

12th May, 2015
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REVIEW STUDY OECD DUTCH CURRICULUM: ‘#ONDERWIJS 2032’

Paper #2: GLOBALIZATION AND SOCIAL COHESION

Education systems around the world are striving to prepare students to live in a new world that is increasingly interconnected and interdependent – one in which citizens come into contact frequently with people of diverse cultural origins due to increases in migration. In this new way of life, individuals will have to learn to live and work together amidst cultural, political and linguistic pluralism and often via rapidly evolving communication technologies. These globalisation processes bring with them new challenges which our leaders of tomorrow will have to tackle. One example is our changing climate – today’s schools will need to prepare the future scientists, technological innovators, and policy-makers who can address and repair the environmental damages of previous generations. Globalisation also impacts social cohesion. For example, there are concerns about the increasing inequalities across demographic and socioeconomic groups (OECD, 2013). At the same time, there is evidence indicating a reduction in civic engagement and political trust (OECD, 2012). These trends contribute to a decline in social cohesion which has consequences for the quality of democratic societies and its citizens.

In this paper, we review some major trends that are a consequence of our increasingly globalised world and how these changes are impacting the social cohesion of our societies. We discuss the implications for education as a consequence of these trends and how we can best prepare students for a more globalised world. Where it is possible, we provide practical examples from other countries. The evidence is reviewed under three themes: globalisation; digital societies; and democracy, trust, and social cohesion. We report on OECD data, and where available, data specific to the Netherlands are examined.

I. Globalisation

Environmental Challenges

Most scientists around the world agree that our climate is changing, and at a faster pace than any other recorded change (World Meteorological Organization). Since the Industrial Revolution, human-produced activities, such as the burning of fossil fuels and deforestation, have led to an increase in greenhouse gases leading to global warming. The consequences of global warming include rising sea levels, increasing wildfires, more extreme weather, deadly heat waves, and more severe droughts (US Environmental Protection Agency). These environmental changes are affecting every village, city, and country on the planet in various ways, and as a consequence, are shaping living conditions and job opportunities. Therefore, an important job for future generations will be to manage the consequences of climate change and to create effective solutions for mitigation and adaptation as the upcoming environmental challenges will be significant. Those who can create innovative solutions

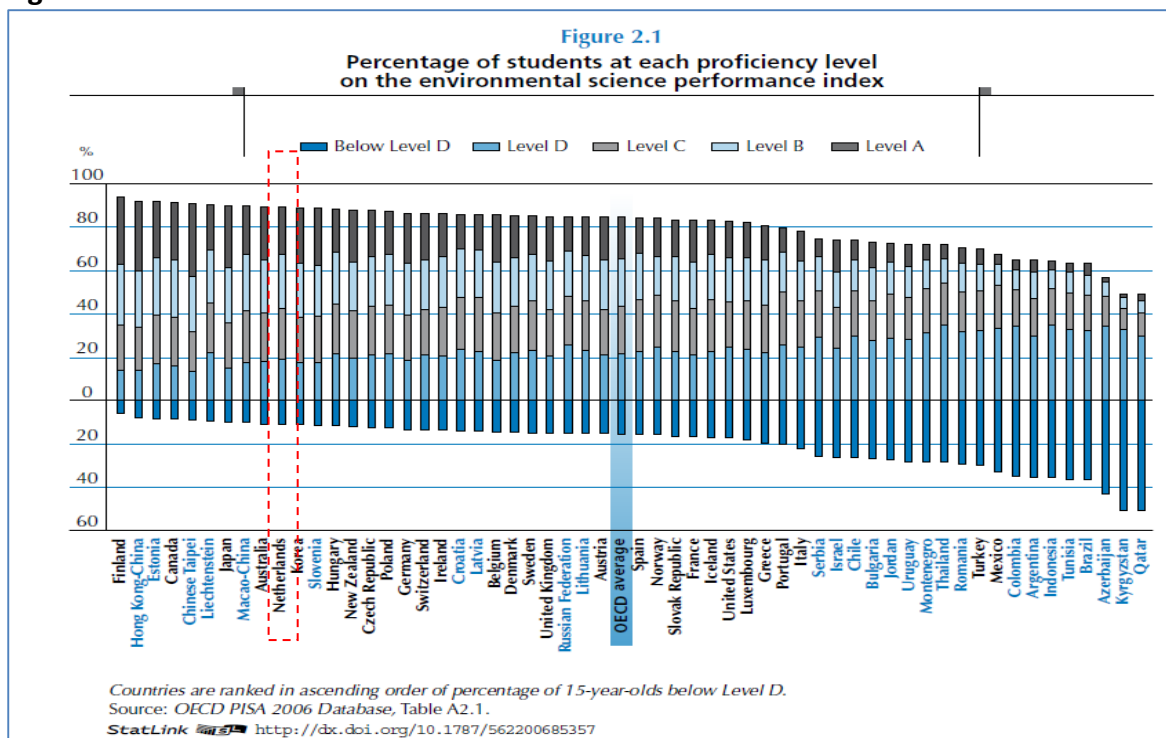
based on a deep understanding of the problem will have comparative advantage, and schools have a role to play in educating this future generation.

Importantly, the globalised nature of climate change, combined with the multiplicity of impacts expected in various parts of the world, will require from students to recognise various perspectives carefully. Schools and teachers can prepare students to think about climate change in ways that consider multiple locations, perspectives, and concerns. Additionally, teaching students to communicate effectively about these various conditions will prepare them for effective transnational co-operation — the kind of global approach necessary to mitigate and adapt to climate change (OECD, 2013).

Implications for Education: Teaching Environmental Awareness

The OECD’s PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) survey, carried out in 2006, included an assessment of students’ environmental science knowledge (see Figure 1).¹ Students scoring at the highest proficiency level might become part of the talent pool of future scientists and innovators working in a country’s research centres, innovation laboratories, think-tanks, and knowledge centres. On average, across OECD countries, 19% of 15-year olds perform at the highest proficiency level (there are in total four proficiency levels). In the Netherlands, 22% of students scored at the highest proficiency level and the country is among the 10 top-performing countries (OECD, 2009).

