects into ten categories, 2001-2004

Category	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average
Rights and responsibilities	30.3	28.3	28.6	29.9	29.3
Stewardship	23.6	20.3	18.8	17.0	19.9
Democracy	14.4	16.8	19.3	20.0	17.6
Law	13.3	11.3	11.1	11.9	11.9
Development	1.9	7.2	2.2	1.5	3.2
Community	3.3	2.8	2.8	3.6	3.1
Interdependence	3.2	2.9	3.8	3.5	3.4
Human dignity	2.2	3.1	6.7	6.9	4.7
Outside the syllabus	3.1	3.3	2.8	3.3	3.1
Not classifiable	1.8	4.1	4.1	2.2	3.1

Total number of projects classified = 12,500 approx.

Source: Wilson (2009, p. 182)

Across all four years, the most popular category was rights and responsibilities (with an average of 29% of Action Projects falling into this topic), followed by stewardship (20%), democracy (18%) and law (12%). Together, these areas accounted for almost 79% of all RAPs. The remaining categories (development, community, interdependence, and human dignity) accounted for just 14% of RAPs. All other projects (6.2%) were deemed to be outside the syllabus or not classifiable.

[39] It should be noted that, in ongoing work on action projects, Wilson has refined the classification system since the publication of the research referenced in this section and results associated with the refined classification system are forthcoming.

Wilson (2008) provides examples of the types of projects under each category as follows:

- Rights and responsibilities: fundraising, doing surveys, raising awareness, inviting guest speakers
- Stewardship: tidying up or restoration of local area, tree planting, recycling
- Democracy: visits to the Dáil or local authorities, surveys on levels of political knowledge in the school or local community
- Law: visits to the school by Gardaí, Junior Liaison Officers, Judges, solicitors, etc.; visits to local courts or prisons; road safety; law in relation to work, drugs and alcohol
- Development: some of these projects, according to Wilson (2008), show an overlap with community and stewardship; typical projects in this category include campaigns for resources and transport initiatives
- Community: projects under this category commonly included analyses amenities in the local community or a description of a local service or facility such as a credit union
- Interdependence: consumer issues, Europe, intercultural topics
- Human dignity: the focus in this area tended to be on disability, e.g. wheelchair access, the Special Olympics.

Table 7.4: Classification of 2004 Action Projects by type of action

Action	%
Guest speaker	28.9
Fundraising	21.5
Guest speaker and fundraising combined	11.5
Visits	11.8
Survey	7.0
Awareness raising	6.5
Mock election	4.9
Investigation	2.7
Campaign	2.1
Clean-up	1.0
Recycling	1.0
Protest or petition	0.3
Publication	0.2
Social event	0.2
Exhibition	0.1
Census	0.1
Quiz	0.1
Other	0.1
Total	100.0

Total number of projects classified = 3,300 approx.

Source: Wilson (2008, p. 183)

Some trends in the four years studied may be noted. For example, stewardship and development have declined somewhat in popularity, while democracy and human dignity have increased.

Wilson (2008) also classified, for the first time in 2004; the type of action underlying each action project via a questionnaire completed by the Assistant Examiners. Table 7.4 (previous page) shows the type of action ranked in order of popularity for the 2004 Action Projects. The table indicates that two types of action – guest speaker and fundraising (either on their own or combined) accounted for 62% of all projects in 2004. A further 30% of action projects were based on visits, surveys, awareness raising and mock elections, and the remaining 11 categories in the table (including more proactive projects such as investigation, campaigns, or protests/petitions) account for just under 8% of all action projects.

7.6. Broader Context of CSPE

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, an important development with respect to civic and citizenship education (CCE) in Ireland is the proposed introduction of Politics and Society at Senior Cycle. This presents both challenges and opportunities for CSPE. It provides an opportunity for the status of CSPE to be raised as a precursor to Politics and Society. On the other hand, this poses challenges. For example, will there be sufficient continuity between CSPE (and related subjects) and Politics and Society in terms of course content, time allocated, and the training for and allocation of teachers to CSPE classes? Is the marking of the CSPE examination too lenient? Should a Common paper for CSPE be replaced by Higher and Ordinary Levels? Should other Junior Certificate subjects serve as precursors to Politics and Society? It would seem important that the development of the Politics and Society syllabus takes due account of what happens at Junior Cycle to maximize both continuity and engagement in this area.

Also, although research exists on the action projects in terms of the content areas covered and types of actions underlying the projects, there may be merit in conducting further research in this area in order to better ascertain the types of knowledge and skills learned by students in completing their project work, as well as the level of initiative and autonomy expected of students in producing RAPs. This would provide a more complete description of CSPE and would seem important given that more marks are given for the Action Project than the written examination. Future subject inspections of CSPE might be a useful source of information in this respect.

Findings described earlier in this report are also worth considering in the context of the results presented in this chapter. On a positive note, the civic knowledge of students in Ireland is over a third of a standard deviation higher than the international one (Chapter 2), indicating that, through CSPE and elsewhere, Irish students' knowledge levels compare favourably with the vast majority of countries that participated in ICCS. However, the overall distribution in achievement (as indicated by the standard deviation) ranks Ireland fourth highest of participating countries, indicating considerable disparities in the performance of high and low achievers relative to the majority of ICCS countries. Also, between-school differences

in achievement in Ireland is some seven percentage points higher than the ICCS average. Therefore, although overall average achievement is favourable, there is evidence of large individual and school-level variations in achievement, which raise some equity issues. It was suggested that this is an area that should be further examined with respect to streaming and grouping practices for achievement and other educational outcomes more generally.

On a number of the attitudinal measures (Chapter 4), Irish students had comparatively high scores, suggesting that, within CSPE and elsewhere, positive attitudes are being fostered. The measures include expected electoral participation, and attitudes to equality of the genders and of ethnic/racial groups.

In contrast, teachers in Ireland reported low rates of participation in community activities with their students (Chapter 5), and students reported comparatively low levels of participation in class and the local community, and low perceived influence about decision-making in school (Chapter 4). The latter finding stands in contrast to the fact that Irish students had comparatively high scores on a scale measuring perceived value of participation at school. Parental participation in school was also comparatively low in Ireland. Low rates of participatory activities may be symptomatic of the examination-driven system in post-primary schools in Ireland.

Therefore, a key implication of the findings recapped in this section is that there appears to be a disjuncture between the focus in the CSPE syllabus on active participation, and guidelines for active participation across the curriculum and as part of the wider school experience (a topic that was a focus of the *Report on the Taskforce on Active Citizenship*, discussed in Chapter 1) and the relatively low rates of participation of Irish students in local community activities, their perceptions that their influence in decision-making in school is rather low, and the low rates of parental participation in the school. This suggests that more might be done to extend the experiences of students, teachers and parents outside of CSPE class into more varied and active participation both inside and outside of school.

7.7. Key Points Arising From Chapter 7

To provide a broader context for interpreting the ICCS framework and results of the study in Ireland, this chapter compared the CSPE syllabus, examination papers and Action Projects with the ICCS framework. The main points in this chapter are summarised as follows:

- CSPE is taught for one class period per week at Junior Cycle and assessed via a common-level written examination (40% of marks) and a Report on an Action Project (RAP; 60%).
- Ireland is one of 18 of 38 ICCS countries that offer CCE at lower secondary level as a dedicated, compulsory subject, and, similar to the majority of ICCS countries, CCE topics are also intended to be encountered by students in integrated, cross-curricular and whole-school approaches.
- Previous research suggests that having one class period per week and a high turnover rate of CSPE teachers may act as barriers to the teaching and learning of this subject.

- Some critics of the CSPE syllabus suggest that omitting power as a topic de-politicises it; others suggest that the broad and flexible nature of the syllabus runs the risk of promoting a minimalist approach to teaching and learning of the subject.
- To examine the content of the CSPE syllabus and assessment with respect to the ICCS assessment, questions from CSPE Junior Certificate examination papers from 2007, 2008 and 2009 were classified in terms of the content and processes specified in the ICCS framework.
- Results of this comparison in terms of content covered in the CSPE examination and the ICCS test are that in both assessments, about 40% of the questions are located in the category of civic society and systems. In contrast ICCS places a higher emphasis on civic principles than the CSPE examinations (31% compared with 16%), while CSPE questions more frequently fell into the civic participation category than did questions on the ICCS test (34% compared with 23%). Very low emphasis is placed on civic identities in either the CSPE examination or the ICCS test.
- On the ICCS test, about 76% of questions assessed the cognitive process of reasoning and analysing, and 24% assessed the process of knowing. The respective percentages for the CSPE examinations are 54% and 46%. However, this comparison does not include the RAPs which may emphasise reasoning and analysing to a greater extent than the CSPE examination paper.
- An analysis of the CSPE examination questions by sub-domains of the content areas indicates that, depending on the main content area, questions tap various combinations of sub-domains. For example, 48% of questions in the content area of civic society and systems assess State institutions only (as opposed to a possible combination of citizens, civil institutions and State institutions). About half of CSPE questions on civic principles assess both equity and freedom, while 28% of questions assess all three sub-content areas (equity, freedom and social cohesion). In assessing civic participation, a majority of CSPE questions (80%) assess the combined sub-domains of decision-making, influencing and community participation.
- Some variations in the relative emphasis given to content and sub-content areas in the 2007, 2008 and 2009 CSPE examination papers were evident.
- In an analysis of the content of the RAPs completed by students in 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 conducted by Wilson (2008), it was found that projects on rights and responsibilities, stewardship, democracy or law accounted for 79% of all projects, while the topics of development, community, interdependence or human dignity accounted for just 14% (6% of projects were deemed to be outside of the curriculum or not classifiable).
- The nature of the activities underlying the RAPs was collected in 2004. In a majority of cases (73%), activities comprised a guest speaker, fundraising, or a combination of these two. A further 12% comprised visits and 14% surveys or awareness-raising. The frequency of more proactive activities was considerably lower (e.g. investigations, campaigns, protests or petitions).
- Three of the key conclusions arising from this chapter are that first, a need to consider the current content and scope of CSPE and the needs and qualifications of CSPE teachers in the context of the introduction of Politics and Society as a subject at senior cycle to maximize continuity and engagement; second, the potential merit in gathering more data on the RAPs in terms of the types of knowledge and skills gained by students and whether or not the most common form of RAP (typically conducted as a whole-class project) is optimal (e.g. individual or small-group work may work better for some projects); and third, the apparent disjuncture between the high emphasis accorded to active participation in the CSPE syllabus and the low levels of teacher, student and parent participation in CCE-relevant activities found in earlier chapters of this report.

Chapter 8. Civic and Citizenship Knowledge and Attitudes: Europe

8.1. Overview

ICCS included three regional modules, dealing with Europe, Asia and Latin America. Box 8.1 provides some national contextual information relevant to the European Module which was commissioned by the European Union and undertaken by students in 24 out of 26 European countries participating in ICCS (Table 8.1). This included 22 of 27 EU member states, plus Liechtenstein and Switzerland. In Asia, students in all five participating countries completed the Asian module. Similarly, in Latin America, students in all six participating countries completed the Latin American module. This chapter outlines students' performance on items in the European Regional Module test and their attitudes and behaviours as measured by the European Regional Module questionnaire.

Box 8.1: Contextual information relevant to the European Regional Module

- Since joining the European Union (then the European Economic Community) in 1973, Ireland has benefitted significantly from membership, receiving monetary assistance from funds including structural and cohesion funds, rural development funds and the Common Agricultural Policy.
- In the two most recent referenda on European issues, Irish voters initially voted against change but subsequently voted in favour. In June 2001, the Irish electorate rejected the Nice Treaty but it was later ratified when a second referendum was held in October 2002. Irish voters also initially rejected the Lisbon Treaty but endorsed it in October 2009 after the government secured guarantees on national sovereignty and the rights of countries to have a Commissioner.
- Developing a sense of European identity among European citizens and fostering an awareness of Europe have been recognised as priorities by European institutions such as the European Commission and the Council of Europe. These supra-national organisations aim to develop what has been termed '*European literacy*' (Georgi, 2008).
- European institutions place a high degree of importance on citizenship education; e.g. the Council of Europe established the *Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education Project* in 1997, one element of which involved designating 2005 as the *European Year of Citizenship through Education*.
- The European Commission (EC) has been involved in actively promoting the engagement of citizens through measures such as including 'civic competence' as one of the key competences for lifelong learning in Europe (2006/962/EC). The Centre for Research on Lifelong Learning (CRELL) (sponsored by the EC), in collaboration with the Council of Europe, has worked on developing a composite indicator on civic competence and has examined active citizenship across European countries (Hoskins, 2006; Hoskins et al., 2006).
- Interest in active citizenship at the European level is ongoing and 2011 has been designated the *European Year of Volunteering*. This marks the 10th anniversary of the UN *International Year of Volunteers*. Each EU Member State has established a National Coordinating Body which is responsible for the planning, coordination and organisation of events and activities during the year.

Table 8.1: Countries that participated in the European Regional Module with year of joining EU and Eurozone, where applicable

Country	Year of joining EU	Year of joining Eurozone	Country	Year of joining EU	Year of joining Eurozone
Austria	1995	1999	Liechtenstein	–	–
Belgium (Flemish) (as part of Belgium)	Founding[1]	1999	Lithuania	2004	–
Bulgaria	2007	–	Luxembourg	Founding[1]	1999
Cyprus	2004	2008	Latvia	2004	–
Czech Republic	2004	–	Malta	2004	2008
Denmark	1973	–	Netherlands[2]	Founding[1]	1999
England (as part of the UK)	1973	–	Poland	2004	–
Estonia	2004	–[3]	Slovak Republic	2004	2009
Finland	1995	1999	Slovenia	2004	2007
Greece	1981	2001	Spain	1986	1999
Ireland	1973	1999	Sweden	1995	–
Italy	Founding[1]	1999	Switzerland	–	–

[1]The Schumann declaration was signed by six countries (Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg) in 1951 agreeing to common management of coal and steel. In 1957, co-operation was expanded to other economic sectors and the European Economic Community was created through the Treaty of Rome.

[2]Although students in the Netherlands participated in the European regional module, response rates were too low to allow accurate comparisons to be made.

[3]At the time of writing, Estonia was due to join the Eurozone on January 1st, 2011.

The European Regional Module consisted of a 12-minute test measuring knowledge about the European Union and a 17-minute questionnaire covering student perceptions of, attitudes towards, and participation in activities related to Europe (not specifically the EU). Of the 23 participating countries with valid data[40], 21 are EU member states and the euro currency is used in 12 (Table 8.1). Where averages are discussed in this chapter, these relate to the average across the 23 countries with valid data.

This chapter consists of six further sections. Section 8.2 presents the results of the European test. These results are reported as percentage correct on the individual test items as no overall scale could be formed from the items. Various factors may have contributed to the poor scaling properties of the test: student knowledge is likely to have varied considerably according to whether or not their country was a member of the EU and Eurozone and by the length of the country's EU and Eurozone membership. Students' self-reported knowledge about the EU is also discussed in Section 8.2. Section 8.3 explores students' sense of European identity, participation in activities at the European level and participation in communication about Europe. In Section 8.4, we describe students' reports on opportunities they have for learning about Europe in school and their reports of how well they can communicate in other European languages. Students' attitudes towards common policies in Europe, the common European currency, European unification and further expansion of the EU are discussed in Section 8.5. Students' attitudes towards equal opportunities for other European citizens, freedom of migration within Europe

[40] Response rates in the Netherlands were too low to allow valid comparisons.

and restricting migration within Europe are examined in Section 8.6. The chapter concludes with a summary of key points (Section 8.7).

In the sections that follow, sample items are given for each of the student questionnaire scales discussed in that section along with percentages of students in Ireland and on average in Europe who responded positively and negatively to each. The overall scale score in Ireland is then compared to the European average and gender differences and differences by migrant/language status within Ireland are also examined. Correlations between scale scores and student socioeconomic status and civic knowledge are then discussed, along with scale intercorrelations where relevant. Finally, scale scores in the European comparison countries are discussed. The comparison countries considered in this chapter are Belgium (Fl.), Finland, Denmark, England, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland. As there is no overall scale score on the test, the section related to the test (Section 8.2) gives only the percentages of students responding correctly to items in Ireland, and on average in Europe; performance on the EU test in the comparison countries is not discussed (see Kerr, Sturman, Schulz & Burge, 2010, for a more detailed breakdown of results by country).

Readers can refer to Box 1.4 (Chapter 1) for further information on how to interpret the results in this chapter.

8.2. Knowledge of the European Union

The European test consisted of a total of 20 items, in both multiple choice and true-false answer formats. The test items covered three areas: facts about the European Union and its institutions; knowledge of EU laws and policies; and knowledge of the euro currency. Further details of the test are provided in Kerr et al. (2010). As noted in Section 8.1, test results are reported on an item-by-item basis. The percentages of students responding correctly to each item in Ireland[41] and on average across European countries are given in Tables 8.2, 8.3 and 8.4.

Almost all students in Ireland (99%) correctly answered the true/false item[42] 'Ireland is a member of the European Union' (Table 8.2). The corresponding European average was 97%. High percentages of students in Ireland and across Europe (88% and 85%, respectively) correctly answered the second true-false item 'the EU is an economic and political partnership between countries'. The European flag was also correctly identified by most students in Ireland (87%), although the percentage in Ireland was lower than the corresponding European average (93%). Perhaps surprisingly, almost 9% of students in Ireland thought that the EU flag was black with two parallel diagonal lines with 'EU' written in the centre.