Figure 1.



However, the proportion of a nation’s 15-year-olds with low levels of performance in environmental science is also an important indicator – particularly in terms of citizens’

¹ Performance in environmental science was only assessed in the 2006 cycle; therefore, more recent data does not exist.

competency to meet future environmental challenges. In comparison to the top-performing country, namely Finland, 54% of students in the Netherlands fall within the bottom two levels (compared to 41% of Finnish students).

PISA 2006 data indicate that there is no single way in which students learn about the environment and that environmental education can occur in many parts of the curriculum (OECD, 2009). For example, while schools typically address the environment in both science and geography, there is greater variability in whether it appears elsewhere in the curriculum and a particularly strong difference across countries in the extent to which it is addressed through outdoor activities and school trips. Moreover, while school is the most common source of learning, many students also report using other sources such as books and the Internet to gain such knowledge. In general, using multiple sources is associated with higher performance in environmental science. In the Netherlands, the number of students who learn about the environmental issues from various sources is higher than the OECD average (Figure 2).

Figure 2.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
A	Air pollution					
B	Energy shortages					
C	Extinction of plants and animals					
D	Clearing of forests for other land use					
E	Water shortages					
F	Nuclear waste					
Percentage of students who report that they are familiar with or know something about the following environmental issues through different sources						
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Australia	99	94	99	98	98	92
Austria	99	90	99	98	94	90
Belgium	98	81	96	94	89	84
Canada	99	90	98	97	94	89
Czech Republic	99	97	99	98	97	98
Denmark	97	91	98	97	92	90
Finland	99	92	100	97	96	94
France	97	72	95	91	84	80
Germany	98	92	99	97	93	87
Greece	95	89	96	79	95	88
Hungary	99	98	99	97	97	90
Iceland	98	87	97	96	96	90
Ireland	98	95	98	97	97	93
Italy	97	94	98	96	97	84
Japan	99	93	98	97	95	84
Korea	99	97	98	87	99	87
Luxembourg	97	80	97	94	87	81
Mexico	98	81	98	97	98	82
Netherlands	91	88	97	97	90	89
New Zealand	98	95	98	96	95	87
Norway	96	94	98	96	96	88
Poland	99	98	99	99	96	83
Portugal	99	93	99	98	96	93
Slovak Republic	99	98	98	95	98	96
Spain	99	96	99	96	99	92
Sweden	96	89	97	76	93	89
Switzerland	98	81	97	94	90	81
Turkey	98	97	98	97	96	97
United Kingdom	99	97	99	96	97	94
United States	98	95	98	97	95	91
OECD average	98	91	98	95	95	89

Students who have the interest and initiative to learn about the environment through the media and the Internet tend to achieve higher proficiency in environmental science performance. It is worth noting that high levels of student awareness of the environment and high levels of proficiency in environmental science do go together, suggesting that an effective curriculum puts joint emphasis on learning about why the environment matters and on building understanding of the scientific phenomena involved (OECD, 2009).

These findings suggest that encouraging students to take a wider interest is an important part of environmental education, and education systems can play an important role in shaping the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours of young people on this issue. For example, schools and teachers can help develop students' 'environmental awareness' by helping students understand how the Earth works, why and how climate change takes place, and what consequences it is likely to have on various habitats and ecosystems. Students will need to understand how energy consumption in one place affects living conditions in another place and how we all depend on the same atmosphere for life. It will require that students understand current and future climate solutions and be able to weigh potential risks, not just for themselves individually but for society as a whole. Data shows that raising students' awareness of environmental challenges makes a difference by also shaping their attitudes and behaviours. For example, the environment is reported to be a primary motivation for youth civic participation in industrialised countries (OECD, 2013).

Environmental Education in Other Countries

In **Finland**, in order to encourage the promotion of environmental education, a national strategy for sustainable development education has been created. Sustainable development education has been taken into account in the national core curricula for primary and secondary schools. The content includes five areas: nature, the built, aesthetic, social and ethical environment. Studies of the natural environment include information about ecology, environmental threats, and the relationship between human beings and nature. The contents of the built environment consist of economical, technical, and socio-cultural information. The aesthetic features of different environments are discussed in aesthetic environment studies. In the social environment, environmental problems and the meaning of the concept of 'active citizenship' are discussed from socio-cultural points of view. Studies of the ethical environment include reflections on values and moral issues (Jeronen, Jeronen, & Rausia, 2009).

In primary and lower secondary schools (students aged 7-16), the theme is 'responsibility for the environment, well-being and sustainable future'. It is the objective of basic education to raise environmentally conscious citizens who are committed to a sustainable way of life. The schools must teach future-oriented thinking and building the future on ecologically, economically, socially, and culturally sustainable premises. The students should understand the prerequisites for human well-being, the necessity of environmental protection, learn to evaluate the impacts of their consumption and daily practices and learn to act constructively for a sustainable future. In upper secondary schools (students aged 16-18), the theme is 'sustainable development'. Upper secondary schools must encourage students to pursue a sustainable lifestyle and to take action for sustainable development. In addition, students learn to examine the challenges of sustainable development from several points of view. The students explore the effects of human activity on environment and

changes that have occurred in the way human beings adapt their environment, analysing global environment hazards, exploring problems related to population growth, poverty and hunger, assessing the cycles of substances and energy in the environment and production systems and learning how to save energy and raw materials (Jeronen, Jeronen, & Rausia, 2009).

In **Singapore**, the Ministry of Education writes the programme for environmental education in schools, although this is based on environmental issues initially identified by the Ministry of Environment. Teaching and learning processes are the main concern of the former while the latter is more concerned with content. The approach in the formal school sector is the integration of environmental education into the curriculum through infusion into existing school disciplines and areas of study, primarily through geography and through biology in secondary schools and through social studies in primary schools. In addition, extracurricular activities act as an important medium and schools are encouraged to involve themselves in one of six programmes from the Public Education Department within the Ministry of Environment such as 'The Seashore Life Programme' and 'The Clean and Green Week Campaign'. The overall intention is that environmental education should emphasise action, active pupil involvement and experiential learning. The overall goal of environmental education is to cultivate amongst the population awareness and understanding of the environment and to encourage them to take an active role in the protection and maintenance of the environment (Kwan & Stimpson, 2003).