The third true-false item ('People get new political rights when their country joins the EU') was correctly answered by 69% of students in Ireland and 65% on average across European countries (Table 8.2). Items answered correctly by between 49% and 60% of students in Ireland related to the meeting place of the European Parliament, the number of member states in the EU, possible enlargement of the EU, and electing Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). A higher percentage of

[41] Readers are reminded that most students in Ireland had are unlikely to have studied the European Union at the time of participating in ICCS. It is typically studied in the third year of the Junior Cycle in Ireland, whereas students participating in ICCS were in second year.
[42] Note that for true-false items, students have a 50% chance of guessing the correct answer.

students in Ireland (49%) than on average (35%) knew that citizens in each European country elect MEPs.

Only one-third of Irish students selected one correct requirement from four for a country to be allowed to join the EU; a similar percentage knew what determines the amount contributed to the EU budget by each member country (Table 8.2). Both of these percentages (33% and 32%, respectively) were lower than the corresponding European averages (40% and 44%, respectively).

Table 8.2: Percentage correct for items measuring knowledge of the EU and its institutions, Ireland and European average

	Ireland	Europe
Ireland is a member of the European Union[1] (True)	98.8	96.7
The EU is an economic and political partnership between countries[1] (True)	87.8	84.8
What is the flag of the EU? (Pick correct design from a possible 4)	87.0	93.3
People get new political rights when their country joins the EU[1] (True)	68.5	65.3
Which of the following cities is a meeting place for the European Parliament? (Brussels)	59.5	67
How many countries are member states of the EU? (21 – 30)	56.4	57.0
Which of the following statements about the possible enlargement of the EU are true? (Currently considering some countries)	49.9	56.5
Who votes to elect Members of the European Parliament? (Citizens of each EU country)	49.2	35.0
What is one requirement for a country to be allowed to join the European Union? (Considered democratic)	33.2	40.4
What determines how much each member country contributes to the EU? (All contribute, amount depends on how rich a country is)	32.6	44.2

[1]True-false answer questions.

Correct response is shown in brackets.

Table 8.3: Percentage correct for items measuring knowledge of EU laws and policies, Ireland and European average

	Ireland	Europe
The EU aims to promote peace, prosperity and freedom within its borders[1] (True)	90.8	89.1
All EU countries have signed the European Convention on Human Rights[1] (True)	89.2	85.6
The EU has made laws to reduce pollution[1] (True)	69.9	69.6
The EU decides what is taught in your school about the European Union[1] (False)	67.8	64.7
The EU pays money to farmers in EU countries to use environmentally friendly farming methods[1] (True)	53.2	51.9
What can all citizens of the EU do by law? (Study in any European country without needing a special permit)	20.7	30.1

[1]True-false answer questions.

Correct response is shown in brackets.

Two items regarding EU laws and policies (the EU aims to promote peace, prosperity and freedom within its borders; all European countries have signed the European Convention on Human Rights) were correctly answered by about 90% of students in Ireland and over 85% of students on average across Europe (Table 8.3). About 70% of students in Ireland knew that the EU has made laws to reduce

pollution and 68% correctly rejected the statement that the EU decides what is taught in schools about the EU; these are similar to the corresponding European averages (70% and 65%, respectively).

About half of students in Ireland and on average knew that the EU pays money to farmers in EU countries to use environmentally friendly farming methods (Table 8.3); as this was a true-false item, this is similar to what would be expected by chance (though there is no evidence that students were systematically guessing on the test). Only one-fifth of students in Ireland and three-in-ten on average across Europe knew that all citizens of the EU can study in any European country without needing a special permit.

For three of the four items measuring knowledge of the euro, the same percentages of students in Ireland responded correctly as on average across European countries (Table 8.4). Between 66% and 70% of students in Ireland and on average in European countries knew that the euro is not the official currency of all countries in Europe, that euro banknotes have the same design in all countries where the euro is the official currency and that one advantage of the euro is that buying and selling goods between countries which use the euro is made easier.

Although 70% of students in Ireland knew that the euro was not the official currency in all countries in Europe, just over half of students in Ireland responded that the euro is not the official currency of all EU countries (Table 8.4). The corresponding European average was 49%. As this was a true-false item, 50% of students could have guessed the correct answer.

Table 8.4: Percentage correct for items measuring knowledge of the Euro, Ireland and European average

	Ireland	Europe
The euro is the official currency of all countries in Europe[1] (False)	69.2	69.5
Euro banknotes have the same design in every country where it is the official currency[1] (True)	66.7	66.7
Which of the following is an advantage for countries that have the euro as their official currency? (Buying and selling goods is easier)	65.7	65.5
The euro is the official currency in all EU countries[1] (False)	50.8	48.5

[1]True-false answer questions.

Correct response is shown in brackets.

Table 8.5: Sample items for *students' self-reported knowledge about the EU*, percentages for combined response categories in Ireland, and European averages

Scale / Question wording	Sample item	Ireland		European average	
		+	-	+	-
Self-reported knowledge about the EU	Institutions of the European Union (e.g. European Parliament)	17.5	82.5	24.4	75.6
How much do you know about the following topics?	The euro (the currency of some European Union countries)	70.2	29.8	70.2	29.8

[1]Positive response options: A lot or quite a lot. Negative response options: A little or nothing.

In addition to completing a test about the EU, students were asked to rate their levels of knowledge in this area. In Ireland, just over one-sixth of students indicated that they know 'a lot' or 'quite a lot' about the institutions of the European Union (Table 8.5). This compares to a European average of 24%. The majority of students in Ireland (70%) and across European countries (70%) reported that they know a lot or quite a lot about the euro.

Responses to the individual items measuring self-reported knowledge of the EU were combined into a single scale with a European mean of 50 and standard deviation of 10. The reliability of this scale in Ireland was satisfactory (alpha= 0.79; reliabilities for all European Module scales are given in Table A8.2, Appendix 8). On this overall measure, students in Ireland scored less than one-eighth of a standard deviation below the European average (Table 8.6). The difference is statistically significant.

Boys in Ireland had a significantly higher mean score (by about one-third of a standard deviation) than girls (Table 8.6). Native students scored significantly lower than migrant students. The difference between native students and migrants who spoke languages other than English or Irish was more than one-third of a standard deviation. A smaller difference (though statistically significant) was found between native students and migrants who spoke English or Irish at home.

Table 8.6: Mean student scale scores (SE, SD) in Ireland for *students' self-reported knowledge about the EU*, comparisons with European mean and by student gender and native status, and correlations with student socioeconomic status and ICCS civic knowledge

Scale	European Mean	Ireland								
						Native & language				
		Mean	SE	SD	Gender (Male – Female)	Native – Migrant, speaks English / Irish	Native – Migrant, other language	Migrant, English / Irish – Migrant, other language	Student SES (r)	ICCS Civic Knowledge (r)
Self-reported student knowledge about the EU	⇓	48.8	0.25	10.14	⇑	↓	⇓	=	**.051**	.000

Note: Significantly higher ($p \leq .05$) ↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .05$) ↓
Significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) ⇑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .01$) ⇓
No statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) =
Values of r in bold indicate that correlation is significant ($p < .05$)
Shading indicates that the difference between the two groups being compared is statistically significant and at least 2.5 (one-quarter of a standard deviation).

There is a weak positive correlation between students' self-reported knowledge about the EU and socioeconomic status but students' self-reported knowledge about the EU is not associated with performance on the ICCS test of civic knowledge (Table 8.6). The correlations between students' self-reported knowledge and all other European Module questionnaire scales are given in Table A8.1 (Appendix 8). In general, these correlations are statistically significant, positive, and

weak to moderate in strength. The strongest correlation is between self-reported knowledge and participation in communication about Europe (r = .36).

Students in Slovenia had higher levels of self-reported knowledge about the EU than students in Ireland and each of the other comparison countries. As Slovenia's membership of the EU is comparatively recent (2004; Table 8.1), students' high levels of self-reported knowledge may be a result of information campaigns in the country prior to joining the EU. However, Poland also joined the EU in the same year as Slovenia and the average self-reported knowledge score in Poland did not differ significantly from the corresponding European average. Students in Finland, Denmark, England, Sweden and Switzerland had somewhat lower average scores on this scale than students in Ireland, while students in Belgium (Fl.) had a similar average score to students in Ireland.

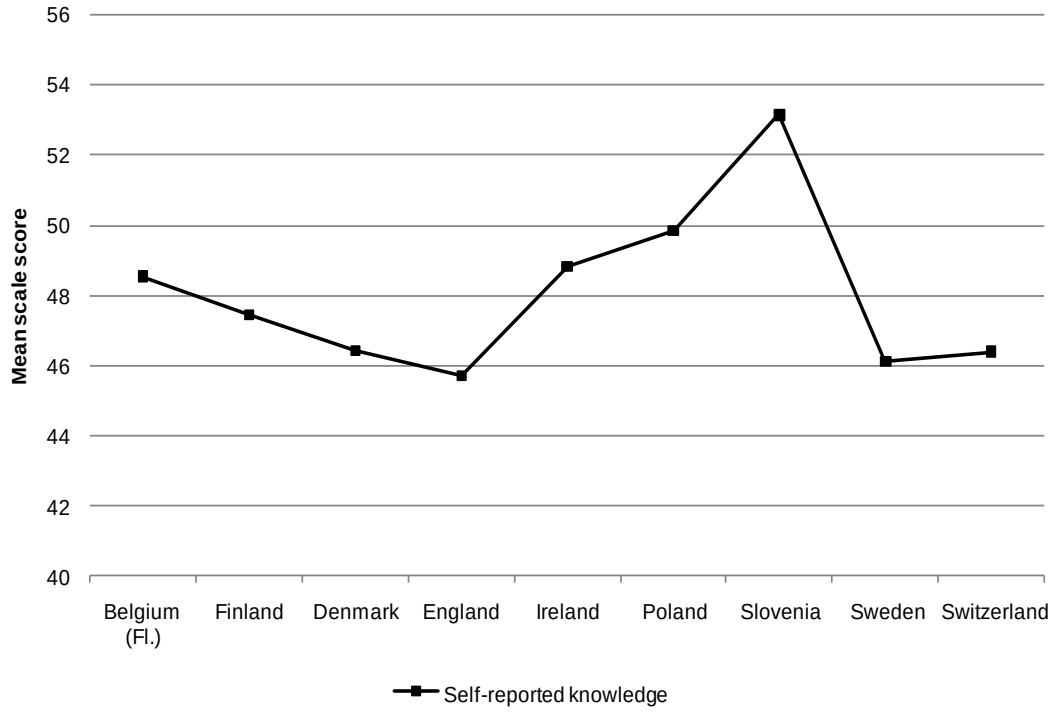

Figure 8.1: Mean scale scores for students' self-reported knowledge of the EU, Ireland and European comparison countries

8.3. Sense of European Identity and Participation in Europe-related Activities

Students were presented with a number of items asking them about their sense of European identity. Most students in Ireland (90%) and on average across European countries (91%) agreed or strongly agreed that they see themselves as European (Table 8.7). Lower percentages of students (56% in Ireland and 64% on average) reported that they have more in common with young people from European countries than with those from countries outside of Europe.

Responses to the example items comprising the participation in activities or groups at the European level scale indicate that only a minority of students have been involved in either twinning activities or school trips to other European countries (Table 8.7). In Ireland, about one-third of students reported having been involved in twinning activities between their towns and other European locations. The corresponding European average is 29%. A substantial minority of students in Ireland (29%) and across Europe (38%) reported having participated in school trips to other European countries.

Table 8.7: Sample items for *students' sense of European identity, participation in activities or groups at the European level*, and *participation in communication about Europe*, percentages for combined response categories in Ireland and European averages

Scale / Question wording	Sample item	Ireland		European average	
		+	-	+	-
Students' sense of European identity[1]	I see myself as European	90.2	9.8	90.8	9.2
How much do you agree or disagree…?	I have more in common with young people from European countries than with those from countries outside Europe	55.8	44.2	64.3	35.7
Students' participation in activities or groups at the European level[2]	Activities related to friendship agreements (twinning) between my local town/city and other European towns/cities	33.6	66.4	29.4	70.6
Have you ever participated in any of the following activities?	School trip(s) to another European country	28.6	71.4	37.6	62.4
Students' participation in communication about Europe[3]	Discussing European sports events with your friends or family	62.4	37.6	55.8	44.1
How often are you involved in each of the following activities?	Discussing issues raised in the European Parliament with your friends or family	21.6	78.4	20.6	79.4

[1]Positive response options: Strongly agree or agree. Negative response options: Disagree or strongly disagree.
[2]Positive response options: Yes, either within the last 12 months or more than a year ago. Negative response options: No, I have never done this.
[3]Positive response options: Monthly or weekly. Negative response options: Yearly or never.

Interestingly, the percentages of students in Ireland who reported having participated in school trips to other European countries do not vary appreciably by socioeconomic status: 69% of students in the highest third of the socioeconomic distribution reported not having participated in school trips compared to 73% of students in the lowest third. However, participation in school trips varies to some extent across school types: about 30% of students in community/comprehensive schools and VEC schools, 35% in boys' secondary schools and 33% in mixed secondary schools indicated that they had participated in a school trip either within the 12 months prior to ICCS or earlier than that. In contrast, only 19% of students in girls' secondary schools reported having been on a school trip to another European country.

Students were asked about their level of participation in communication about Europe. Over three-fifths of students in Ireland reported that they discuss European sports events with their friends or families either weekly or monthly (Table 8.7), although a higher percentage of boys than girls reported regular discussion of sports events (70% of boys and 54% of girls in Ireland reported discussing European sports events on a monthly or weekly basis). The overall European average was 56%. Only about one-fifth of students in Ireland and on average across Europe reported regularly discussing issues raised in the European Parliament.

Table 8.8: Mean student scale scores (SE, SD) in Ireland for *students' sense of European identity*, *participation in activities or groups at the European level* and *participation in communication about Europe*, comparisons with European means and by student gender and native status, and correlations with student socioeconomic status and ICCS civic knowledge

Scale	European Mean	Ireland								
		Mean	SE	SD	Gender (Male – Female)	Native & language: Native – Migrant, speaks English / Irish	Native & language: Native – Migrant, other language	Native & language: Migrant, English / Irish – Migrant, other language	Student SES (r)	ICCS Civic Knowledge (r)
Students' sense of European identity	=	50.4	0.23	9.92	↑↑	↑↑	=	=	.017	**-.051**
Students' participation in activities or groups at the European level	↑↑	51.6	0.24	8.81	=	=	↓↓	=	**.178**	**-.070**
Students' participation in communication about Europe	↓↓	48.2	0.24	10.74	=	=	↓↓	↓↓	**.104**	.032

Note: Significantly higher ($p \leq .05$) ↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .05$) ↓
Significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) ↑↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .01$) ↓↓
No statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) =

Values of r in bold indicate that correlation is significant ($p < .05$)

Shading indicates that the difference between the two groups being compared is statistically significant and at least 2.5 (one-quarter of a standard deviation).

The mean score in Ireland on the scale measuring students' sense of European identity did not differ significantly from the corresponding European average (Table 8.8). Students in Ireland scored significantly above the corresponding European average on the participation in activities or groups at the European level but significantly below on the participation in communication about Europe scale; in both cases, the differences amounted to about one-sixth of a standard deviation.

A significant gender difference was found only on the sense of European identity scale (Table 8.8). Boys had a significantly higher score than girls; the difference was about two-fifths of a standard deviation.

On both the participation in activities at the European level and participation in communication about Europe, native students scored significantly lower than migrant students who spoke languages other than English or Irish at home (Table

8.8). The difference was larger on the participation in communication scale and amounted to almost half a standard deviation. No differences on these scales emerged between native students and migrants who spoke English or Irish at home. Just one difference was found within the group of migrant students: those who spoke English or Irish scored significantly lower on the participation in communication scale than migrants who spoke other languages.

Civic knowledge correlated weakly and negatively with students' sense of European identity (r = -.05) and participation in activities or groups at the European level (r = -.07) (Table 8.8). Weak to moderate positive correlations were found between students' socioeconomic status and participation in activities or groups at the European level (r = .18) and participation in communication about Europe (r = .10). There are also weak to moderate positive correlations between European identity and participation in activities or groups at the European level (r = .18) and between European identity and participation in communication about Europe (r = .18) (Table A8.1, Appendix 8). The correlation between participation in activities about Europe and communication about Europe is moderate and positive (r = .26) (Table A8.1, Appendix 8).

There was relatively little variation across comparison countries in average scores on the scale measuring participation in activities or groups at the European level (Figure 8.2). Somewhat greater variation was evident on the sense of European identity scale and wide variation was found across countries on the scale measuring participation in communication about Europe. Of the comparison countries, students in Belgium (Fl.) had the lowest average score on the participation in communication about Europe scale, followed by students in England, Finland, Sweden and Ireland. Students in Poland, Slovenia and Switzerland had comparatively high scores on this scale.