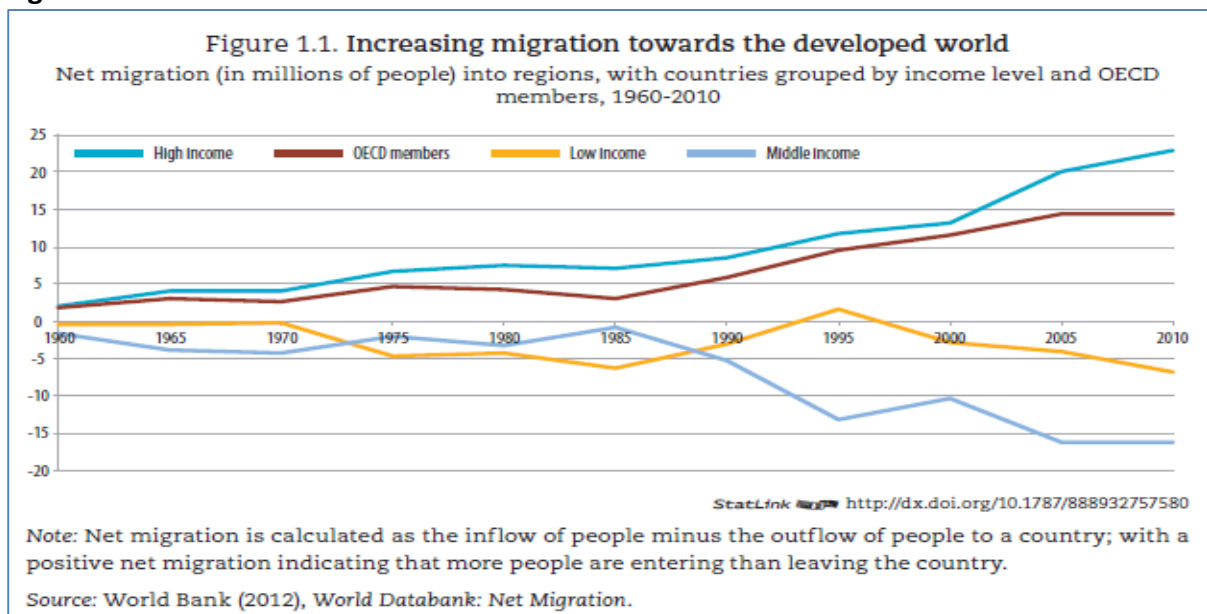
The **New South Wales** Government is supporting environmental education in schools, with particular attention being given to Agenda 21, a global policy outcome of the 1992 Earth Summit. Agenda 21 has been recognised by the New South Wales Government as the basis for an internationally agreed course of action towards sustainability. This has led to legislation in a number of areas, including the Protection of the Environment Amendment (Environmental Education) Act, 1998. The Government supports schools in developing environmental and ethical awareness in their students, and more importantly, their growth in competence to identify and address environmental issues. Through environmental education, students acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable them to form judgements about sustainable lifestyles and to participate in environmental decision-making. They can also acquire technical skills associated with environmental management, such as environmental cost accounting and life cycle analysis. Through the environmental education curriculum, students learn about the environment, develop skills to investigate and solve issues in the environment, acquire attitudes of care and concern for the environment, adopt behaviours and practices which protect the environment, and understand the principles of ecologically sustainable development (NSW, 2001).

Migration and Diversity

Globalisation, in terms of the mobility of individuals, families and human capital is facilitated by technological advances and driven by trade and skill imperatives. Escaping poverty, wars and native country instability are other reasons for increased mobility of individuals. People are moving more freely across borders and continents, bringing greater ethnic and cultural diversity to OECD countries. As Figure 3 shows, in recent years, migration has become more prevalent, especially towards more affluent countries (OECD, 2010). Communities are

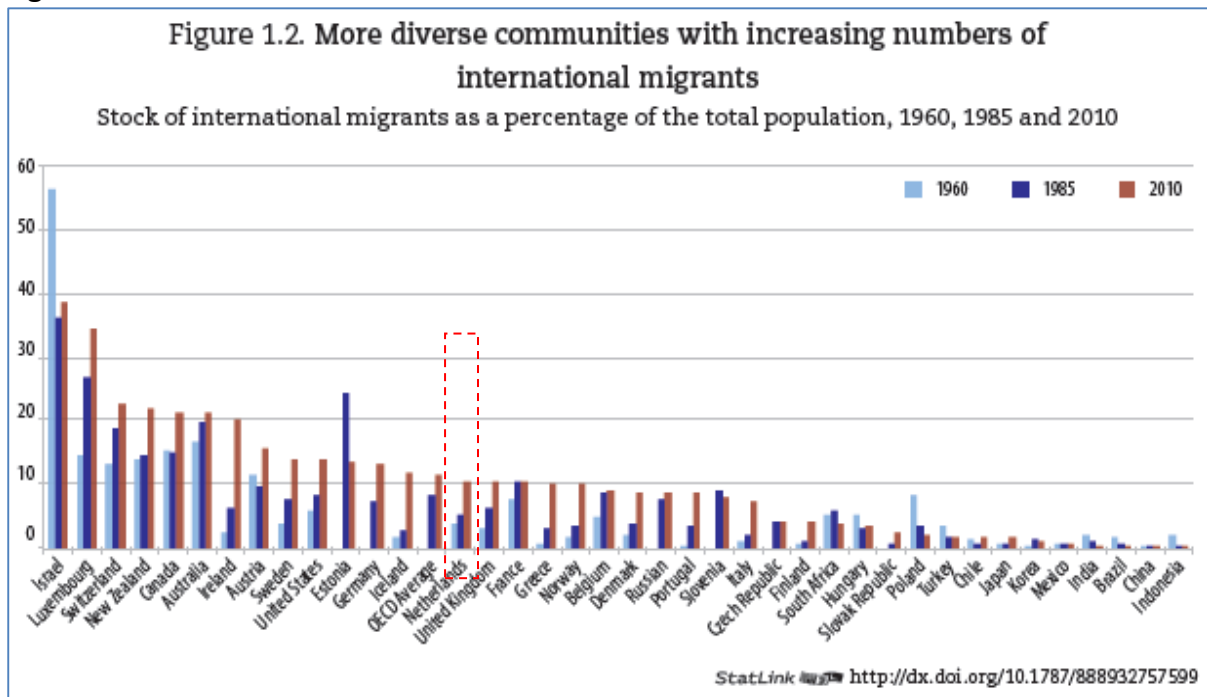
changing, reflecting the increasing diversity of their citizens in many ways. Greater cultural and linguistic diversity continues to have a strong impact on the schools and classrooms.