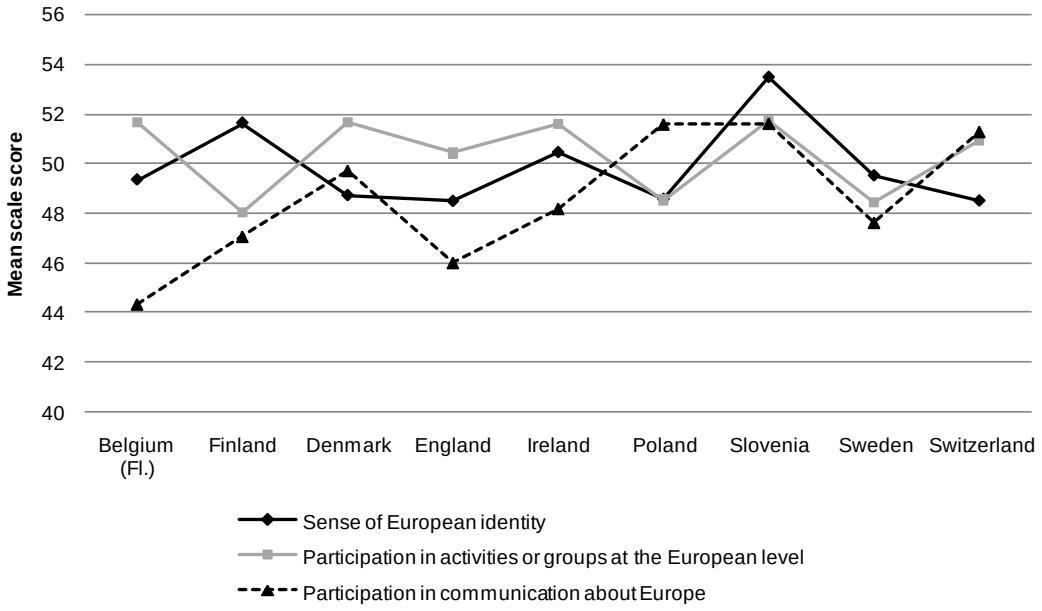

Figure 8.2: Mean scale scores for students' sense of European identity, participation in activities or groups at the European level and participation in communication about Europe, Ireland and comparison countries

Across comparison countries, students' sense of European identity is not consistently associated with their participation in activities or groups at the European level or with their participation in communication about Europe (Figure 8.2); e.g. while students in Slovenia had a comparatively strong sense of European identity and also comparatively high average scores on the scales measuring participation in activities or groups at the European level and communication about Europe, students in Finland had a comparatively high average score for sense of European identity and low average scores for participation in activities and communication about Europe.

8.4. Learning about Europe and European Languages at School

The majority of students in Ireland agreed or strongly agreed that their schools gave them opportunities to learn about Europe (Table 8.9). Over two-thirds of students in Ireland indicated that their schools gave them opportunities to visit other European countries and 80% agreed or strongly agreed that the school gave them opportunities to find out what is happening in other European countries. The corresponding European averages were 58% and 74% respectively. Although students in Ireland reported that schools gave them opportunities to visit other European countries, it was noted in Section 8.3 above that only 29% of students had been on a school trip to another European country by the time of the ICCS survey.

Students were also asked about their attitudes towards learning foreign European languages (see Box 8.1 for a discussion of a number of relevant issues; also Council of Europe, 2007). A large majority of students in Ireland (86%) and on average across European countries (93%) agreed or strongly agreed that learning a foreign European language is important for travelling/going on holidays in Europe (Table 8.9). Almost four-fifths of students in Ireland (78%) agreed or strongly agreed that learning a foreign European language helps people understand other European cultures better. This was slightly lower than the corresponding European average (82%).

Table 8.9: Sample items for student reports on opportunities for learning about Europe at school and students' attitudes towards European language learning

Scale / Question wording	Sample item	Ireland		European average	
		+	-	+	-
Student reports on opportunities for learning about Europe at school[1]	Visit other European countries	68.3	31.7	57.5	42.5
How much do you agree or disagree…? My school gives me opportunities to…	Find out what is happening in other European countries	80.1	19.9	74.1	28.9
Students' attitudes toward European language learning[1]	Learning a foreign European language is important for travelling/going on holidays in Europe	86.3	13.7	93.1	6.9
How much to you agree or disagree…?	Learning a foreign European language helps people understand other European cultures better	78.4	21.6	82.3	17.7

[1]Positive response options: Strongly agree or agree. Negative response options: Disagree or strongly disagree.

Box 8.1: Issues regarding Foreign Language Learning

The term "foreign language" was not defined in the European Module questionnaire so it is not possible to know how the term was interpreted by students. The special Eurobarometer on language learning (European Commission, 2006, p. 5) considered a foreign language "to be any language other than the respondent's mother tongue even if it is a state language in the country of residence". More typically, a distinction is made between "second language" and "foreign language", whereby the latter is used to refer to languages not commonly used in the country in which they are learned. Ellis (1994, p. 12) states that in "second language acquisition, the language plays an institutional and social role in the community... For example, English as a second language is learnt in the United States, the United Kingdom. … In contrast, foreign language learning takes place in settings where the language plays no major role in the community and is primarily learnt only in the classroom. Examples of foreign language learning are English learnt in France or Japan". The distinction is important as students in ICCS were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a number of statements which referred to "foreign languages". In particular, the distinction between "second" and "foreign" would be useful when examining young people's responses to the statement "all young people in Europe should learn at least two foreign European languages".

The European Module asked students about attitudes to learning foreign European languages but did not distinguish between English and other European languages. Dörnyei & Csizér (2002, p.455) argue that it is unfair to compare attitudes towards learning English to attitudes towards learning other languages, given the status of English as a world language. They state that "the distinction between world language learning and non-world language learning … helps to question the common claim that the British and the Americans are worse language learners than people in other countries. This comparison contrasts non-world language learning with World English learning which is simply not fair… We suspect that if we compared the learning of French in the UK to that in Hungary, the picture we would find would not be at all dissimilar". Similarly, Henry and Apelgran (2008) indicate that "while adults in Sweden place great importance on communicative competence in English, interest in learning other foreign languages and support for multilingualism are low". It is possible that, had a distinction been made in the European Module, attitudes towards learning English may have differed from attitudes towards learning other European languages.

Students were asked whether or not they can communicate in or understand any languages spoken in other European countries. Students in Ireland were told to exclude English and Irish. Over three-quarters of students in Ireland (77.6%) indicated that they could communicate in another European language. This was similar to the percentage in England (73.2%). The corresponding European average was higher, at 87.7%.

The average score of students in Ireland on the opportunities for learning about Europe scale did not differ significantly from the corresponding European average (Table 8.10). No significant differences were found on this scale between boys and girls or between native and migrant students. A statistically significant, albeit weak, correlation (r = -.09) was found between scores on this scale and civic knowledge, and there was no relationship between this scale and students' socioeconomic background.

Students in Ireland scored significantly lower than the European average on the attitudes towards European language learning scale (Table 8.10). The difference amounts to almost two-fifths of a standard deviation. Boys had a significantly lower average score than girls and native students had a significantly lower score than migrants who spoke languages other than English or Irish. The latter difference amounted to almost half a standard deviation.

Table 8.10: Mean student scale scores (SE, SD) in Ireland for *students' reports on opportunities for learning about Europe at school*, and *students' attitudes towards European language learning*, comparisons with European means and by student gender and native status, and correlations with student socioeconomic status and ICCS civic knowledge

Scale	European Mean	Ireland								
		Mean	SE	SD	Gender (Male – Female)	Native & language: Native – Migrant, speaks English / Irish	Native & language: Native – Migrant, other language	Native & language: Migrant, English / Irish – Migrant, other language	Student SES (r)	ICCS Civic Knowledge (r)
Student reports on opportunities for learning about Europe at school	=	50.3	0.27	9.48	=	=	=	=	-.001	**-.090**
Students' attitudes toward European language learning	⇓	46.2	0.22	9.70	⇓	=	⇓	=	**.130**	**.104**

Note: Significantly higher ($p \leq .05$) ↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .05$) ↓
Significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) ⇑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .01$) ⇓
No statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) =

Values of r in bold indicate that correlation is significant ($p < .05$)

Shading indicates that the difference between the two groups being compared is statistically significant and at least 2.5 (one-quarter of a standard deviation).

There is a weak to moderate positive correlation between students' attitudes to European language learning and student socioeconomic status (r = .13) and a weak positive correlation with civic knowledge (r = .10) (Table 8.10). A moderate positive correlation (r = .29) was found between students' reports on opportunities for learning about Europe at school and their attitudes towards European language learning (Table A8.1, Appendix 8).

The mean scale score for attitudes to European language learning in England is similar to that in Ireland (Figure 8.3). The average scores in Finland, Sweden, Switzerland, and to a lesser extent Denmark, are also below the corresponding European average.

Students in Sweden, Switzerland and Belgium (Fl.) had comparatively lower scores on the scale measuring opportunities for learning about Europe at school than students in the other comparison countries. The average scores on this scale were similar in England, Ireland, Poland and Slovenia.

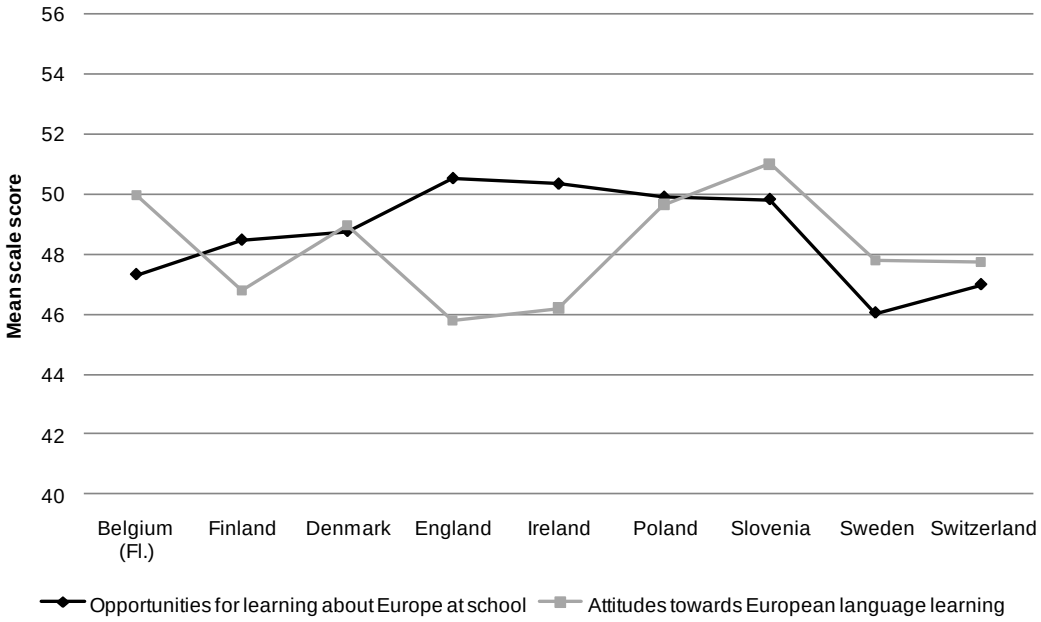

Figure 8.3: Mean scale scores for opportunities for learning about Europe at school and attitudes towards European language learning, Ireland and European comparison countries

8.5. Attitudes to Common Policies, Currency, Unification and Expansion

In this section, four scales are discussed: students' attitudes towards common policies in Europe, the common European currency, European unification and further expansion of the EU. Table 8.11 shows example items comprising each of these scales. A large majority of students in Ireland and on average across European countries agreed or strongly agreed that 'European countries should try and have a common set of policies regarding the environment' (Ireland 88%, European average 87%) and also that 'it would be good if European countries had more similar rules and laws' (Ireland 73%, European average 76%).

Similarly, high percentages of students in Ireland and on average in European countries agreed or strongly agreed with the statements regarding the common European currency. In Ireland, 81% of students agreed or strongly agreed that 'if all European countries had the same currency, they would be stronger economically' (Table 8.11). The corresponding European average was 75%. A greater percentage of students in Ireland (79%) than on average across Europe (65%) was in favour of all countries in Europe joining the euro.

To a large extent, support for joining the euro differed according to whether or not countries were members of the Eurozone, although there were some exceptions. The average percentage of students who agreed or strongly agreed that all European countries should join the euro was 76.8% in Eurozone countries compared to 53.2% in non-Eurozone countries. The lowest percentage of students in favour of all countries joining the euro was found in Switzerland (35%), a non-Eurozone and non-EU country. In other non-Eurozone countries such as Sweden, Denmark, England and Liechtenstein, less than half of students agreed or strongly agreed that all European countries should join the euro. Looking at countries within

the Eurozone, Belgium (Fl.) had the highest percentage of students (89%) who agreed that all countries in Europe should join the euro. With 79% of students in favour, Ireland was similar to other Eurozone countries such as Slovenia (76%), Italy (79%) and Luxembourg (80%).

Table 8.11: Sample items for *students' attitudes towards common policies in Europe, common European currency*, *European unification* and *further expansion of the EU*, percentages for combined response categories in Ireland and European averages

Scale / Question wording	Sample item	Ireland		European average	
		+	-	+	-
Students' attitudes towards common policies in Europe[1] *How much do you agree or disagree…?*	European countries should try and have a common set of policies regarding the environment	88.2	11.8	87.2	12.8
	It would be good if European countries had more similar rules and laws	73.4	26.6	75.8	24.2
Students' attitudes towards common European currency[1] *How much do you agree or disagree…?*	If all European countries had the same currency, they would be economically stronger	81.0	19.0	75.2	24.8
	All countries in Europe should join the Euro	79.0	21.0	65.5	34.5
Students' attitudes towards European unification[1] *How much do you agree or disagree…?*	The heads of state of European countries (presidents, kings, queens, etc.) should one day be replaced by a 'President' of all Europe	29.7	70.3	33.7	66.3
	The European Parliament should one day replace the parliaments of all European countries	27.3	72.7	36.6	63.4
Students' attitudes towards further expansion of the EU[1] *How much do you agree or disagree…?*	The European Union should continue to enlarge until it includes all European countries	77.6	22.4	70.9	29.1
	The advantage of European Union enlargement is that it encourages countries that want to join to respect human rights	86.4	13.6	84.5	15.5

[1]Positive response options: Strongly agree or agree. Negative response options: Disagree or strongly disagree.

Although Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia[43] and the Czech Republic are not members of the Eurozone, majorities (53% to 66%) of students in those countries agreed that all European countries should join the Euro. Among non-Eurozone countries, the highest level of support for joining the euro was found in Bulgaria (78%). The high percentage of students in Bulgaria in favour of the euro may have

[43] As noted in Table 8.1, Estonia is expected to join the Eurozone in January 2011.

related to the country's planned entry into the Eurozone which has since been postponed.[44]

A substantial minority of students in Ireland (30%) and on average in Europe (34%) agreed or strongly agreed that 'the heads of state of European countries … should one day be replaced by a 'President' of all Europe' (Table 8.11). A lower percentage of students in Ireland (27%) than on average across European countries (37%) agreed or strongly agreed that 'the European Parliament should one day replace the parliaments of all European countries'.

There was strong support in Ireland for enlargement of the EU as almost 78% of students agreed or strongly agreed that 'the European Union should continue to enlarge until it includes all European countries' and 86% agreed or strongly agreed that 'the advantage of European Union enlargement is that it encourages countries that want to join to respect human rights' (Table 8.11). The corresponding European averages were 71% and 84%, respectively.

On the overall scale scores for student attitudes towards common policies in Europe, the common European currency, European unification and further expansion of the EU, students in Ireland scored below the corresponding European averages on two scales (attitudes towards common policies and attitudes towards European unification) and above the corresponding European averages on a further two scales (attitudes towards the common currency and attitudes towards further expansion of the EU) (Table 8.12).

Small, but statistically significant, differences in favour of boys were found in Ireland on the scales measuring attitudes towards the common European currency, European unification and further expansion of the EU (Table 8.12). Few differences were found between native and migrant students although on the attitudes towards the common currency scale, native students scored significantly higher than migrant students who spoke languages other than English or Irish at home. In addition, on the attitudes towards European unification scale, native students and migrants who spoke English or Irish had significantly lower scores than migrants who spoke languages other than English or Irish.

A statistically significant, but weak, positive correlation was found between student socioeconomic status and student attitudes towards the common European currency (r = .04) (Table 8.12). A weak to moderate positive correlation was found between civic knowledge and attitudes to the common currency (r = .11). Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and with lower civic knowledge scores tended to have more positive attitudes towards European unification: there is a weak to moderate negative correlation between student socioeconomic status and attitudes to European unification (r = -.19) and a moderate to strong negative correlation between civic knowledge and attitudes to unification (r = -.50).

Students in Ireland who showed stronger levels of support for common policies across Europe also showed stronger levels of support for a common European currency and for further expansion of the EU; there are moderate to strong correlations between students' attitudes to a common currency and common policies (r = .42), students' attitudes to a common currency and further expansion of the EU (r = .52), and students' attitudes to common policies and further expansion of the EU (r = .47) (Table A8.1, Appendix 8).

[44]See e.g. http://www.euractiv.com/en/euro/bulgaria-drops-plans-early-Eurozone-entry-news-438038

Table 8.12: Mean student scale scores (SE, SD) in Ireland for *students' attitudes towards common policies in Europe*, *common European currency*, *European unification* and *further expansion of the EU*, comparisons with European mean and by student gender and native status, and correlations with student socioeconomic status and ICCS civic knowledge

Scale	European Mean	Ireland								
						Native & language				
		Mean	SE	SD	Gender (Male – Female)	Native – Migrant, speaks English / Irish	Native – Migrant, other language	Migrant, English / Irish – Migrant, other language	Student SES (r)	ICCS Civic Knowledge (r)
Students' attitudes towards common policies in Europe	↓	49.6	0.21	9.78	=	=	=	=	.002	.006
Students' attitudes towards common European currency	↑	52.4	0.19	9.09	↑	=	↑	=	**.040**	**.108**
Students' attitudes towards European unification	↓	47.5	0.32	10.82	↑	=	↓	↓	**-.194**	**-.495**
Students' attitudes towards further expansion of the EU	↑	50.9	0.22	10.01	↑	=	=	=	.031	-.008

Note: Significantly higher ($p \leq .05$) ↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .05$) ↓
Significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) ↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .01$) ↓
No statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) =
Values of r in bold indicate that correlation is significant ($p < .05$)
Shading indicates that the difference between the two groups being compared is statistically significant and at least 2.5 (one-quarter of a standard deviation).

Students in Belgium (Fl.) had the highest average score on the attitudes towards the common European currency scale (Figure 8.4). Students in Ireland and Slovenia also had mean scores on this scale that were above the European average. Students in Switzerland, Denmark and England had comparatively low scores on this scale; none of these countries are in the Eurozone. There is almost one standard deviation between the average score in Switzerland and that in Belgium, indicating wide variation across countries on this scale.

There is also wide variation between comparison countries on the attitudes to European unification scale with about three-quarters of a standard deviation between the average scores in the highest and lowest scoring comparison countries. Of the comparison countries, the highest average score on this scale was found in Slovenia (a country that recently joined the EU) and the lowest in Finland.

There was less variation between countries on the attitudes to common policies scale. Across comparison countries students in Finland and Denmark had the lowest average scores on this scale. In general, there was also relatively little variation on the attitudes towards EU expansion scale, although Switzerland was an outlier in this regard.

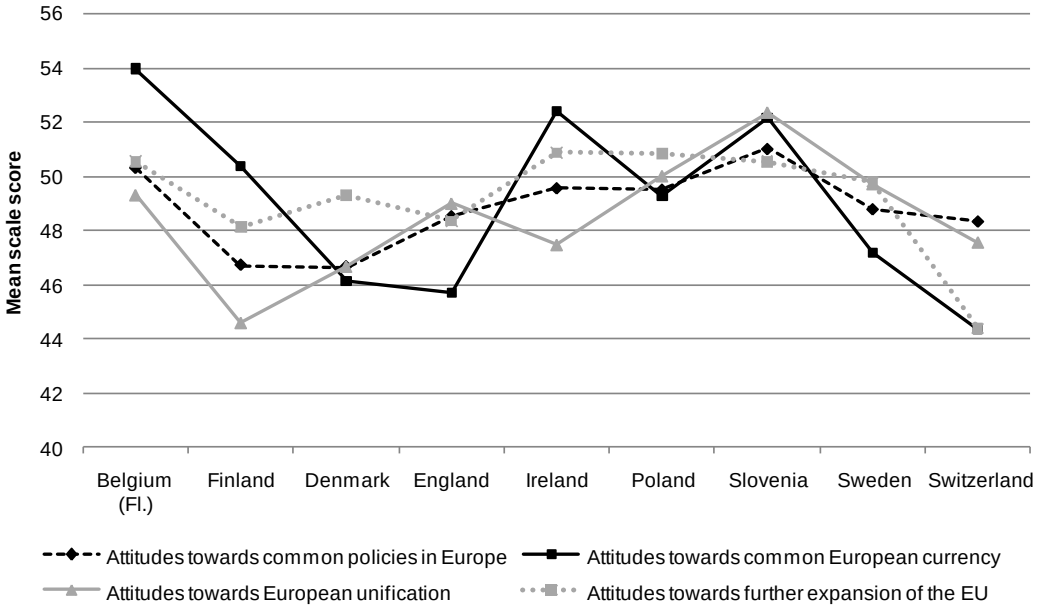

Figure 8.4: Mean scale scores for attitudes towards common policies in Europe, common European currency, European unification and further expansion of the EU, Ireland and European comparison countries

8.6. Attitudes to Equal Opportunities and Migration within Europe

In this section, students' attitudes towards equal opportunities for other European citizens, freedom of migration within Europe and restricting migration within Europe are discussed. Table 8.13 shows example items for these scales. High percentages of students in Ireland agreed or strongly agreed that 'citizens of European countries who come to Ireland should have the same opportunities as people from Ireland whatever their ethnic or racial background' (86%) or 'whether they come from a rich country or a poor one' (88%). The corresponding European averages were very similar, at 85% and 88%, respectively.

Regarding students' attitudes towards freedom of migration within Europe, lower percentages of students in Ireland (58%) than on average across European countries (70%) agreed or strongly agreed that 'allowing citizens from other European countries to work here is good for the economy of Ireland' (Table 8.13). Similar percentages of students in Ireland (82%) and on average across Europe (88%) agreed or strongly agreed that 'European citizens should be free to travel anywhere in Europe, so they get to understand other European cultures better'.

Table 8.13: Sample items for *students' attitudes towards equal opportunities for other European citizens, freedom of migration within Europe* and *restricting migration within Europe*, percentages for combined response categories in Ireland and European averages

Scale / Question wording	Sample item	Ireland		European average	
		+	-	+	-
Students' attitudes towards equal opportunities for other European citizens[1]	whatever their ethnic or racial background	85.6	14.4	84.6	15.4
Citizens of European countries who come to Ireland should have the same opportunities as people from Ireland…	whether they come from a rich country or a poor one	87.6	12.4	88.3	11.7
Students' attitudes towards freedom of migration within Europe[1]	Allowing citizens from other European countries to work here is good for the economy of Ireland	58.4	41.6	69.8	30.2
How much do you agree or disagree…?	European citizens should be free to travel anywhere in Europe, so they get to understand other European cultures better	82.3	17.7	87.6	12.4
Students' attitudes towards restricting migration within Europe[1]	Citizens of Ireland will be safer from crime if they close their borders to immigrants from other European countries	38.5	61.5	45.0	55.0
How much do agree or disagree…?	Allowing citizens of other European countries to come and work here leads to more unemployment for citizens of Ireland	74.5	25.5	65.3	34.7

[1]Positive response options: Strongly agree or agree. Negative response options: Disagree or strongly disagree.

A large minority of students in Ireland (39%) agreed or strongly agreed that 'citizens of Ireland will be safer from crime if they close their borders to immigrants from other European countries' (Table 8.13). This was somewhat lower than the corresponding European average (45%). Three-quarters of students in Ireland agreed or strongly agreed that 'allowing citizens of other European countries to come and work here leads to more unemployment for citizens of Ireland'. The corresponding European average was lower, at 65%.

The average score of students in Ireland did not differ significantly from the European average on the equal opportunities for other European citizens scale (Table 8.14). Students in Ireland had a significantly lower score on the scale measuring attitudes towards freedom of migration and a significantly higher score on the scale measuring restricting migration than students on average across European countries. Although statistically significant, the differences were small – less than one-quarter of a standard deviation in both cases.

Table 8.14: Mean student scale scores (SE, SD) in Ireland for *students' attitudes towards equal opportunities for other European citizens, freedom of migration within Europe* and *restricting migration within Europe*, comparisons with European means and by student gender and native status, and correlations with student socioeconomic status and ICCS civic knowledge

Scale	European Mean	Ireland								
		Mean	SE	SD	Gender (Male – Female)	Native & language: Native – Migrant, speaks English / Irish	Native & language: Native – Migrant, other language	Native & language: Migrant, English / Irish – Migrant, other language	Student SES (r)	ICCS Civic Knowledge (r)
Students' attitudes towards equal opportunities for other European citizens	=	50.4	0.22	10.20	🡻	🡻	🡻	=	**.116**	**.210**
Students' attitudes towards freedom of migration within Europe	🡻	47.7	0.24	10.39	=	🡻	🡻	=	**.116**	.031
Students' attitudes towards restricting migration within Europe	🡹	51.5	0.22	9.95	🡹	↑	=	=	**-.152**	**-.222**

Note: Significantly higher ($p \leq .05$) ↑ Significantly lower ($p \leq .05$) ↓
Significantly higher ($p \leq .01$) 🡹 Significantly lower ($p \leq .01$) 🡻
No statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) =

Values of r in bold indicate that correlation is significant ($p < .05$)

Shading indicates that the difference between the two groups being compared is statistically significant and at least 2.5 (one-quarter of a standard deviation).

Gender differences were found in Ireland on two of these scales: girls had a significantly higher score than boys on the attitudes towards equal opportunities scale, while boys had a significantly higher score on the attitudes towards restricting migration scale. The difference between boys and girls on the equal opportunities scale was about one-third of a standard deviation. The difference on the attitudes towards restricting migration was lower, at one-quarter of a standard deviation.

Differences were found between native and migrant students on all three scales (Table 8.14). Native students had significantly lower scores than migrant students regardless of the language spoken at home by migrants on both the attitudes towards equal opportunities scale and the attitudes towards freedom of migration scale. The differences between native students and migrant students amounted to about two-fifths of a standard deviation on the equal opportunities scale. Larger differences were found on the freedom of migration scale: native students scored over half a standard deviation lower than migrants who spoke English or Irish and almost two-thirds of a standard deviation lower than migrants who spoke other languages. Native students had a significantly higher average score on the restricting migration scale than migrants who spoke English or Irish. This difference was just over one-quarter of a standard deviation.

There are statistically significant weak to moderate positive correlations between students' attitudes towards equal opportunities for other European citizens

and both student socioeconomic status (r = .12) and civic knowledge (r = .21) and also between students' attitudes towards freedom of migration within Europe and student socioeconomic status (r = .12) (Table 8.14). There are weak to moderate negative correlations between students' attitudes towards restricting migration within Europe and socioeconomic status (r = -.15) and civic knowledge (r = -.22). There is a moderate to strong positive correlation between students' attitudes to equal opportunities and freedom of migration within Europe (r = .50) and weak to moderate negative correlations between students' attitudes to restricting migration and equal opportunities (r = -.21) and between students' attitudes to restricting migration and freedom of migration (r = -.16) (Table A8.1, Appendix 8).

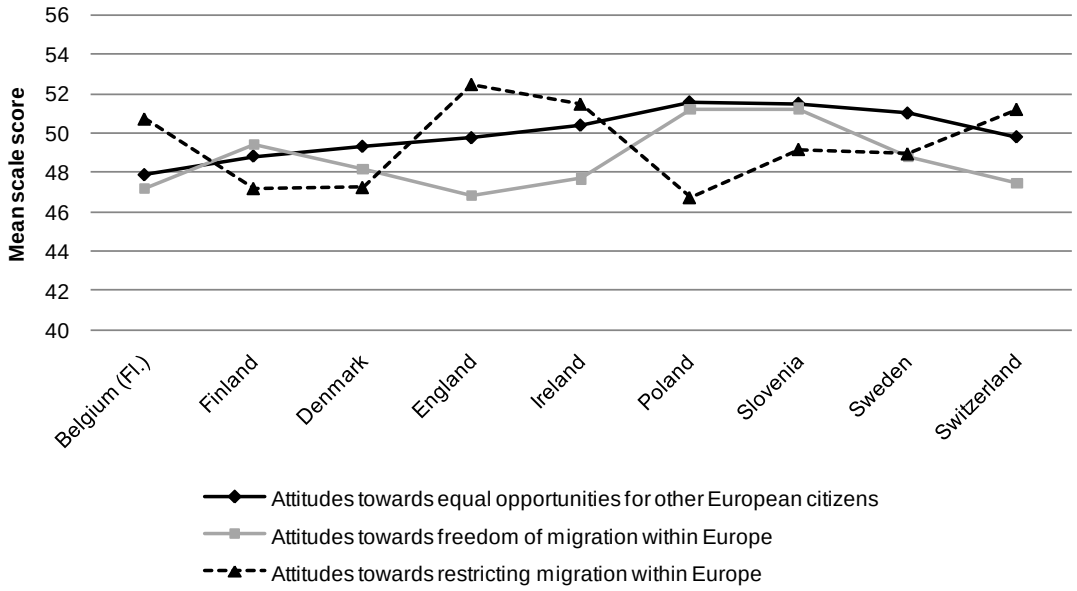

Figure 8.5: Mean scale scores for attitudes towards equal opportunities for other European citizens, freedom of migration with Europe and restricting migration within Europe, Ireland and European comparison countries

In general across comparison countries, higher average scores on the scale measuring attitudes towards restricting migration within Europe were associated with lower average scores on the attitudes towards freedom of migration scale (e.g. Belgium (Fl.), England, Ireland and Switzerland) and *vice versa* (Poland, Slovenia and Finland); however, this was not the case in Sweden and to only a small extent in Denmark (Figure 8.5). Students in Poland, Slovenia and Sweden had comparatively high scores on the attitudes towards equal opportunities for other European citizens scale; conversely, students in Belgium (Fl.) and Finland had comparatively lower scores on this scale. Attitudes towards equal opportunities tended to be negatively associated with attitudes towards restricting migration, e.g. in Poland, the average score was low on the restricting migration scale but comparatively high on the equal opportunities scale; the opposite was the case in England.

8.7. Key Points Arising From Chapter 8

This chapter examined students' performance on the European Module test and their attitudes and behaviours as measured by the European questionnaire which was commissioned by the European Union and undertaken by students in 24 out of 26 European countries. Key findings are as follows:

- The 12-minute European test measured civic and citizenship knowledge in discrete areas, knowledge that is likely to vary according to a how long a country is a member of the EU and/or Eurozone. As the test items did not measure a single underlying construct, an overall scale could not be formed.
- Regarding knowledge of the EU and its institutions, there was a high degree of familiarity with basic facts. For example, almost all students in Ireland (99%) knew that Ireland is a member of the European Union and most (87%) could identify the flag of the EU. The corresponding European averages were also very high, at 97% and 93% respectively.
- There was somewhat less familiarity with procedural aspects of the EU. For example, 56% of students in Ireland knew the number of EU member states and 49% knew who votes to elect members of the European Parliament than on average across European countries.
- Only a minority of students in Ireland could identify one requirement for a country to be allowed to join the EU (33%) or indicate what determines the amount a member country contributes to the EU (32%). These percentages in Ireland were lower than the corresponding European averages (41% and 44%, respectively).
- Knowledge of EU laws and policies was variable. For example, while most students in Ireland (91%) knew that the EU aims to promote peace, prosperity and freedom within its borders, only one-fifth of students knew that all citizens of the EU can study in any EU country without needing a special permit.
- Three of four questions on the euro were answered correctly by at least two-thirds of students in Ireland and on average across Europe. The fourth question, asking students whether or not the euro is the official currency of all EU countries, was answered correctly by about half of students in Ireland and on average across Europe; as this was a true-false item, this is similar to what would be expected by chance.
- Students in Ireland had significantly lower mean scores on six of 13 attitudinal scales derived from the European Module questionnaire: self-reported knowledge about Europe; participation in communication about Europe; attitudes towards foreign European language learning; common policies about Europe; European unification; and freedom of migration within Europe.
- The mean scores in Ireland on three scales did not differ significantly from the corresponding European averages. These were: students' sense of European identity; students' reports on opportunities for learning about Europe at school; and students' attitudes towards equal opportunities for other European citizens.
- On four scales, students in Ireland had higher mean scores than students on average across Europe. These were: students' participation in activities or groups at the European level; attitudes towards a common European currency; further expansion of the EU; and restricting migration within Europe.
- A significant gender difference which exceeded one-quarter of a standard deviation in favour of males in Ireland was found for the scale measuring self-reported knowledge of the EU. A significant gender difference which

exceeded one-quarter of a standard deviation in favour of females was found for the scale measuring attitudes towards equal opportunities for other European citizens.

- Statistically significant differences amounting to more than one-quarter of a standard deviation between native and migrant students were found on a number of scales. Native students had significantly lower scores than migrant students (regardless of language spoken at home) on the scales measuring attitudes towards equal opportunities for other European citizens and freedom of migration within Europe.
- Some additional differences were found between native students and migrants who spoke languages other than English or Irish. Although in general, migrant students had significantly higher scores than native students (i.e. on the scales measuring self-reported knowledge of the EU; attitudes towards European language learning; participation in communication about Europe; attitudes towards European unification; attitudes towards equal opportunities for other European citizens; and attitudes towards freedom of migration in Europe), native students had significantly higher scores on two scales (sense of European identity and attitudes towards restricting migration).
- A moderate to strong negative correlation was found between students' attitudes to European unification and civic knowledge. Correlations between civic knowledge, socioeconomic status and scores on the other scales were generally positive and weak.

Chapter 9. Summary and Conclusions

9.1. Introduction

The International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS), conducted in 2008-2009 in 38 countries, is the first study in which civic and citizenship education (CCE) issues in Ireland have been examined within a comprehensive international context in almost four decades. IEA's Six-Subject Study was conducted in eight countries including Ireland in 1971 and included an assessment of civics. A later IEA study on CCE – CIVED – was conducted in 1999, but Ireland did not participate.

ICCS gathered a wide range of information from students, teachers, school principals, and national policy experts. As well as completing an assessment of civic knowledge, students completed a questionnaire that gathered information about their social and demographic backgrounds, and their attitudes towards and beliefs about a number of civic and citizenship issues. Students also completed a booklet comprising a short assessment on knowledge about the EU and answered some questions on their attitudes and beliefs about various European issues (these instruments were commissioned by the EU). The information from students is complemented by the responses of teachers and principals to questionnaires. The teacher questionnaire included a CCE-specific section, as well as questions directed at all subject teachers of second years. In Ireland, under guidance of a national advisory committee (the members are noted in the Acknowledgements to this report), several Ireland-specific questions were developed and included in the student, teacher and principal questionnaires in order to enhance the national relevance of the study. In Ireland, an analysis of aspects of the CSPE curriculum was also undertaken, with reference to the ICCS framework.

In a large majority of ICCS countries, participating students were in grade 8 (second year) at the time of the study, with an average age of 14.4 years (in Ireland, the average age was 14.3 years). In four countries, participating students were in third year. In all countries, students were selected on the basis of a random sample of one or two base second (third)-year classes per school.

Since CCE is not confined to a single subject (although it is, arguably, most closely aligned to CSPE in Ireland), all subject teachers of second years were eligible for selection and, generally, 15 teachers were sampled at random from each school.