Figure 3.



In the last 50 years, migration to developed countries has generally increased. Since 1960, the number of immigrants has increased steadily, from on average 2 million immigrants to as many as 23 million in 2010. Similarly, as a group of relatively high-income countries, the OECD region has steadily increased its intake of migrants during this period. On the other hand, there has been a steady decline in migration to middle-income countries. These changes in net migration clearly demonstrate that our communities are changing. There are substantial populations of international migrants living in OECD societies (Figure 4) and many immigrants intend to stay for the long term. In the Netherlands, the stock of international migrants as a percentage of the total population has increased since 1960 until 2010 up to 10%.

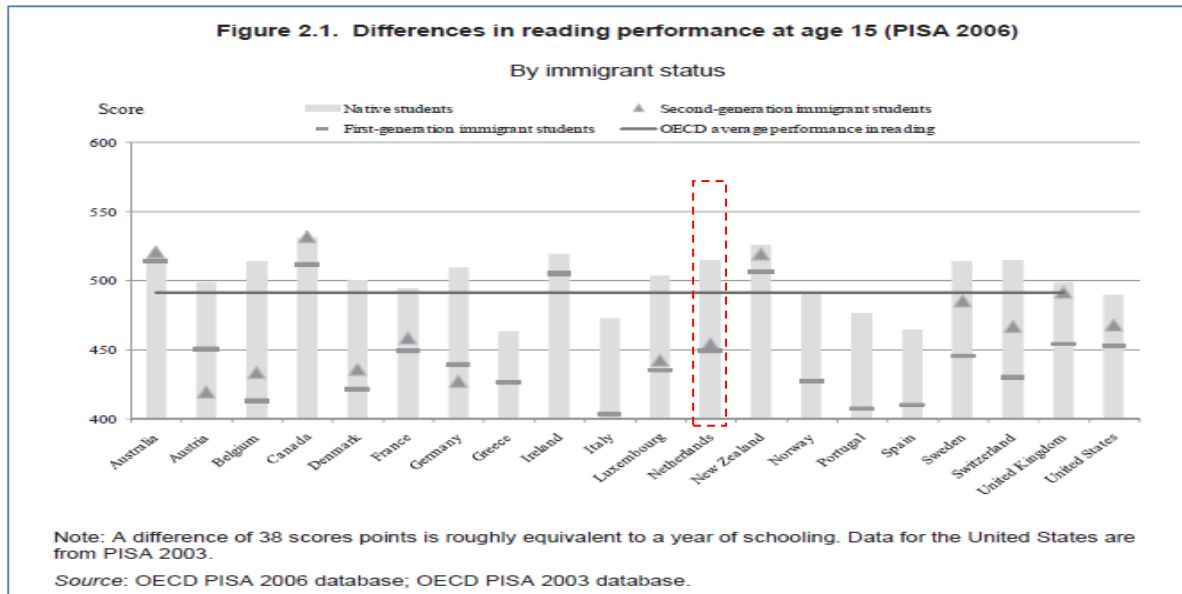
Figure 4.



Migrants usually come from lower income regions to higher income countries which might cause inequality and socio-economic disparities. Newly migrated families are the ones to most likely face instability and exclusion. Immigrant students often face tougher challenges than others in achieving good education outcomes as they have diverse needs.

With some exceptions, immigrant students tend to have weaker education outcomes at all levels of education. The differences in language spoken at home and socio-economic background to some extent explains the performance gap between native and immigrant students (Figure 5). In most countries, including the Netherlands, immigrant students do not perform as well as native students on average, as PISA scores demonstrate (OECD, 2013).

Figure 5.



Increased diversity is a reality in many education systems and educators need to have the right tools to accommodate their various needs accordingly. A ‘one size fits all’ policy may fail to meet individual immigrant needs, especially those most at risk. For some early childhood education and care institutions and schools, dealing with diversity is a longstanding challenge. School leaders and teachers are often not qualified to teach students with multi-cultural, bilingual and diverse learning needs. In order to close the achievement gap, schools should adopt a positive approach to multilingualism and language development. In some cases, schools focus on the ‘deficits’ that immigrant students may have in the language of instruction and not enough on the benefits such as cultural and linguistic resources that these students bring to the school system. Immigrant students may have knowledge of or be proficient in several languages that could be enriching for the school environment as well as society. Valuing the mother tongue of immigrant students is an essential part of developing a positive approach to diversity and identity. It means seeing students’ language capacities as part of their personal, social and cultural identity and welcoming these as a tool for learning and understanding. At the same time, it is essential to make students from non-immigrant backgrounds aware of the benefit immigrants bring to society in terms of diversity and cultural richness (OECD, 2010).