In 36 of the 38 countries, student response rates were deemed sufficiently high to compare results internationally, and in 27 of the 38 countries, teacher response rates were also sufficiently high for international comparisons to be made. In Ireland, a representative sample of 144 schools, 3,355 students and 1,861 teachers took part. Ireland fully met the sampling and response rate standards so that it is possible to compare results for Ireland with those of other participants.

Given that the countries participating in ICCS vary widely by culture, language, economic characteristics, etc., nine 'comparison countries' were selected against which to compare findings from Ireland (in addition to the overall ICCS international averages), and occasional reference is made to these comparison

countries in this concluding chapter. These are Belgium (Fl.), Denmark, England, Finland, New Zealand, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland. These countries were selected on the basis of high average performance, similar cultural/linguistic characteristics, similar population sizes, and/or recent educational reforms.

9.2. Civic Knowledge

The test of civic knowledge has an international mean of 500 and a standard deviation of 100 (i.e. across countries, two-thirds of students have an achievement score that are between 400 and 600).

Students in Ireland compared favourably with students in other participating countries in terms of their average performance on this test, ranking seventh out of 36 countries with a mean score that was one-third of a standard deviation higher than the international mean. Just four countries (Finland, Denmark, Korea and Chinese Taipei) achieved mean scores on the test that were significantly higher than Ireland. Four of the comparison countries (England, New Zealand, Slovenia, and Belgium (Fl.)) had scores that were significantly lower than that of Ireland (by up to 20 score points).

Performance was also reported in terms of international benchmarks or proficiency levels, ranging across three levels. In Ireland, 41% of students scored at Level 3 (≥563 points), 29% at Level 2 (479-562 points), and 20% at Level 1 (395-478 points). Ten percent of students scored below Level 1 (<395 points) indicating that, for these students, levels of civic knowledge were not measured by the test. These percentages compare favourably with the respective international averages of 28%, 31%, 26%, and 16%.

Although the Irish overall mean score ranked seventh, Ireland had the highest percentage of students scoring below Level 1 among the 12 top-performing countries. This is indicative of a comparatively longer 'tail' at the lower end of the achievement distribution in Ireland. Consistent with this, the Irish standard deviation was the fourth highest across 36 countries, indicating a relatively high level of variation in the scores among students. This finding suggests that student achievement in civic knowledge may be less equitable in Ireland than in other countries.

Another indicator of equity examined in this report is the extent to which schools differ with respect to civic knowledge. The more schools differ with respect to achievement, the less equitable the school system, since the larger the difference in achievement between schools, the more it 'matters' which school a student attends. Findings for Ireland suggest relatively high achievement differences between schools, indicated by a between-school variance of 35%, which is similar to countries such as England and Switzerland, but much higher than in others such as Denmark, Finland and Sweden. Recall, however, that students in ICCS were selected on the basis of intact base classes, and it is likely that between-school and between-class differences in achievement are confounded in these estimates, particularly in schools that stream students. We know from ICCS that 92% of students in Ireland attend CSPE classes on the basis of their base class, and that, of these, at least one-quarter are in base classes established on the basis of academic ability.

Apart from ICCS, which asked only in general terms about streaming, the most recent available data on streaming practices in schools are from 2002 (ESRI, personal communication, January, 2010). Comparing 2002 figures with those from 1984, the ESRI has documented an increase in mixed-ability base classes in first year from 40% to 65%. Figures for 2002 for Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate years are 62% and 61%, respectively. Ability-based differentiation in 2002 was associated with school sector, being lowest in co-educational secondary schools (15%), followed by girls' secondary schools (18%), boys' secondary schools (26%), and VEC, community and comprehensive schools (about 42%). Also, ability-based differentiation for base classes was much more prevalent in designated disadvantaged schools (51%) compared to non-designated schools (20%). These findings should be interpreted with respect to school size (smaller schools with one class per year level will, by default, be mixed-ability grouping).

The practice of streaming has been described by some researchers (e.g. Smyth, McCoy & Darmody, 2004; Smyth, Dunne, McCoy & Darmody, 2006) as a mechanism to reinforce and magnify social class and achievement differences, particularly for boys. They also reported that allocation to the lower stream places ceiling effects on students' potential Junior Certificate performance. This effect remained even after adjusting for students' prior achievement (Smyth et al., 2006). There was an observed dip in motivation and engagement of students in second year and this was most clearly in evidence in students in lower-stream classes, and particularly boys.

These findings point to the need to further examine the extent to which students are being streamed, in which schools, for which students this is more likely to occur, and how this affects students' achievement and other aspects of their education such as their engagement in school life. It might also be argued that less emphasis on streaming could lead to stronger democratic climate within schools, which, in turn, could lead to greater community awareness and support for democratic values (Flanagan, Cumsille, Gill & Gallay, 2007).

In 31 of 36 countries participating in ICCS, girls scored significantly higher than boys on the test of civic knowledge, and the size of the (significant) gender differences ranged from 8 to 48 points. The gender difference in Ireland (22 points) was the same as the international average.

It was emphasised in this report that observed associations between background variables (e.g., student gender, school sector) when examined one at a time can mask more complex associations. For example, previous studies of educational outcomes (namely performance; e.g. Cosgrove et al., 2005) have demonstrated that achievement differences associated with school structural features such as sector are accounted for by differences in the socioeconomic composition of schools.

For this reason, civic knowledge was examined within a multilevel model, which allows for a consideration of the simultaneous contribution of school and student characteristics.

The school characteristics considered were:

- Socioeconomic composition (based on the socioeconomic characteristics of participating students)
- Participation in the School Support Programme (SSP) under DEIS
- Location (population density)
- Enrolment size
- Principals' perceptions of parental participation in school
- Principals' perceptions of resources in the local community
- Students' sense of belonging in school (reported by principals)
- Teachers' perceptions of student behaviour (school average)
- Teachers' perceptions of school governance (school average).

The student characteristics considered were:

- Gender
- Migrant/language status (i.e. whether native or newcomer, and if newcomer, whether speaking a language at home other than English/Irish)
- Family structure (single parent, nuclear, mixed)
- Number of siblings
- Socioeconomic status (parental education and occupation combined)
- Number of books at home
- Parental interest in political and social issues
- Frequency of discussing political and social issues with parents
- Internal political efficacy (or confidence)
- Civic participation at school
- Student perceptions of their influence on decision-making at school
- Student perceptions of the value of participation at school
- Student perceptions of the openness of classroom discussion
- Time spent on homework on a typical day
- Time spent reading for fun on a typical day.

Results indicated that the *only school characteristic* to remain significantly associated with civic knowledge was *school socioeconomic composition*. Several *student characteristics* remained significant in the final model. These were *migrant/language status, socioeconomic status, books at home, frequency of discussing political or social issues with parents, internal political efficacy, perception of student influence on decision-making at school, value of participation at school, openness of classroom discussion,* and *time spent reading for fun*. The final model accounted for 46% of the total variation in civic knowledge (and explained 71% of the total variation between schools and 33% within schools).

One finding of interest was that the observed gender difference of 22 score points appears to be accounted for (at least in a statistical sense) by gender differences in the frequency of leisure reading (this being higher for girls). This finding is consistent with findings from PISA (e.g. OECD, 2010c), where associations between engagement in reading and reading achievement were noted, along with the comparatively low engagement of boys relative to girls, particularly in Ireland. This finding also suggests that civic knowledge and its assessment may require a basic level of literacy in order to access its content, and indeed that increasing levels of

literacy may be associated with increasing levels of civic knowledge achievement. This conjecture would need, however, to be explored further by examining measures that are relevant to literacy (e.g. performance on Junior Certificate English, standardised test results) and how these relate to civic knowledge achievement results.

Consistent with previous multivariate analyses of achievement in other domains, school socioeconomic composition remains in the final model and in fact explains 18% of the total variation in civic knowledge. Also consistent with previous studies, student socioeconomic status remains in the final model, which indicates that both school-level and within-school socioeconomic-related targeting may be warranted. Further, that newcomer students who do not speak the language of instruction had lower scores than other students (even after adjusting for the other characteristics) underlines the continued need to support these students.

The importance of the role of parents is confirmed in the model, and results indicate the benefits of fostering a positive home educational climate and promoting discussion on social and political issues between students and their parents.

The model also affirms the importance of schools, over and above student background characteristics, in fostering civic knowledge. It was found that student perceptions of the value of participation in school and of openness in classroom discussion were positively associated with civic knowledge, suggesting that there would be merit in examining in more detail what these scales are measuring in order to identify strategies to promote and support these aspects of school climate. In contrast, however, students' perceptions of their level of influence on decision-making in school were negatively associated with civic knowledge. Although consistent with results from other ICCS countries (Schulz et al., 2010b), there would be merit in exploring this result further, since one might have expected a positive association between this variable and achievement.

Finally, students' internal political efficacy showed a small positive association with civic knowledge in the final model. However, some researchers (e.g. Williams & Williams, 2010) have provided evidence that the nature of the relationship between measures of efficacy and achievement is circular, so this result should be interpreted with caution. In other words, it might be erroneous to infer from this finding that helping students to feel more confident about their capabilities to engage in political issues would result in higher levels of civic knowledge.

9.3. Interest in Political and Social Issues and Expected Electoral Participation

As the aim of civic and citizenship education (CCE) is to prepare students for active and participatory citizenship and not solely to provide knowledge about civic and citizenship issues, students' interest in political and social issues and expected adult electoral participation were also considered to be indicators of interest for national reporting. The mean score of students in Ireland on the scale measuring interest in political and social issues was about the same as the international mean and was similar to the mean scores of students in three of the nine comparison countries (England, New Zealand and Poland). In contrast, Irish students had a

significantly higher mean score than on average internationally on the expected electoral participation scale and the Irish score on this scale was higher than all nine comparison countries.

In Ireland, both interest in political and social issues and expected adult electoral participation were positively associated with civic knowledge, although the association was stronger between achievement and expected adult electoral participation (r=.40) than between achievement and interest in political and social issues (r=.11). Girls in Ireland indicated significantly higher levels of interest in political and social issues than boys and also obtained a significantly higher mean score on expected adult electoral participation.

There is some evidence internationally supporting the stability of political attitudes of adolescents. In contrast, there appears to be a less stable relationship between adolescents' voting intentions and the actual voting behaviour of young adults (Hooghe & Wilkenfeld, 2008). Given this potential instability, the expected adult voting intentions scale was not examined in depth in this report. Similar to the multivariate analysis of civic knowledge described in the previous section, though, the association between students' interest in political and social issues and various demographic, home background, self-concept and engagement characteristics was examined using multivariate analysis. Unlike the analysis of civic knowledge, however, no school characteristics were included as none was associated with interest in political and social issues. The same student characteristics (listed in the previous section) were included in this analysis.

The final model explained 45% of variation in *interest in political and social issues*. Variables in the final model were *gender* (higher interest in girls), *frequency of discussing political and social issues with parents, internal political efficacy, civic participation at school, perceptions of student influence on decision-making at school and of openness in classroom discussion,* and *time spent on homework.*

Thus, fewer characteristics remained significant in explaining variation in interest in political and social issues compared with civic knowledge. Student and school socioeconomic status were not associated with interest (which is in contrast with civic knowledge). However, the importance of the role of parents was again confirmed with the positive association between interest and discussion with parents.

The importance of school climate in fostering student interest in political and social issues was also confirmed. However, unlike the model of civic knowledge, all three student attitudinal scales relating to school climate (i.e. perceptions of civic participation, openness in classroom discussion, and perception of student influence on decision-making) were positively associated with interest in political and social issues. That perceptions of student influence on decision-making in school are negatively associated with knowledge but positively associated with interest again underlines the need to gain a better understanding of what this scale is measuring.

It is perhaps unexpected that time spent on homework is associated with interest but not knowledge, but it may be the case that the measure of time spent on homework is too general to draw any specific conclusions.

Similar to the model of civic knowledge, internal political efficacy was positively associated with interest, but the association was stronger in the case of interest: efficacy explained 18% of the variation in interest in political and social issues over and above the other variables, while it explained only 1% of the variation in civic knowledge. This suggests a need to examine in greater detail the relationship between efficacy and interest.

9.4. Other Student Attitudes and Beliefs

Additional student attitudes/beliefs examined in ICCS included attitudes towards gender equality, equal rights for all ethnic/racial groups and for immigrants, support for the student's country of residence, and support for democratic values. Students were also asked about their trust in civic institutions, levels of civic and political self-efficacy, student-teacher relations at school, perceived importance of different types of citizenship, and current and intended future behaviour such as participation at school and expected future participation in political and protest activities (both legal and illegal).

In general, students in Ireland had mean scores on these scales similar to the corresponding international averages. Two notable exceptions were attitudes to gender equality, where students in Ireland scored about two-fifths of a standard deviation above the international mean, and students' perceptions of their influence on decisions about school, where they scored almost three-fifths of a standard deviation below the corresponding international mean. While the former finding is welcome, considering the relatively low endorsement of gender equality in the 1971 Six-Subject Study, the latter finding is of concern given the increasing importance placed on involving students in decision-making processes via mechanisms such as Student Councils, and the partnership approach fostered by the Education Act (1998) and by agencies such as the National Educational Welfare Board (www.newb.ie).

Statistically significant and substantive gender differences in Ireland in favour of females were found on each of the scales measuring attitudes to equality (gender equality, equal rights for immigrants, and for ethnic/racial groups), and on perceptions of the importance of social-movement related citizenship, civic participation in the community and in school, expected future participation in legal protest, perceptions of openness in classroom discussions, and perceptions of the value of participation at school. The only statistically significant difference in favour of males which exceeded one-quarter of a standard deviation was on expected future participation in illegal protests. Schools and parents need to be aware of these gender differences as they seek to develop CCE-related attitudes.

Some statistically significant and substantive differences in achievement and attitudes were found between native and migrant students. For example, native students had significantly higher scores than migrant students, regardless of language spoken, on attitudes towards the country in which they lived (Ireland). Migrant students (regardless of home language) had a significantly higher score than native students on the scale measuring attitudes towards equal rights for immigrants.

Generally speaking, the associations between these scales and student socioeconomic status were positive but weak.

A large majority (95%) of Irish students indicated that they identify with a religion and of all students in Ireland, 87% identified themselves as Catholic. Of the comparison countries where this question was asked, only Poland had a higher percentage (97%). The percentage in England (56%) was one of the lowest across the 30 countries that chose to administer this question. Three-quarters of students in Ireland agreed that religious beliefs are an important influence in their lives (this question was specific to Ireland). Hence, it seems that religious identity and perceived religious influence among 14-year-olds are quite strong in contemporary Ireland and should not be overlooked in interpreting students' attitudes towards civic-related issues. However, the finding that comparatively few students in Ireland reported participating in religious organisations stands in contrast to the relatively high levels of religious identity and participation in religious services.

9.5. Teaching and Learning Contexts for Civic and Citizenship Education

Given that CCE occurs in a range of home, school and community contexts, both principal teachers and subject teachers, including teachers with responsibility for teaching CSPE, responded to questions about CCE-related issues in their schools. We have emphasised in previous chapters of this report that Ireland is characterised by a strongly examination-driven system at post-primary level, which may serve as a barrier to student and teacher engagement in participatory activities, whether informal or formal, as well as opportunities for students and their teachers to engage in innovative, collaborative and self-directed teaching and learning activities.

In Ireland, subject teachers agreed that promoting knowledge of citizens' rights and responsibilities, promoting knowledge of social, political and civic institutions, promoting students' critical and independent thinking, and promoting respect for and safeguard of the environment are key aims of CCE. Other aims, which were supported more strongly by subject teachers internationally than by subject teachers in Ireland, included promoting the capacity to defend one's point of view, developing skills and competencies in conflict resolution, and supporting the development of effective strategies for the fight against racism and xenophobia. Since ICCS asked teachers in general to identify the three most important aims of CCE, it is unclear if subject teachers in Ireland are aware of these broader aims of CCE, or ways in which they might promote them in lessons more generally.

Subject teachers in Ireland reported comparatively low levels of participation with their second-year students in a range of CCE-related activities, including human rights projects, activities related to underprivileged people or groups, activities to improve facilities for the local community, and multicultural and intercultural activities in the local community. Indeed, 24% of teachers in Ireland reported not participating with their students in any of the activities listed, compared with just 10% internationally. Students do not generally undertake a Report on an Action Project until third year, but it is perhaps nevertheless surprising that participation at second year is so low. Clearly, there is scope for teachers (and not just those that

teach CSPE) to participate jointly with students in a broader range of activities related to CCE that might, over time, encourage students to engage in such activities independently, whilst also addressing the relatively low participation of Irish students in CCE-related activities in the wider community (something observed by teachers themselves). It is also noteworthy that, relative to their counterparts in other ICCS countries, subject teachers in Ireland also reported low personal involvement in CCE-related activities.

An area related to student participation in the community is parental participation in school activities. The mean score for Ireland on the parental participation scale is below the international average, and parental participation was found to be greater in schools with higher levels of socioeconomic intake. Therefore, efforts could be made to encourage greater involvement of parents, particularly in less socioeconomically advantaged communities. Indeed, similar to teacher participation (with their students) in activities in the community, parental participation in the school could provide students with an important message about community participation more generally.

The results of Irish students on measures of student influence at school (rated comparatively low by principals), engagement of students in CCE activities in the class (rated low by CSPE teachers), and student participation in class activities (rated low by subject teachers) all point to a need to address levels of student participation and engagement in learning. These findings, taken together with those of the OECD's (2009b) Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), in which lower-secondary teachers in Ireland reported emphasising structuring or formal teaching practices in their teaching to a much greater extent than student-oriented practices (relative to teachers in other European countries), suggest considerable scope for enhancing student involvement in planning and implementing learning activities. While ICCS questionnaire scale scores for Ireland based on principals' ratings of students' sense of belonging, teacher confidence in teaching, CSPE teachers' confidence in teaching CCE, and teacher reports of classroom climate are all above the corresponding international averages, it seems that the items underlying these scales did not require respondents' to take student involvement in lessons into account.

The relatively frequent use of project work as an assessment tool by CSPE teachers in Ireland is noteworthy (45% of teachers report using this method 'often' or 'very often', compared with 25% internationally). This can be partly attributable to the high weighting given in the CSPE Junior Certificate assessment to the Report on an Action Project. In contrast, student self-assessment and peer assessment are used comparatively less often by CSPE teachers, with under-usage of these tools also reflected in the below-average score for subject teachers in Ireland on the teachers' use of assessment scale (see also OECD, 2009b). An increase in teachers' use of student-directed approaches to assessment would be consistent with strengthening the involvement of students in the learning process, as well as in decision-making.

While almost all CSPE teachers in Ireland reported attending at least one continuing professional development (CPD) activity in CSPE in the three years preceding the ICCS study, one-half of teachers viewed additional CPD in relevant

subject matter knowledge as among the most important aspects in need of improvement to enhance the teaching and learning of CCE (CSPE), and 21% considered additional CPD in assessment of CSPE to be important. These findings, together with others noted earlier (e.g. the relatively low level of involvement of students in CCE activities in CSPE classes), and the low average number of CPD days attended by Irish teachers at lower-secondary level found in TALIS (OECD, 2009b), suggest that access to and participation in appropriate courses for CSPE teachers should be closely monitored so that they are adequately equipped to teach the subject. Consideration might also be given to addressing these needs by providing quality Internet-based courses.

9.6. ICCS in the Context of National Curriculum and Assessment

This report included a comparison of the content of the ICCS assessment of civic knowledge and the CSPE curriculum and assessment, as well as a consideration of the broader context of the content and assessment of CCE in Ireland.

It was noted that CSPE is taught for just one class period per week at Junior Cycle and is the only Junior Certificate subject assessed via a common-level written examination. CSPE is also unique in that 60% of Junior Certificate Examination marks are allocated to a Report on an Action Project (RAP) or Course Work Assessment Booklet (CWAB).

Previous commentary on the CSPE syllabus suggests that the omission of power as a topic de-politicises it and that the broad and flexible nature of the syllabus runs the risk of promoting a minimalist approach to the subject (e.g. Jeffers, 2008). Also, having one class period a week and a relatively high teacher turnover among teachers of the subject have been identified as potential barriers to effective teaching and learning of CSPE (ibid.). However, it is worth re-stating that 16 ICCS countries do not have any discrete instructional time devoted to CCE. There is no clear relationship between provision of dedicated time on CCE and civic knowledge across countries; clearly the issue is more complex than this (see Schulz et al., 2010b and the forthcoming IEA ICCS Encyclopaedia for broader discussion of the national contexts of CCE provision in ICCS countries).

This report included a quantitative analysis of CSPE vis á vis the ICCS civic knowledge test. To do this, questions from CSPE Junior Certificate examination papers from three consecutive years were classified in terms of aspects of the ICCS assessment framework (Schulz et al., 2008) and an analysis of the content of recently-submitted action projects (Wilson, 2008) was reviewed.

Results indicated that in both assessments, about 40% of the questions assessed the content area of civic society and systems. ICCS placed a higher emphasis on civic principles than the CSPE examination questions, while CSPE questions were classified under the civic participation category more frequently than questions on the ICCS test. Very low emphasis was placed on civic identities in either assessment.

On the ICCS test, three-quarters of questions assessed the cognitive process of reasoning and analysing, and one quarter assessed the process of knowing about

CCE-relevant concepts. About half of CSPE questions assessed reasoning and analysing, and half assessed knowing. However, this comparison does not take into account students' work on a Report on an Action Project (RAP) which might also be expected to emphasise reasoning and analysing processes.

In an analysis of the content of the RAPs by Wilson (2008), it was found that projects on rights and responsibilities, stewardship and environment, democracy and law accounted for four-fifths of all projects, while the topics of development, community, interdependence and human dignity accounted for just a sixth of projects. Hence, there is an uneven coverage of CSPE topics in RAPs.

The nature of the activities underlying the RAPs was also reported by Wilson (2008). In three-quarters of cases, activities comprised a guest speaker, fundraising, or a combination of these two. The frequency of more proactive activities such as investigations, campaigns, protests, or petitions was much lower. It would seem important to extend the range of activities underlying these projects. There may be a link between students' relatively low levels of participatory activities and the types of activities underpinning the action projects.

In the broader context of CCE in Ireland, it is argued that there is a need to consider the content and scope of CSPE and related subject areas. The needs and qualifications of Junior and Senior Cycle teachers may also need to be examined, given the currently-planned future introduction of Politics and Society as a subject at Senior Cycle (see NCCA, 2010b). There would also be merit in gathering more information on the RAPs in terms of the types of knowledge and skills gained by students and whether or not the most common format of the RAP (whole-class project) is optimal. Finally, there is a need to investigate the disjuncture between the high levels of priority accorded to active participation in the CSPE syllabus and the low levels of teacher, student and parent participation in CCE-relevant activities noted earlier in this chapter, perhaps most appropriately in the broader context of the Junior Cycle Review (NCCA, 2010b).

9.7. Knowledge of EU and Attitudes towards Europe

ICCS incorporated three regional modules dealing with Europe, Asia and Latin America. The European Module (commissioned by the EU) was undertaken by students in 24 out of 26 European countries that participated in ICCS, including Ireland. Two of these, Switzerland and Liechtenstein, are not members of the European Union. The Module consisted of a 12-minute test which measured specific knowledge about the European Union and a questionnaire which examined attitudes towards, perceptions of, and participation in, activities related to Europe (not specifically the EU). The test items did not measure a single underlying construct across countries; therefore an overall scale could not be formed. In interpreting these results, it might be noted that students in Ireland generally cover Europe and the EU in CSPE and history classes in third year.

There was, nonetheless, a high degree of familiarity with basic facts about the European Union in Ireland as well as in other participating countries; e.g. almost all students in Ireland (99%) and on average in European countries (97%) knew whether or not their country was a member of the European Union. Procedural aspects of the

EU were less familiar; e.g. 56% of students in Ireland and 57% on average knew the number of EU member states. Knowledge of EU laws and policies was quite varied. For example, most students in Ireland (91%) and on average (89%) knew that the EU aims to promote peace, prosperity and freedom within its borders. However, only 21% of students in Ireland and 30% on average across European countries knew that all citizens of the EU can study in any EU country without needing a special permit. Three of four questions on the euro were answered correctly by at least two-thirds of students in Ireland and on average across Europe. Given that the EU is generally studied in CSPE and history classes in third year, it is unclear whether additional attention to these issues is warranted earlier in the Junior Cycle.

In general, Irish students achieved similar mean scores on the attitudinal/behavioural measures in the European Module questionnaire as students on average across European countries. The mean scores in Ireland on just two of the 13 attitudinal/behavioural scales were significantly and substantively different to (by at least one-quarter of a standard deviation) the corresponding European means. First, students in Ireland had comparatively poorer attitudes towards European unification than students on average across Europe. Second, students in Ireland had a significantly lower mean score on the attitudes towards European language learning. It was noted, however, that students in different countries may have interpreted the term 'foreign language' differently depending on the number of languages spoken in their country. In addition, no distinction was made in the European Module between attitudes to learning English and learning other languages; other research has shown that attitudes to learning English are typically more positive given its status as a world language (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002).

The relatively poor attitude among students in Ireland towards learning a European language, along with lower levels of familiarity with another language, is consistent with concerns expressed elsewhere (e.g. Faller, Irish Times, April 20, 2010) that relate to the small proportion of students in Ireland learning more than one foreign language, declining percentages of students sitting a foreign language subject in the Junior Certificate examination, low levels of fluency among graduates applying for positions with multi-national companies where there is a language requirement, and a failure to implement programmes in schools based on new insights into language learning.

Turning now to gender differences on the European Module questionnaire scales, males in Ireland had a significantly higher score on the scale measuring self-reported knowledge of the EU: their mean score exceeded that of females by about three-tenths of a standard deviation (this finding can be interpreted with respect to the more general pattern in the research literature of higher self-reported efficacy among males relative to females; e.g. Williams & Williams, 2010). Conversely, females in Ireland had a significantly higher mean score on attitudes towards equal opportunities for European citizens. This difference amounted to about one-third of a standard deviation.

Regarding attitudes of native and migrant students, significant differences that amounted to at least one quarter of a standard deviation were found on attitudes towards equal opportunities for European citizens and freedom of migration within

Europe. On both of these scales, native students had significantly lower mean scores than migrant students, regardless of whether migrants spoke English/Irish or a different language at home.

Some additional differences were found between native students and migrants. Although, in general, migrant students who spoke other languages had significantly higher scores (by at least one-quarter of a standard deviation) than native students on various indicators of attitudes or beliefs (i.e. on the scales measuring self-reported knowledge of the EU; attitudes towards European language learning; participation in communication about Europe; attitudes towards European unification; attitudes towards equal opportunities for other European citizens; and attitudes towards freedom of migration in Europe), native students had significantly higher scores on two scales (sense of European identity and attitudes in favour of restricting migration).

9.8. Concluding Remarks

The findings in this report suggest a number of areas for further research and policy analysis which are outlined in this section. These points are also included in the Executive Summary (Section E.8) at the beginning of this report.

There are inconsistencies between the emphasis on participatory activities in the CSPE curriculum and the actual levels of participation in the community and in the school reported by students and teachers. This places Ireland in strong contrast with some other countries that participated in the study. It points to aspects of the CSPE syllabus that are aspirational rather than implemented (or implementable), and to the wider context of schools, where a comparatively low emphasis is placed on active student participation. Having said this, it should be noted that ICCS participants were in second year and key activities, such as the CSPE Report on an Action Project (which is likely to be associated with higher levels of participatory activities) normally take place in third year.

These findings can be interpreted in the context of the results of a recent international study of teachers at lower post-primary level (Teaching and Learning International Study; TALIS; Gilleece, Shiel, Perkins & Proctor, 2009; OECD, 2009b) which showed that Irish teachers made relatively little use of student-oriented teaching practices (i.e. practices which adapted teaching on the basis of individual student ability and involved students in planning classroom activities or topics) or enhanced activities (practices requiring students to engage in extended projects). Teachers in Ireland employed structuring practices (e.g. reviewing homework or recapping previous lessons) on a more frequent basis than teachers in all other TALIS countries and they also endorsed traditional views about teaching to a greater extent than teachers in several other countries. It has been argued that the extensive use of traditional approaches to teaching in Ireland may be a consequence of the strong focus on examinations in the Irish educational system (NCCA, 2010b).

The emphasis on project work in CSPE can be regarded as a positive and innovative departure from other Junior Certificate subjects. However, although the CSPE curriculum guidelines recommend innovative and collaborative teaching approaches, it is difficult to see how teachers can switch between traditional

(examination-focused) and innovative modes of teaching during just one class period per week. In the wider context of teaching approaches at post-primary level, guidelines for Transition Year (Department of Education, 1993) recommend an emphasis on interdisciplinary and self-directed learning. Available evidence (e.g. Smyth, Byrne & Hannan, 2004) indicates that many teachers working with Transition Year students are successfully providing their students with innovative, self-directed and collaborative learning experiences. Arguably though, these come too late in the system when many students who are disengaged from the education process may already have left school. As the Junior Cycle review progresses, it would seem important that the NCCA takes note of a low reported emphasis on student participation in Irish schools and in the community. It may be noted that many of the points raised in the NCCA's consultation paper (NCCA, 2010b) have the potential to address findings related to student engagement in learning observed in ICCS (and corroborated by some of the findings in TALIS).

Achievement differences between schools on the ICCS test of civic knowledge are higher in Ireland relative to the international average. This raises some concerns about the equity of our post-primary education system and points to a need to better understand whether, to what extent, and how this relates to practices of grouping and streaming in Ireland (indeed, the issue of grouping and streaming applies to a myriad of achievement and other educational outcomes). Also, ICCS indicated that over one-quarter of the (second-year) students who participated in Ireland were in classes whose membership was established on the basis of academic ability. This issue should be considered with reference to existing research on grouping and streaming (e.g. Smyth, 2009) and the negative impact that this can have on achievement and engagement in school more generally, particularly for less socioeconomically advantaged boys, who are more likely to be streamed than other students (ibid.).

Lower achievement on the ICCS test of civic knowledge by boys appears to be related to gender differences in the frequency of leisure reading and it could be hypothesised that a basic level of literacy is needed to access the content of the ICCS test, with increasing levels of reading literacy associated with increasing civic knowledge scores. This, coupled with findings from other studies on literacy, raises some fundamental concerns about the reading standards and practices of boys. For example, the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), administered to 15-year-olds in 2009 (OECD, 2010a, 2010c) showed that the reading literacy achievement of boys is lower in Ireland compared with girls (in line with patterns across the OECD generally), and it estimated that around 23% of Irish boys have reading literacy levels below that deemed to be needed for a minimum level of functioning in future learning and adult life more generally. PISA also indicated that boys in Ireland have lower levels of engagement in leisure reading activities. These findings indicate that the reading habits, literacy practices and literacy standards of boys in Ireland require careful review and strategies to foster stronger reading habits and self-directed learning more generally must be emphasised. The draft national strategy for literacy and numeracy, *Better Literacy and Numeracy for Children and Young People* (Department of Education and Skills, 2010) is welcome in this respect. However, it remains to be seen whether the strategy is specific enough to adequately

address the concerns about literacy practices and literacy levels of boys raised by findings from ICCS and PISA. It can be hypothesised that raising literacy standards among boys could have the potential to improve standards in CSPE, as well as other subject areas.

The relatively low levels of parental involvement in schools found in this study may be noted as another finding of some concern since many studies emphasise the importance of parents in their children's education (e.g. Eivers et al., 2010; OECD, 2010b). This finding merits further consideration, particularly in developing strategies to enhance both students' and parents' engagement with civic processes.

Relatively low levels of knowledge about organisational and legal aspects of the EU among students in Ireland were noted in this report. This finding indicates that there is merit in considering whether or not these should be emphasised at an earlier stage in Ireland in the context of the CSPE syllabus and in other subject areas.

It was also noted that students in Ireland reported comparatively low familiarity with speaking a European language other than English. The National Development Plan 2007-2013 (Government of Ireland, 2007) identified the importance of strengthening language learning and diversifying the languages taught. It also noted that the development and implementation of an integrated language policy is a priority. The findings from ICCS regarding students' attitudes towards language learning provide further evidence of the need for such a policy.

The proposed future introduction of Politics and Society at Senior Cycle was noted. For this new subject to be successful, it would seem important for sufficient instruction time to be built into schools' timetables, along with a strategy to attract teachers with qualifications in politics or sociology to teach the subject. This raises implications for the teaching and assessment of CSPE and related subjects at Junior Cycle in order that students are adequately prepared for the new Senior Cycle subject, and have a sufficiently engaging experience at Junior Cycle to consider taking Politics and Society. Equity in the extent to which the subject is available to students across different school types would also be an important aim to achieve in securing adequate take-up of the subject.

Finally, as with any in-depth survey of education, there are several findings that merit further investigation. These include:

- gaining a better understanding of the reasons for the relatively wide dispersion of civic knowledge between students and schools (including how this relates to the manner in which classes were selected for ICCS);
- further analysis of the nature of the relationship between reading practices, civic knowledge scores, and reading literacy levels;
- identification of possible reasons for the relatively low rates of leisure reading;
- identification of characteristics of schools and teachers who successfully engage students, teachers and parents in a range of participatory activities; and
- identification of possible ways to promote interest in foreign language learning among students with a view to targeting students with low levels of interest.

The richness of the ICCS data should be further exploited to inform us about possible ways to improve CCE within our education system. The breadth of information contained in the ICCS database also means that it has the potential to inform improvements to our education system more generally.

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Appendices: Additional Data Tables

Appendix 2. Additional Data Tables for Chapter 2

Table A2.1: Percentage of variance in achievement between and within schools and mean ICCS test scores, all countries

Country/System	Variance Between Schools	Variance Within Schools	ICCS Mean
Cyprus	5.9	94.1	453.5
Korea, Republic of	7.0	93.0	564.8
Norway	8.6	91.4	514.6
Slovenia	8.9	91.1	515.9
Finland	9.1	90.9	576.4
Denmark	16.0	84.0	576.4
Italy	16.0	84.0	530.8
Sweden	17.6	82.4	537.0
Lithuania	19.4	80.6	505.2
Chinese Taipei	21.1	78.9	558.7
Dominican Republic	22.3	77.7	380.3
Poland	23.2	76.8	536.3
Estonia	23.7	76.3	525.3
Czech Republic	26.0	74.0	510.2
Greece	26.4	73.6	476.0
Latvia	27.0	73.0	481.6
Austria	27.4	72.6	502.9
Spain	27.9	72.1	504.8
Colombia	28.3	71.7	461.9
Slovak Republic	30.7	69.3	528.6
Chile	31.3	68.7	483.0
Mexico	31.4	68.6	451.7
Thailand	34.1	65.9	451.5
Ireland	34.9	65.1	533.7
England	35.0	65.0	518.7
Indonesia	37.6	62.4	432.5
Paraguay	38.7	61.3	423.7
Switzerland	40.0	60.0	531.4
Guatemala	40.0	60.0	434.6
Russian Federation	40.4	59.6	506.4
New Zealand	41.1	58.9	516.7
Belgium (Fl.)	44.0	56.0	514.1
Bulgaria	48.4	51.6	466.5
Malta	51.7	48.3	489.7
ICCS average	27.9	72.1	500.0
10-Country average*	27.0	73.0	535.7

*Belgium (Fl.), Denmark, England, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland.