Implications for Education: Teaching Global Competency and Languages

The increased diversity in classrooms raises questions as to whether schools, teachers and students are sufficiently prepared for the new challenges this creates. Education systems should be prepared to deal with the inequality of educational opportunity that greater numbers of immigrants may experience. In order to raise education outcomes for immigrant students, evidence suggests that schools should prepare school leaders and teachers to meet the needs of diverse student groups, stimulate language learning at an early age and their learning at home, involve families in children’s education and manage students in the classroom for a more balanced socio-economic composition (OECD, 2010). Moreover, schools should cherish the language and cultural diversity immigrants bring and teach

students from non-immigrant backgrounds about the positive value immigrants bring to the society and develop their ability to interact with individuals from different cultural backgrounds and understand the cultural differences. Additionally, remittances is one of the key policy issues in international migration as it has important implications for education and skill development – particularly in receiving countries.

Global Competency

Contemporary societies are marked by new global trends — economic, cultural, technological, and environmental shifts that are part of a rapid and uneven wave of globalisation. The growing global interdependence that characterises our time calls for a generation of individuals who can engage in effective global problem solving and participate simultaneously in local, national, and global civic life. Preparing students to participate fully in today’s and tomorrow’s world demands that we nurture their *global competency* (Asian Society, 2011).

Globalisation has led to an increase in the frequency and type of interactions among people of different cultural origins which in some cases results from immigration. These enhanced interactions among people with different cultural backgrounds and values might affect social cohesiveness and notions of identity. Responses of individuals to these changes depend on how they are prepared to understand cultural differences. Schools bear a new fundamental responsibility: to prepare students for difference and complexity. They will need to prepare all youth — migrant and hosting alike — for new contexts in which multiple cultures coexist. Managing this complexity — fostering kinship, communicating effectively, working together, valuing difference, benefitting from diversity — are essential competencies in a global world. Schools need to effectively develop tolerance, cosmopolitanism, knowledge of global affairs and commitment to peace in order to prevent the likelihood of civilisational clashes and intolerance (Reimers, 2006).

The preparation to develop these understandings, knowledge and skills must start early in order to develop high levels of competence and help youth recognise relevance of their education to the world in which they live. Global competency is helpful not only from an economic standpoint but also as a foundation of democratic leadership and citizenship. Since the boundaries between international and domestic affairs have become increasingly pervious, the demands of government and citizenship require knowledge and awareness of international topics. As a result of globalisation, these skills are necessary for the majority of the world’s population; therefore global competence should be a purpose of mass education, not just of elite education.

“Global competency” has been defined as a set of knowledge and skills that help students understand the flat world they live in and comprehend global affairs and events (Reimers, 2006). Global competencies are also attitudes and ethical dispositions that make it possible to interact peacefully, respectfully and productively with human beings across various geographies. The definition of global competency consists of three interdependent dimensions:

1. A positive disposition towards cultural difference and a framework of global values to engage in difference. This requires a sense of identity but also empathy towards others with different identities and an interest in understanding different cultures and the ability to see these differences as opportunities for enriching exchange among people. This ethical dimension of global competency also contains a commitment to basic equality and rights of all people (Gutmann, 1999 and Reimers, 2006).
2. An ability to speak, understand and think in foreign languages in addition to the dominant language spoken in the country in which people are born.
3. Deep knowledge and understanding of world history, geography, the global topics such as health, climate, migration and a capacity to think critically and creatively about the complexity of current global challenges.

It has been proposed that development of the first dimension of global competency can be achieved through human rights education, teaching students not only the knowledge of these rights but also appreciation of these rights and reflection on how they are upheld in the various communities of which they are a part. Human rights education provides a framework to examine the multiple ways in which intolerance violates human rights and recognise extreme forms of intolerance and human rights violations such as sexism, racism, xenophobia, ethnocentrism, islamophobia, anti-Semitism, religious fanaticism and political repression (Reardon, 1997). To educate for global civility, it is essential to use common democratic values that are needed for the survival of every society and are recognisable across societies. These common values are necessary for cross-cultural dialogue and to address the common challenges humanity is facing.

In addition to direct instruction, the context of education is a fundamental component of global competency education which includes the opportunities for students to know and collaborate with others of diverse cultural, racial and socioeconomic backgrounds. Promoting these opportunities, which are embedded in a community and larger cultural and social context that influences how students interpret what they experience, is one of the ways to develop global competencies. Students need to live their human rights and schools have to provide authentic experiences in the practice of tolerance. Students need to see and experience respect for equal rights, human dignity, appreciation and tolerance of difference. In addition, students need to develop interpersonal and intrapersonal competencies to resolve conflicts (Reimers & Villegas-Reimers, 2006). Preparing our youth to participate successfully in a world of increasing social, cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity will require teaching them about the qualities—the history, languages, geography, and cultural contributions—of peoples the world over. It requires inviting them to revisit their own nation's qualities and contributions in a way that captures its multiple relations with other societies.

In short, globalisation is profoundly transforming the context of the lives of many people around the world. Those who are educated to understand these changes and how to turn them into advantage are likely to benefit from globalisation; but those who are not will face growing challenges (Reimers, 2009). The OECD recognises the increased importance of developing global competency among youth and plans to include this dimension in PISA assessment in 2018.

Global Competency Programs in Other Countries

There are several countries around the world that are integrating global competency programmes into their curriculum. In **Great Britain**, the Department for International Development has sought to integrate global development issues into the formal curriculum through the Global Partnership Schools programme, linking UK schools to schools in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. In **Sweden**, the Global Citizen Program prepares students, teachers and school leaders to understand countries with significant importance to Sweden's future. Partnerships with schools in China and India are supposed to prepare students for the real demands of the world, from studying abroad to engaging in sustainable development, corporate social responsibility, and economy and finances. In **India** for example, efforts toward international education build on ancient traditions of nonviolence and universal brotherhood. India's National Curriculum Framework calls to promote national identity and unity but also strives to raise awareness of the necessity to promote peace and understanding between nations for the prosperity of all mankind. The framework expects international education to be embedded in existing subjects in conjunction with a specific curricula focused on peace and human rights education. As these examples illustrate, several countries are enunciating their global education agendas in alignment with national priorities and traditions. Their initiatives tend to converge on a few fundamental orientations. Some view the world as a system shaped by the history of a global interdependence and others highlight commitment to the idea that there are basic human rights, including social and economic equality as well as basic freedoms. Most emphasise a commitment to cultural diversity and the importance of intercultural understanding and acceptance of differences of opinion (Asia Society, 2011).