Countries are ordered by the magnitude of between-school variance.

Table A2.2: Gender differences in mean achievement, all countries

	Females		Males		Male-Female	
Country/System	Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Diff	SE
Finland	590.3	2.94	562.3	3.55	**28.0**	4.30
Denmark	581.4	3.44	573.3	4.45	**8.1**	3.51
Korea, Republic of	577.5	2.43	555.4	2.29	**22.0**	3.02
Chinese Taipei	572.5	2.73	546.1	2.75	**26.4**	2.53
Sweden	548.7	3.38	527.4	4.21	**21.4**	4.52
Poland	552.7	4.52	520.0	5.51	**32.7**	4.35
Ireland	545.1	4.80	523.4	5.98	**21.6**	6.20
Switzerland	535.2	3.00	528.3	5.45	6.9	4.57
Liechtenstein	538.8	6.37	526.4	6.22	**12.4**	10.42
Italy	540.4	3.42	522.1	3.91	**18.4**	3.26
Slovak Republic	537.3	5.35	519.7	4.42	**17.6**	4.22
Estonia	542.0	4.80	508.7	4.91	**33.3**	3.85
England	529.1	6.07	509.2	6.11	**19.9**	8.49
New Zealand	532.3	5.87	501.0	6.42	**31.3**	7.47
Slovenia	531.3	2.58	501.4	3.87	**29.9**	4.00
Norway	527.0	3.72	504.2	4.46	**22.8**	4.40
Belgium (Fl.)	517.5	5.31	511.3	5.59	6.2	5.76
Czech Republic	520.0	3.03	502.1	2.45	**17.8**	2.79
Russian Federation	516.9	4.34	495.9	3.75	**21.0**	3.35
Lithuania	523.0	2.95	488.4	3.36	**34.6**	2.96
Spain	514.5	4.18	495.6	4.79	**18.9**	3.63
Austria	512.6	4.59	496.5	4.51	**16.1**	4.66
Malta	506.6	7.68	473.1	3.61	**33.5**	8.19
Chile	489.8	4.26	476.2	4.20	**13.6**	4.78
Latvia	496.7	3.72	466.5	4.96	**30.2**	3.72
Greece	491.8	4.81	459.7	5.11	**32.0**	4.49
Luxembourg	479.0	2.80	468.9	3.40	**10.1**	4.49
Bulgaria	479.3	5.21	453.5	6.13	**25.8**	5.32
Colombia	463.4	3.06	460.6	4.05	2.8	4.06
Cyprus	475.1	2.74	434.8	3.20	**40.3**	3.66
Mexico	463.2	3.16	439.1	3.06	**24.1**	2.88
Thailand	474.4	3.92	426.2	4.47	**48.2**	4.52
Guatemala	435.5	4.17	433.8	4.26	1.7	3.69
Indonesia	441.6	3.88	423.0	3.53	**18.6**	2.98
Paraguay	437.8	4.06	408.4	3.94	**29.4**	4.59
Dominican Republic	392.0	2.80	366.9	2.67	**25.1**	2.72
ICCS average	511.5	0.71	489.2	0.74	**22.3**	0.80
10-country average*	546.4	1.53	525.8	1.83	**20.6**	1.95
Hong Kong SAR	564.0	6.53	543.3	8.34	20.6	9.80
Netherlands	496.9	6.58	489.6	10.41	7.3	7.93

*Belgium (Fl.), Denmark, England, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland.

Countries are ordered alphabetically.

Countries are ordered by overall average achievement.

Significant differences ($p \leq .05$) are in bold.

Table A2.3. Percentages of males at each ICCS proficiency level, all countries

	Below Level 1 (<395 points)		Level 1 (395-479 points)		Level 2 (479-563 points)		Level 3 (>563 points)	
Country/System	%	SE	%	SE	%	SE	%	SE
Austria	16.6	2.39	26.5	1.55	28.9	1.49	28.0	1.70
Belgium (Flemish)	9.5	3.59	24.7	1.97	37.7	1.95	28.1	2.37
Bulgaria	31.9	1.92	27.1	1.89	24.0	1.96	17.0	2.07
Chile	18.9	2.44	33.2	1.80	29.8	1.50	18.2	1.33
Chinese Taipei	6.8	3.1	18.1	1.13	30.1	1.52	45.1	1.54
Colombia	22.1	4.66	36.2	1.30	30.9	1.43	10.8	1.20
Cyprus	36.6	4.56	31.1	1.70	22.9	1.56	9.4	1.14
Czech Republic	11.1	3.79	29.2	1.25	35.1	1.29	24.7	1.14
Denmark	4.6	3.31	13.3	1.11	27.2	1.32	54.8	1.96
Dominican Republic	69.8	3.29	25.5	1.54	4.4	0.67	0.3	0.14
England	15.6	4.49	22.0	1.61	31.0	2.12	31.4	2.37
Estonia	12.1	4.54	25.6	2.04	32.7	2.38	29.6	2.15
Finland	3.6	4.4	14.0	1.20	30.5	1.45	51.8	1.90
Greece	28.2	4.98	29.4	1.51	25.7	1.52	16.6	1.48
Guatemala	31.3	2.66	41.7	2.39	21.7	1.73	5.3	1.28
Indonesia	36.1	3.41	43.1	1.93	18.2	1.58	2.5	0.59
Ireland	12.2	4.67	21.9	1.77	28.2	1.70	37.7	2.33
Italy	8.6	2.38	22.5	1.32	35.5	1.23	33.4	1.71
Korea, Republic of	3.2	3.77	14.6	0.74	32.4	1.13	49.8	1.47
Latvia	20.5	2.84	35.9	1.78	30.4	2.03	13.3	1.55
Liechtenstein	7.0	4.13	19.5	3.37	32.8	4.02	40.7	3.19
Lithuania	12.3	3.98	32.8	1.54	36.5	1.48	18.4	1.39
Luxembourg	24.4	4.45	29.9	1.21	27.1	1.12	18.6	0.91
Malta	21.4	3.54	30.6	1.80	29.2	2.25	18.8	1.60
Mexico	32.1	3.99	37.0	1.24	22.5	1.11	8.3	0.86
New Zealand	19.4	4.39	23.9	2.08	25.3	1.92	31.4	2.70
Norway	13.8	2.24	26.0	1.74	32.0	1.82	28.1	1.69
Paraguay	45.6	5.03	32.6	2.15	16.9	1.36	4.9	0.83
Poland	12.3	2.95	23.2	1.71	29.3	1.36	35.1	2.13
Russian Federation	12.1	2.41	31.1	2.06	34.5	1.56	22.4	1.80
Slovak Republic	8.8	2.79	24.8	1.85	32.8	1.60	33.6	2.11
Slovenia	12.5	3.65	28.6	1.55	33.4	1.52	25.4	1.55
Spain	13.8	3.78	27.9	1.91	34.9	1.93	23.4	1.93
Sweden	10.0	3.43	22.4	1.31	31.4	1.44	36.2	1.79
Switzerland	6.7	3.41	22.1	2.10	35.5	2.34	35.7	2.59
Thailand	36.0	2.42	39.9	1.65	20.0	1.77	4.1	1.01
ICCS average	19.1	0.61	27.5	0.29	28.7	0.29	24.8	0.29
10-Country average*	10.6	0.49	21.6	0.59	31.0	0.61	36.8	0.77
Hong Kong, SAR	9.8	1.88	15.5	1.73	28.9	1.76	45.9	3.26
Netherlands	17.1	3.88	29.3	3.16	29.5	3.06	24.1	3.72

*Belgium (Fl.), Denmark, England, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland.

Countries are ordered alphabetically.

Table A2.4. Percentages of females at each ICCS proficiency level, all countries

	Below Level 1 (<395 points)		Level 1 (395-479 points)		Level 2 (479-563 points)		Level 3 (>563 points)	
Country/System	%	SE	%	SE	%	SE	%	SE
Austria	11.2	1.43	23.9	1.64	34.2	1.88	30.7	1.91
Belgium (Flemish)	7.1	1.39	22.7	2.20	40.1	2.15	30.1	2.51
Bulgaria	21.8	2.03	25.6	1.88	29.6	1.82	23.0	2.15
Chile	13.9	1.26	32.1	1.48	33.6	1.63	20.5	1.72
Chinese Taipei	2.8	0.52	12.3	0.98	28.8	1.14	56.2	1.44
Colombia	20.2	1.46	36.0	1.42	32.8	1.44	11.0	1.13
Cyprus	18.2	1.33	33.4	1.87	32.2	1.49	16.2	1.27
Czech Republic	7.8	0.82	24.2	1.52	36.2	1.45	31.8	1.56
Denmark	2.7	0.40	11.8	0.92	27.3	1.53	58.2	1.70
Dominican Republic	53.9	2.04	35.0	1.76	10.0	0.97	1.1	0.34
England	9.6	1.16	22.1	1.74	30.8	1.92	37.5	2.44
Estonia	4.5	0.92	18.0	1.51	35.7	1.93	41.7	2.54
Finland	0.6	0.25	6.4	0.93	29.3	1.70	63.7	1.61
Greece	16.9	1.78	26.3	1.84	32.3	1.58	24.5	1.79
Guatemala	29.2	1.97	42.9	2.05	22.8	1.64	5.1	1.41
Indonesia	25.0	1.96	45.3	1.72	25.3	1.56	4.4	0.95
Ireland	7.3	1.04	17.7	1.60	30.1	1.25	44.9	2.08
Italy	5.4	0.68	17.6	1.33	34.9	1.44	42.1	1.92
Korea, Republic of	1.6	0.33	8.5	0.78	30.4	1.25	59.5	1.31
Latvia	9.8	1.50	30.8	1.74	40.4	1.98	19.0	1.62
Liechtenstein	7.8	2.25	14.7	2.92	27.7	4.52	49.7	3.84
Lithuania	5.2	0.81	22.5	1.56	41.4	1.82	30.9	1.66
Luxembourg	18.7	1.44	30.9	1.32	31.6	1.26	18.8	1.00
Malta	12.9	2.44	21.8	2.85	36.3	3.01	29.0	4.10
Mexico	21.2	1.43	35.6	1.61	31.7	1.25	11.5	1.02
New Zealand	9.3	1.25	20.3	1.72	31.0	1.58	39.4	2.50
Norway	8.2	0.92	20.9	1.61	34.9	1.88	36.0	1.84
Paraguay	31.9	2.00	36.9	1.65	23.1	1.52	8.2	1.03
Poland	4.9	0.76	15.6	1.20	32.5	1.91	46.9	2.40
Russian Federation	7.3	0.81	26.3	1.59	37.1	1.61	29.3	2.14
Slovak Republic	5.7	1.12	19.5	1.81	35.0	2.08	39.8	2.68
Slovenia	4.4	0.61	21.3	1.33	39.4	1.81	34.9	1.47
Spain	8.1	1.10	23.9	1.67	38.6	1.82	29.5	2.13
Sweden	5.1	0.78	18.2	1.33	32.1	1.62	44.6	1.71
Switzerland	4.3	0.86	18.9	1.50	39.2	1.83	37.6	2.06
Thailand	14.4	1.37	36.7	1.73	37.9	1.84	11.1	1.57
ICCS average	12.2	0.22	24.4	0.28	32.4	0.31	31.1	0.33
10-Country average*	5.5	0.32	17.5	0.53	33.2	0.61	43.8	0.73
Hong Kong, SAR	3.7	0.93	12.1	1.79	31.5	2.09	52.7	3.45
Netherlands	12.6	2.35	27.8	2.82	36.0	2.73	23.6	2.94

*Belgium (Fl.), Denmark, England, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland.

Countries are ordered alphabetically.

Appendix 4. Additional Data Tables for Chapter 4

Table A4.1: Student questionnaire scale intercorrelations - Ireland

	Gender equality	Ethnic rights	Immigrant rights	Attitudes to country	Trust in institutions	Democratic values	Convent. citizenship	Social movm't citizenship	Internal political efficacy	Self-concept in politics	Participation community	Discuss pols outside sch'l	Future legal protest	Future illegal protest	Inform political particip'n	Adult particip'n political act	Civic part. in school	Openness classroom	Infl. decisions school	Student-teach relations	Value part. at school
Gender equality	1	**.439**	**.334**	.001	**.113**	**.357**	**.147**	**.285**	**.156**	**.108**	**.054**	**.094**	**.278**	**-.236**	**.123**	**.043**	**.179**	**.251**	**-.111**	**.171**	**.333**
Ethnic rights		1	**.567**	**.066**	**.196**	**.314**	**.231**	**.336**	**.187**	**.183**	**.077**	**.162**	**.269**	**-.135**	**.226**	**.147**	**.147**	**.242**	-.012	**.243**	**.340**
Immigrant rights			1	-.022	**.178**	**.262**	**.223**	**.318**	**.143**	**.102**	**.102**	**.162**	**.215**	**-.148**	**.191**	**.092**	**.144**	**.214**	.040	**.236**	**.258**
Attitudes to country				1	**.386**	**.067**	**.220**	**.123**	**.155**	**.093**	**.092**	.018	**.124**	**.046**	**.130**	**.175**	.040	**.096**	**.121**	**.179**	**.138**
Trust in institutions					1	-.008	**.371**	**.203**	**.291**	**.196**	**.128**	**.152**	**.239**	**-.123**	**.305**	**.320**	**.161**	**.220**	**.165**	**.312**	**.165**
Democratic values						1	**.175**	**.325**	**.174**	**.192**	.003	**.123**	**.230**	-.037	**.108**	**.058**	**.126**	**.191**	**-.118**	**.151**	**.414**
Convent. citizenship							1	**.503**	**.312**	**.300**	**.181**	**.237**	**.293**	**-.098**	**.354**	**.351**	**.198**	**.258**	**.188**	**.287**	**.265**
Social movm't citizenship								1	**.220**	**.207**	**.171**	**.172**	**.356**	**-.093**	**.258**	**.211**	**.176**	**.236**	**.086**	**.224**	**.360**
Internal political efficacy									1	**.569**	**.231**	**.349**	**.541**	.027	**.537**	**.421**	**.349**	**.250**	**.062**	**.191**	**.277**
Self-concept in politics										1	**.199**	**.422**	**.432**	**-.059**	**.511**	**.421**	**.264**	**.172**	.038	**.173**	**.221**
Participation community											1	**.263**	**.264**	-.018	**.257**	**.206**	**.359**	**.120**	**.152**	**.107**	**.140**
Discuss pols outside sch'l												1	**.297**	**-.124**	**.365**	**.245**	**.309**	**.242**	**.102**	**.189**	**.163**
Future legal protest													1	**.120**	**.547**	**.425**	**.299**	**.261**	**.045**	**.177**	**.308**
Future illegal protest														1	**.055**	**.075**	**-.073**	**-.131**	.034	**-.219**	**-.130**
Inform political particip'n															1	**.587**	**.261**	**.213**	**.114**	**.184**	**.198**
Adult particip'n political act																1	**.201**	**.117**	**.114**	**.139**	**.125**
Civic part. in school																	1	**.273**	**.098**	**.173**	**.264**
Openness classroom																		1	**.097**	**.373**	**.290**
Infl. decisions school																			1	**.210**	.004
Student-teach relations																				1	**.300**
Value part. at school																					1

Values of r in **bold** indicate that correlation is significant ($p \leq .05$). Cells are shaded where correlation $\geq .4$. Analyses presented in this table were conducted in WesVar so results may differ marginally from those which might be obtained in alternative software packages.

Table A4.2: Student questionnaire scale reliabilities

Scale	Alpha (Ireland)	Alpha (Int'l Average)
Students' attitudes to gender equality	0.842	0.789
Students' attitudes towards equal rights for all ethnic groups	0.872	0.831
Students' attitudes towards equal rights for Immigrants	0.824	0.796
Students' attitudes towards their country	0.790	0.821
Students' trust in civic institutions	0.833	0.841
Students' support for democratic values	0.671	0.651
Students' perceptions of the importance of conventional citizenship	0.708	0.707
Students' perceptions of the importance of social movement-related citizenship	0.770	0.739
Students' citizenship self-efficacy	0.844	0.820
Students' internal political efficacy	0.861	0.837
Students' interest in political and social issues	0.871	0.859
Students' civic participation in the wider community	0.656	0.740
Students' discussion of political and social issues outside of school	0.705	0.715
Students' expected participation in future legal protest	0.818	0.792
Students' expected participation in future illegal protest	0.830	0.832
Students' expected informal political participation	0.829	0.821
Students' expected adult participation in political activities	0.775	0.810
Students' expected adult electoral participation	0.841	0.816
Students' civic participation at school	0.609	0.657
Student perceptions of openness in classroom discussions	0.786	0.759
Student perceptions of Influence on decisions about school	0.891	0.880
Student perceptions of student-teacher relations at school	0.790	0.783
Students' perceptions of the value of participation at school	0.759	0.734
Students' attitudes towards the influence of religion on society	N/A	0.890

These are provisional estimates and may differ somewhat to those reported in the *ICCS Technical Report* (forthcoming).