Bilingualism and Multilingualism

In our globalised world, language competencies are becoming increasingly important. It is no longer an advantage for a job seeker to speak only one non-native language (Della Chiesa, 2012). Bilingualism and multilingualism is now the norm for large percentages of the global population, with estimates that almost two thirds of the global population speak at least two languages. In addition to economic benefits, speaking foreign languages has several benefits for society as well. Globalisation and the process of change in societies whose multiculturalism is becoming more prevalent raise numerous questions. Migration and changing demographic trends are altering the socio-ethnological composition of our populations. Cultural diversity represents potential enrichment for our society but can also be a source of challenges. Language is an essential component of a given culture. Thus, languages and cultures, cultural diversity and linguistic diversity are closely related. Language is inseparable from cultural identity and thus becoming multilingual improves cultural and global awareness (Della Chiesa, 2012). Mastery of one's non-native language can give significant benefits and play a significant role in fostering a cosmopolitan mindset. Thus, current trends in migration and multilingualism suggest the importance of effective integration of immigrants into the local education system and successful acquisition of second and subsequent languages.

Bilingual Policies in Other Countries

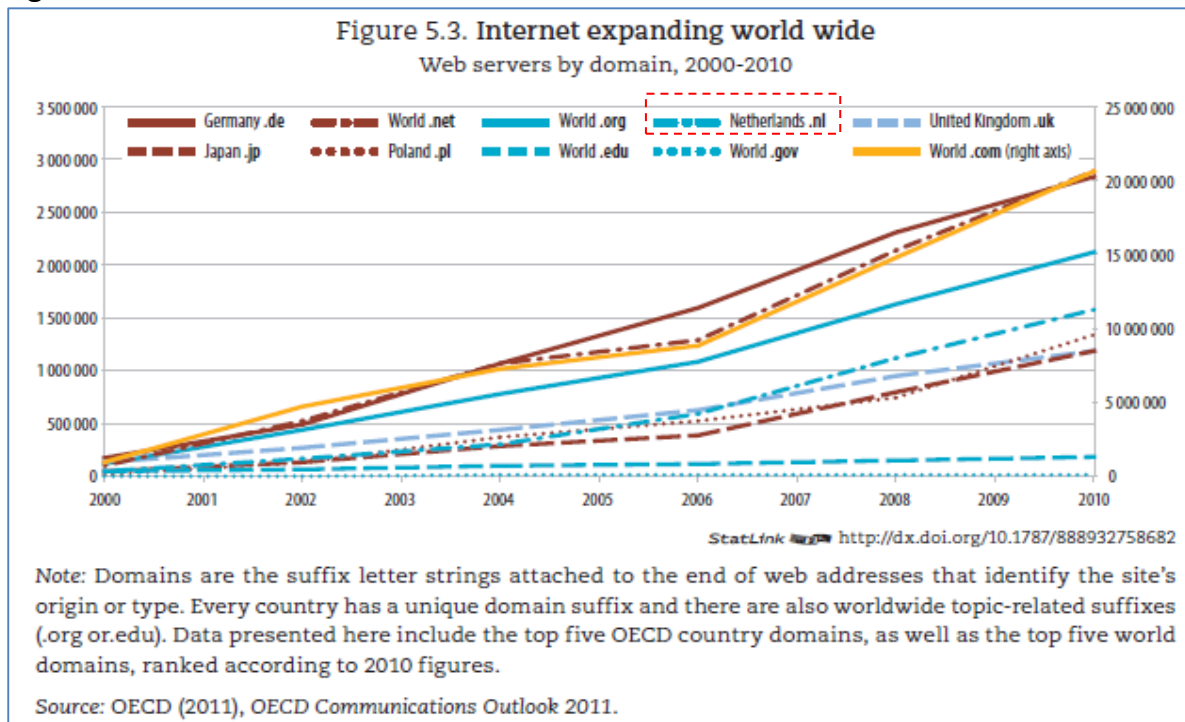
Some of the countries with a large number of non-native language speakers that embraced diversity and implemented bilingual policies include, for example, Singapore, Estonia and Canada. **Singapore** has been referred to as one of the most globalised nations with four ethnic groups (Chinese, Malays, Indians and Eurasians) and has four official languages (Mandarin, Malay, Tamil and English). It has mandated a bilingual educational system which is widely recognised as very successful, particularly in terms of mathematical and scientific performance. On the 2009 PISA exams, Singapore scored within the top ten countries, well above the OECD average. For these reasons, Singapore presents a successful example for bilingual education. Educational policy supporting bilingualism/multilingualism appears to be working well in **Estonia** too. Following independence, the Estonian government moved quickly to reassert cultural and linguistic sovereignty. Strict linguistic requirements were placed upon immigrants, as standards were set through language exams for employment, higher education or those seeking citizenship. This means that many people had to move from monolingualism (Russian) or bilingualism (Russian and mother tongue) to either bilingualism or trilingualism. The percentage of non-Estonians speaking Estonian rose from 14% to 37% from 1988 to 2000. Bilingual students have been shown to be meeting national expectations as set forth by educational curricula and literacy outcomes for these students has been significantly higher than a monolingual control group. In the most recent PISA results, Estonian students scored well above the OECD average in reading, math and science (OECD, 2009). Another good example of embracing diversity is **Canada**. When faced with the fact that one-third of Canadians were of non-British and non-French origin, Canada officially acknowledged contribution of other ethnic communities and announced its multiculturalism policy in 1971 with a French-English bilingual framework. Promoting ethnic and cultural pride while facilitating integration into Canadian society is the essence of Canada's policy on multiculturalism. Canada's settlement programmes that focus on linguistic incorporation and transition into the labour market reflect the nation's approach of identifying structural factors related to discrimination and disadvantage and developing policies to promote equality in opportunity and outcome (Della Chiesa, 2012).

II. DIGITAL SOCIETIES

Access and Connectivity

Computers and information technology have become an integral part of daily life for everything from business to entertainment, as well as for social interaction. The ease and speed at which very large quantities of information can be rapidly accessed in a variety of settings is a key matter for education, as is the development of the skills necessary to use this resource effectively. The Internet is now a completely global space that is transforming almost all aspects of our lives. The increase in the amount of global internet activity has been so rapid that it is difficult to grasp conceptually. Figure 6 illustrates that during the 10 years since 2000 the volume of Internet activity increased exponentially. These dramatic increases can be attributed to numerous phenomena, including the proliferation of mobile devices (particularly Internet-enabled devices like smart phones and tablets), an increasing number of Internet users, faster broadband speeds, more affordable connectivity, and greater use of video and voice over protocol (VOIP, for example, Skype) online (OECD, 2009).

Figure 6.



Words like 'google' or 'Skype' or 'tweet' are seamlessly incorporated into conversations and reflect this change. Most recently, with the combination of these technologies, increasing numbers of users have the ability to engage with *Twitter*, *Facebook*, and other online social applications. Two of the most interesting recent changes are the rise of downloadable applications, or 'apps' and the emergence of cloud computing. Recent global events demonstrate the impact that new technologies can have: for example, the use of social media more than doubled in Arab countries during the Arab Spring in 2011 (OECD, 2013). These technologies were instrumental in organising times and meeting points for demonstrations, publishing crackdowns and abuses on citizens, and raising awareness throughout the world by providing constantly updated information.

Despite the enormous potential of the Internet to reshape our world and communities, there is a downside to unlimited connectivity and universal access. The new digital media are a frontier that is rich with opportunities and risks, particularly for young people. Through digital technologies, young people are participating in a range of activities, including social networking, blogging, gaming, instant messaging, downloading music and other content, uploading and sharing their own creations, and collaborating with others in various ways. As young people engage with the new digital media, five key issues are at stake – identity, privacy, ownership and authorship, credibility and participation (Gardner, 2009). New challenges such as the rise of Internet fraud, online privacy concerns and identity theft, and the transmission of false or misleading information are all part of a new global online world. For parents and children, this leads to specific concerns such as cyber-bullying and worries about protecting our young from explicit content. Today's students, willingly or unwillingly, are exposed to a whole new set of dangers, and parents and educators are not always sure how best to protect them. It is essential that effective preventive strategies need to be implemented involving awareness, constant attention, and, in terms of protecting children, an open dialogue about their concerns and online lives (OECD, 2013).

Youth Usage of Digital Media

According to Weinstein (2014), young people today are frequently engaged in the following activities and therefore assume a number of different roles:

Self-expression and identity experimentation: Young people, for whom issues of identity are particularly salient, conceive of new opportunities for self-expression provided by digital media. Studies suggest that 57 percent of online teens create content, including blogs and even younger children are increasingly playing active, creator roles online (Green and Hannon, 2007).

Social networking: These activities include chatting with friends, reaching out to people with shared interests, and establishing support groups (Facebook, MySpace). According to a recent Pew study, 55 percent of online teens use social networks and have created online profiles, 91 percent of teens chat with offline friends through these sites, and half pursue new online friendships (Lenhart & Madden, 2007).

Gaming: These activities include single-player and multiplayer, role-playing games (such as World of Warcraft). Gaming is a popular youth activity. The average thirteen- to eighteen year-old plays fourteen hours of video games per week (Martin & Oppenheim 2007).

Consumption and entertainment: These activities include downloading music (iTunes), watching videos (YouTube), and shopping (Amazon). Pew's 2005 study of online content found that half of online teens download music (Lenhart & Madden 2007).

Knowledge-building: These activities include research, school work, news, and other information gathering (including Wikipedia, Google, and NYTimes.com). According to Pew's recent report on Wikipedia, 44 percent of those aged eighteen to twenty-nine turn to Wikipedia for information (Rainie & Tancer 2007).

Online civic expression: These activities include engaging in public discourse, promoting social change, and political, social, and cultural criticism. Through programmes such as Youth Engagement with the New Digital Media 93, Radio and the Global Kids Online Leadership Program and sites such as Gather.com, young people are educating their peers about key social issues, and mentoring civic engagement and activism online.

Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying includes many different forms of online bullying such as sending threatening emails, copying personal conversations and sending them to others, creating derogatory websites about a person or humiliating them repeatedly on social networks (Campbell, 2005). On average, 6% to 9% of 16-year-olds are being bullied online across EU countries (Livingstone et al., 2011). Some groups of young people are particularly affected by cyber bullying such as LGBTI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersexed) teenagers. According to research, 41% of them experience cyber bullying, and are more than three times as likely to be bullied online as non-LGBTI youth (GLSEN, 2013). Furthermore, one in

five LGBTI teenagers reported that they were being bullied online specifically because of their gender or sexual orientation. Despite the fact that cyber bullying is not physical, it can be extremely powerful and can be witnessed by a much larger audience than face-to-face bullying. Cyber bullying, as it is not confined to school hours, can happen anywhere, anytime. Cyber bullying can be fought with many of the same means as traditional bullying such as interventions of parents and teachers. However, as is the case with all bullying, an important role is played by bystanders that often tolerate the practice. Schools can therefore take action both by raising awareness and by educating students about their role and responsibility in its prevention (OECD, 2013).

Ethical and Moral Issues Associated with Digital Life

While there is emerging research around how youth engage with digital media, relatively little attention has been given to moral and ethical issues. Howard Gardner and Harvard's Project zero research team worked on a project called GoodPlay Project investigating the ethical dimensions of digital media and their potential to support youth's ethical participation and development of ethical minds. Research findings suggest that online interactions might be susceptible to a disconnection between moral or ethical thinking and action and an inclination that favours self-focused thinking (James and Flores, 2009). Psychological research on moral development suggests that capacities for moral decision making and action evolve over time and are affected by social contexts and experiences (Kohlberg, 1981; Turiel, 2006). Students' cognitive and moral development, beliefs and values and peer cultures emerge from the use of digital media. Thus, as young people immerse themselves in digital environments, they need to be equipped with the capacities to engage in meaningful and socially responsible ways while using digital media. Countless examples of ethical misconduct and confusion online suggest a pressing need. For the promises of new digital media to be positively realized, supports for the development of ethical skills — or, better yet, 'ethical minds' must emerge (Gardner, 2007).