Table A4.3: Frequency of attendance at religious services at school by frequency of attendance outside of school: Percentages of students in Ireland

	Outside of school % (SE)						
In school % (SE)	Never	Less than once a year	At least once a year	At least once a month	At least once a week	Missing	Total
Never	4.0 (0.38)	1.0 (0.18)	1.9 (0.26)	1.4 (2.4)	2.6 (0.37)	2.0 (0.24)	12.8 (0.94)
< once a year	1.1 (0.18)	1.1 (0.2)	1.8 (0.24)	1.5 (0.25)	1.5 (0.25)	0.8 (0.17)	7.7 (0.58)
At least once a year	2.3 (0.29)	2.2 (0.27)	7.5 (0.54)	8.4 (0.64)	12.1 (0.87)	2.6 (0.31)	35.2 (1.45)
At least once a month	0.5 (0.15)	0.4 (0.09)	1.6 (0.25)	2.3 (0.34)	3.6 (0.39)	1.1 (0.20)	9.4 (0.79)
At least once a week	0.1 (0.06)	0.2 (0.07)	0.2 (0.10)	0.4 (0.11)	1.6 (0.31)	0.8 (0.17)	3.3 (0.49)
Missing	1.2 (0.21)	0.6 (0.18)	2.8 (0.31)	4.8 (0.42)	11.6 (0.75)	10.5 (0.74)	31.5 (1.26)
Total	9.1 (0.60)	5.5 (0.47)	15.8 (0.74)	18.9 (0.78)	32.9 (1.33)	17.7 (0.98)	100

Appendix 5. Additional Data Tables for Chapter 5

Table A5.1: School and teacher questionnaire scale reliabilities

Scale	Alpha (Ireland)	Alpha (Int'l Average)
School		
Teachers' participation at school	0.815	0.859
Parents' participation at school	0.711	0.773
Student influence at school	0.722	0.746
Teachers' sense of belonging	0.857	0.828
Students' sense of belonging	0.821	0.824
Resources in the local community	0.760	0.800
Social tension in the local community	0.926	0.882
Teacher		
Teachers' confidence in teaching methods	0.645	0.726
Teachers' use of assessment	0.809	0.773
Teachers' personal participation in activities outside school	0.767	0.798
Teachers' participation in school governance	0.851	0.855
Teachers' reports on CCE activities in class	0.701	0.780
Teachers' confidence in CCE teaching	0.908	0.900
Teachers' perceptions of classroom climate	0.915	0.868
Teachers' perceptions of social problems at school	0.855	0.817
Teachers' perceptions of student activities in the community	0.748	0.746
Teachers' perceptions of student behaviour at school	0.895	0.866
Teacher reports of student participation in class activities	0.796	0.827

These are provisional estimates and may differ somewhat to those reported in the *ICCS Technical Report* (forthcoming).

Table A5.2: Response options for each school questionnaire scale

Scale / Question wording	Response options (+)	Response options (-)
Teachers' participation at school *In your opinion, how many teachers in this school…*	All or nearly all / Most	Some / None
Parents' participation at school *In your opinion, how many parents of students in this school participate in the following…*	All or nearly all / Most	Some / None
Student influence at school *In this school, how much are students' opinions taken into account when decisions are made about the following…*	To a large extent / To a moderate extent	To a small extent / Not at all
Teachers' sense of belonging *In your opinion, to what extent do…*	To a large extent / To a moderate extent	To a small extent / Not at all
Students' sense of belonging *In your opinion, to what extent do…*	To a large extent / To a moderate extent	To a small extent / Not at all
Resources in the local community *Are the following available in the local area…*	Yes	No
Social tension in the local community *To what extent are any of the following issues a source of social tension in the area in which this school is located…*	To a large extent / To a moderate extent	To a small extent / Not at all

Table A5.3: Response options for each teacher questionnaire scale

Scale / Question wording	Response options (+)	Response options (-)
Teachers' confidence in teaching methods *How confident do you feel about using the following teaching methods and approaches…*	Quite/Very confident	Not very/Not confident
Teachers' use of assessment *To what extent do you use the performance of your second year students on assessment tasks for the following purposes…*	To a large extent	To a small extent/Not at all
Teachers' personal participation in activities outside school *How often in the last twelve months have you personally taken part in activities promoted by the following organisations/groups…*	Once a month or more	Never/Few times
Teachers' participation in school governance *With reference to the current school year, how many teachers in this school…*	Most/All or nearly all	Some/None or hardly any
Teachers' reports on CCE activities in class *How often do (did) the following activities occur during your civic and citizenship education classes for second years…*	Often/Very often	Never/Sometimes
Teachers' confidence in CCE teaching *How confident do you feel about teaching the following topics…*	Quite/Very confident	Not very/Not confident
Teachers' perceptions of classroom climate *In your opinion, how many of your second year students…*	Most/All or nearly all	Some/None or hardly any
Teachers' perceptions of social problems at school *Please indicate how frequently each of the following problems occurs among students at this school…*	Often/Very often	Never/Sometimes
Teacher reports of student participation in class activities *In your second year classes, how many students…*	Most/All or nearly all	Some/None or hardly any
Teachers' perceptions of student behaviour at school *In your opinion, how many students in this school…*	Most/All or nearly all	Some/None or hardly any
Teachers' perceptions of student activities in the community *During the current school year, have you and any of your second year classes taken part in any of these activities…*	Yes	No

Table A5.4: School and aggregate teacher questionnaire scales intercorrelations - Ireland

	S1. Tch participation at school	S2. Par participation at school	S3. Student influence at school	S4. Tch sense of belonging	S5. Stud sense of belonging	S6. Res in local community	S7. Soc tens in local community	T1. Conf in teaching methods	T2. Use of assessment	T3. Tch part in comm activities	T4. Tch part in sch gov	T5. CCE activities in class*	T6. Conf in CCE teaching*	T7.Perceptions of class climate	T8. Perceptions soc probs at sch	T9. Stud partic in class activities	T10. Perceptions of stud beh	T11. Perceptions of stud act in comm
S1. Tch participation at school	1	**.257**	**.214**	**.384**	**.313**	.081	-.064	-.063	.067	-.001	.075	-.114	-.092	.053	-.080	-.211	.020	-.111
S2. Par participation at school		1	.059	**.321**	**.329**	-.022	**-.333**	**.204**	.117	-.076	.033	-.031	-.115	**.192**	**-.207**	.085	**.298**	-.041
S3. Student influence at school			1	.126	.113	-.039	.074	**-.189**	-.003	-.082	-.004	.025	.002	.025	-.059	-.061	.024	.106
S4. Tch sense of belonging				1	**.668**	**.213**	-.267	.013	-.115	.080	.002	.145	.058	**.302**	**-.290**	.077	**.361**	.020
S5. Stud sense of belonging					1	**.242**	**-.370**	.104	.015	.119	.094	**.280**	**.222**	**.260**	**-.402**	.108	**.432**	-.016
S6. Res in local community						1	.124	**.225**	.123	.141	.074	.104	**.183**	.082	-.164	**.212**	**.213**	.121
S7. Soc tens in local community							1	**-.175**	-.046	-.030	-.091	-.057	-.015	**-.339**	**.388**	-.167	**-.453**	.002
T1. Conf in teaching methods								1	.193	**.248**	.051	**.285**	-.077	.084	-.096	**.338**	**.240**	**.225**
T2. Use of assessment									1	.115	**.196**	-.052	-.054	-.034	-.132	.129	.079	.120
T3. Tch part in comm activities										1	.137	**.278**	.050	-.142	.028	**.294**	.055	**.422**
T4. Tch part in sch gov											1	.041	.042	**.305**	**-.421**	**.273**	**.472**	**.205**
T5. CCE activities in class*												1	**.309**	-.027	-.049	**.261**	.125	**.192**
T6. Conf in CCE teaching*													1	-.096	-.126	-.012	.105	.059
T7.Perceptions of class climate														1	**-.578**	**.279**	**.637**	.016
T8. Perceptions soc probs at sch															1	**-.348**	**-.828**	-.052
T9. Stud partic in class activities																1	**.455**	**.418**
T10. Perceptions of stud beh																	1	.138
T11. Perceptions of stud act in comm																		1

Values of r in **bold** indicate that correlation is significant (p ≤ .05). Cells are shaded where correlation ≥ .4.
Analyses presented in this table were conducted in WesVar so results may differ marginally from those which might be obtained in alternative software packages.
*Scale applies to teachers currently teaching CSPE only (12.6% of the total sample).

Appendix 6. Additional Data Tables for Chapter 6

Table A6.1: Civic knowledge: School-level variables tested as separate models by addition to the null random intercept model (first plausible value)

Characteristic	Parameter	SE	Test statistic	df	P-value
In School Support Programme (SSP) under DEIS	-61.62	11.998	t=-5.137	142	<.001
School average socioeconomic status	42.16	4.539	t=9.288	142	<.001
School type					
Comm/Comp – Secondary	-22.28	13.600	Ddiff=18.116	2	<.001
VEC – Secondary	-46.97	12.912			
Percent female enrolment: zscore	11.30	5.163	t=2.188	142	.030
Location					
Rural – Town	-22.64	15.599	Ddiff=3.951	2	NS
City – Town	-5.00	17.770			
School size					
Small – Medium	1.20	23.979	Ddiff=6.320	2	<.05
Large – Medium	25.80	11.747			
Principal's perceptions of parents' participation in school life: zscore	16.65	5.735	t=2.903	142	.005
Principal's perceptions of availability of resources in local community: zscore	10.57	5.943	t=1.779	142	.077
Principal's perceptions of social tension in the community: zscore	-27.15	4.797	t=-5.660	142	<.001
Principal's perceptions of students' sense of belonging to the school: zscore	21.69	5.412	t=4.007	142	<.001
Teachers' perceptions of student behaviour at school: zscore	31.48	4.673	t=6.737	142	<.001
Teachers' participation in school governance: zscore	15.81	5.700	t=2.774	142	.007

Variables shaded in grey remain in the final model (Table 6.3).

Table A6.2: Civic knowledge: Student-level variables tested as separate models by addition to the null random intercept model (first plausible value)

Characteristic	Parameter	SE	Test statistic	df	P-value
Gender (Female – Male)	11.09	4.332	t=2.560	2836	.011
Age	-6.51	4.641	t=-1.403	2836	.161
Migrant/language status					
Migrant, speaks English or Irish – native	6.95	7.843			
Migrant, speaks other language – native	-42.89	11.113	Ddiff=86.530	3	<.001
Missing migrant/language status	-76.76	13.636			
Socioeconomic status: zscore	23.49	2.380	t=9.872	2836	<.001
Family structure					
Single parent – nuclear	-15.30	5.853			
Mixed family – nuclear	-14.11	6.724	Ddiff=26.192	3	<.001
Missing family structure	-46.21	13.649			
Siblings					
No siblings – 1, 2 or 3	-6.26	7.577	Ddiff=14.984	2	<.001
4 or more – 1, 2 or 3	-21.10	7.252			
Parental Interest in politics					
Interested – not	22.42	6.410	Ddiff=36.316	2	<.001
Missing indicator	-11.17	12.897			
Frequency of discussing political or social issues with parents					
Never – monthly	-29.20	4.414	Ddiff=156.133	2	<.001
Weekly – monthly	16.74	5.231			
Books at home					
0 to 25 books – 26 to 200 books	-37.22	4.630	Ddiff=218.524	4	<.001
201 or more books – 26 to 200 books	33.77	3.975			
Sense of internal political efficacy: zscore	21.70	1.909	t=11.369	2836	<.001
Students' civic participation at school: zscore	12.24	1.857	t=6.590	2836	<.001
Perception of openness in classroom discussion: zscore	19.41	1.921	t=10.102	2836	<.001
Perception of student influence on decision-making at school: zscore	-26.07	2.018	t=-12.920	2836	<.001
Perception of the value of participation at school: zscore	19.76	1.966	t=10.051	2836	<.001
Hours spent doing homework on a normal school day	15.23	3.667	t=4.154	2836	<.001
Hours spent reading for fun on a normal school day	34.48	2.933	t=11.754	2836	<.001

Variables shaded in grey remain in the final model (Table 6.3).

Table A6.3: Interest in political and social issues: Variables tested as separate models by addition to the null model

Characteristic	Parameter	SE	Test statistic	df	P-value
Gender (Female – Male)	0.13	0.047	t=2.764	73	.007
Age	0.07	0.045	t=1.585	73	.117
Migrant/language status					
Migrant, speaks English or Irish – native	0.25	0.106	F=7.626	3, 2817	<.001
Migrant, speaks other language – native	0.34	0.091			
Missing migrant/language status	-0.03	0.165			
Socioeconomic status: zscore	0.10	0.021	t=4.528	73	<.001
Family structure					
Single parent – nuclear	0.07	0.084	F=0.947	3, 2817	.610
Mixed family – nuclear	0.02	0.057			
Missing family structure	0.22	0.191			
Siblings					
No siblings – 1, 2 or 3	0.03	0.115	F=0.946	2, 2818	.610
4 or more – 1, 2 or 3	0.11	0.073			
Parental Interest in politics					
Interested – not	0.80	0.054	F=94.671	2, 2818	<.001
Missing indicator	0.62	0.191			
Frequency of discussing political or social issues with parents					
Never – monthly	-0.69	0.043	F=239.379	2, 2818	<.001
Weekly – monthly	0.35	0.036			
Books at home					
0 to 25 books – 26 to 200 books	-0.20	0.061	F=21.273	2, 2818	<.001
201 or more books – 26 to 200 books	0.24	0.044			
Sense of internal political efficacy: zscore	0.61	0.017	t=36.497	73	<.001
Students' civic participation at school: zscore	0.28	0.020	t=13.539	73	<.001
Perception of openness in classroom discussion: zscore	0.22	0.023	t=9.777	73	<.001
Perception of student influence on decision-making at school: zscore	0.14	0.025	t=5.538	73	<.001
Perception of the value of participation at school: zscore	0.28	0.020	t=13.539	73	<.001
Hours spent doing homework on a normal school day	0.33	0.035	t=9.325	73	<.001
Hours spent reading for fun on a normal school day	0.32	0.033	t=9.758	73	<.001

Variables shaded in grey remain in the final model (Table 6.5).

Appendix 8. Additional Data Tables for Chapter 8

Table A8.1: European Module questionnaire scale intercorrelations – Ireland

	Europe - identity	Opps for learning	Participate activities	Participate comms	Language learning	Freedom migration	Restricting migration	Equal opps	Common policies	European unification	Common currency	Further expansion EU	Self-reported knowledge[13]
Europe – identity[1]	1	**.273**	**.183**	**.178**	**.242**	**.246**	**.126**	**.158**	**.266**	**.110**	**.243**	**.288**	**.193**
Opportunity for learning[2]		1	**.243**	**.216**	**.290**	**.304**	.058	**.211**	**.275**	**.132**	**.149**	**.225**	**.226**
Participate activities[3]			1	**.263**	**.139**	**.172**	.028	**.075**	**.119**	**.081**	**.105**	**.111**	**.261**
Participation in communication[4]				1	**.199**	**.169**	-.028	**.121**	**.100**	-.025	**.060**	**.078**	**.361**
Language learning[5]					1	**.406**	.051	**.346**	**.331**	.017	**.256**	**.315**	**.182**
Freedom of migration[6]						1	**-.156**	**.504**	**.390**	**.099**	**.218**	**.359**	**.208**
Restrict Migration[7]							1	**-.207**	**.165**	**.209**	**.173**	**.147**	-.023
Equal opportunities[8]								1	**.328**	**-.045**	**.202**	**.269**	**.127**
Common policies[9]									1	**.212**	**.418**	**.467**	**.187**
European unification[10]										1	**.067**	**.185**	**.078**
Common currency[11]											1	**.518**	**.132**
Further expansion EU[12]												1	**.180**

Values of r in **bold** indicate that correlation is significant ($p \leq .05$). Cells are shaded where correlation ≥ .4.

Analyses presented in this table were conducted in WesVar so results may differ marginally from those which might be obtained in alternative software packages.

[1]Students' sense of European identity; [2]students' reports on opportunities for learning about Europe at school;[3] students' participation in activities or groups at the European level; [4]students' participation in communication about Europe; [5]students' attitudes towards European language learning;[6]students' attitudes towards freedom of migration with Europe;[7]students' attitudes towards restricting migration within Europe; [8]students' attitudes towards equal opportunities for other European citizens; [9]students' attitudes towards common policies in Europe; [10]students' attitudes towards European unification; [11]students' attitudes towards common European currency; [12]students' attitudes towards further expansion of the EU; [13]Self-reported knowledge of the EU.

Table A8.2: European Module questionnaire scale reliabilities

Scale	Alpha (Ireland)	Alpha (Int'l Average)
Students' sense of European identity	0.745	0.740
Student participation in activities or groups at the European level	0.704	0.732
Student reports on opportunities for learning about Europe at school	0.836	0.830
Student participation in communication about Europe	0.843	0.845
Students' attitudes toward European language learning	0.824	0.817
Students' attitudes towards freedom of migration within Europe	0.691	0.633
Students' attitudes towards restricting migration within Europe	0.663	0.680
Students' attitudes towards equal opportunities for other European citizens	0.863	0.846
Students' attitudes towards common policies in Europe	0.634	0.631
Students' attitudes towards European unification	0.747	0.725
Students' attitudes towards common European currency	0.672	0.724
Students' attitudes towards further expansion of the EU	0.787	0.784
Self-reported knowledge about the EU	0.790	0.780

These are provisional estimates and may differ somewhat to those reported in the *ICCS Technical Report* (forthcoming).

Educational Research Centre
St Patrick's College
Dublin 9

www.erc.ie

ISBN: 978 0 900440 30 4
9 780900 440304