Implications for Education: Media Literacy

New digital media create tremendous opportunities for young people — to nurture important skills, to connect with others around the world, to nurture skills for future careers, to engage in civic pursuits, and to contribute to a greater good. For education, current trends indicate that media literacy is an important skill and schools need to play a role in equipping graduates with effective capabilities in this domain. Media literacy refers to the ability to critically evaluate and interpret information on media platforms, both online and offline. It also refers to how one would make wise choices about the information he creates, posts and shares online, take responsibility for his actions and show good judgment in his online interactions (Gardner, 2007).

An important facet of media literacy is cyber wellness, which refers to the positive well-being of Internet users and a healthy cyber culture for the Internet community. It involves an understanding of the risks of harmful online behaviour, an awareness of how to protect oneself and other Internet users from such behaviour, and recognition of the power of the Internet to benefit oneself and the community at large. Education systems need to provide students with guidance on their use of technology and in determining the quality and

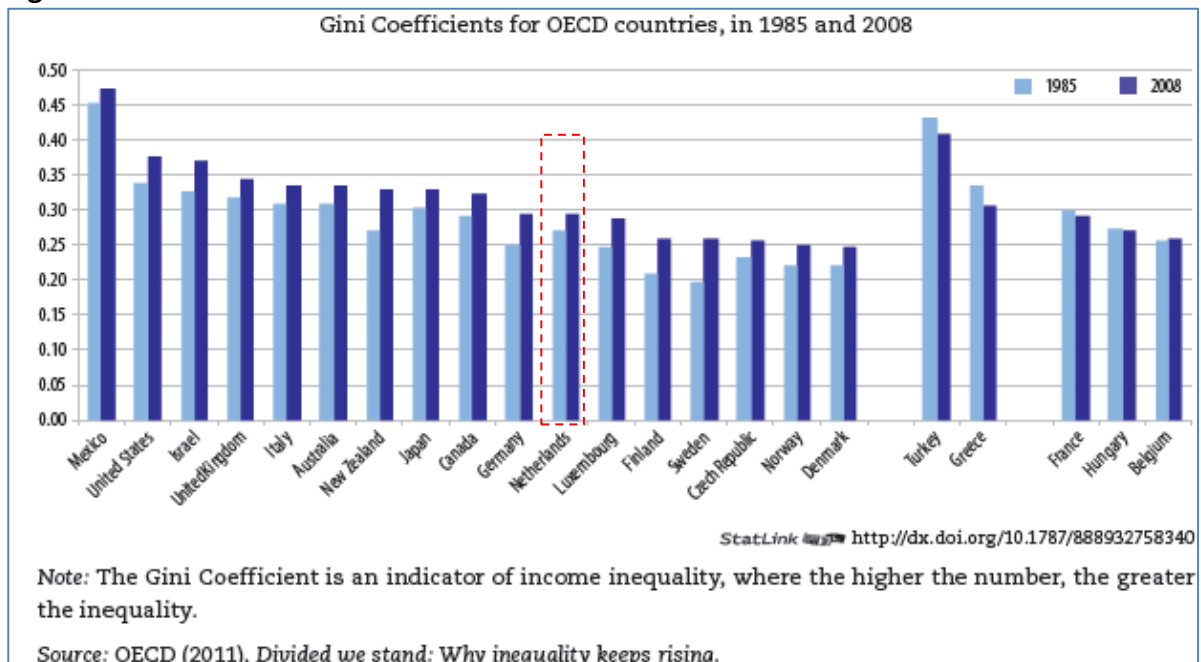
objectivity of information found in search results. With the overload of information, it is necessary to develop students' critical capacity to effectively use the wealth of information and to distinguish rigorous research from biased or dubious sources. As the Internet safety movement is a dominant source of messages that might contribute to largely individualistic approaches, digital ethics is an important component of media literacy. Emerging digital citizenship curricula may support moral and ethical thinking. At the same time, school-based efforts might be more effective if supplemented by peer-based approaches in online contexts. Support to trigger ethical thinking from fellow participants in online games, blogs and other contexts might be more powerful (James & Flores, 2009). Although it is clear that a complex set of factors is producing the ethical stances that young people hold in relation to their online activities, encouraging them to reflect on these issues can be an important intervention. Youth who consider their roles in various online contexts, understand the responsibilities that are implied by them, and imagine the larger implications of various judgments, are well-prepared to engage in responsible use of digital media (Gardner, 2007).

III. Social Cohesion, Trust and Civic Engagement

Inequality and Social-Economic Disparities

Over the past decades, OECD countries underwent significant structural changes, driven by their closer integration into the global economy and to rapid technological progress. These changes often brought highly skilled workers greater rewards than low-skilled ones and thus affected the way earnings from work were distributed (OECD, 2011). Despite increasing affluence, income inequality has been growing on average in OECD countries in the last 25 years (Figure 7).

Figure 7.



This widening gap in income equality seems not to be due to increasing separation between the poor and middle class. Rather, there is a growing divide between the middle class and the rich in many (though not all) OECD countries (OECD, 2013). Growing inequalities are worrisome because the middle-classes play an important role in improving social cohesiveness and fostering economic progress in both developed and developing countries. For economies and societies as a whole, globalisation and technological changes offer opportunities. To reap the maximum rewards from these opportunities, policies must make markets more efficient while encouraging employment and reducing inequalities. Without a comprehensive strategy for inclusive growth, inequality will continue to rise. Thus, inclusive growth and reduction of the growing divide between the rich and poor should rest on three main pillars: more intensive human capital investment; inclusive employment promotion; and well-designed tax/transfer redistribution policies (OECD, 2011). Education can stimulate social mobility by providing the right opportunities, but it also plays a role in reproducing inequalities when the already privileged have better access to education.

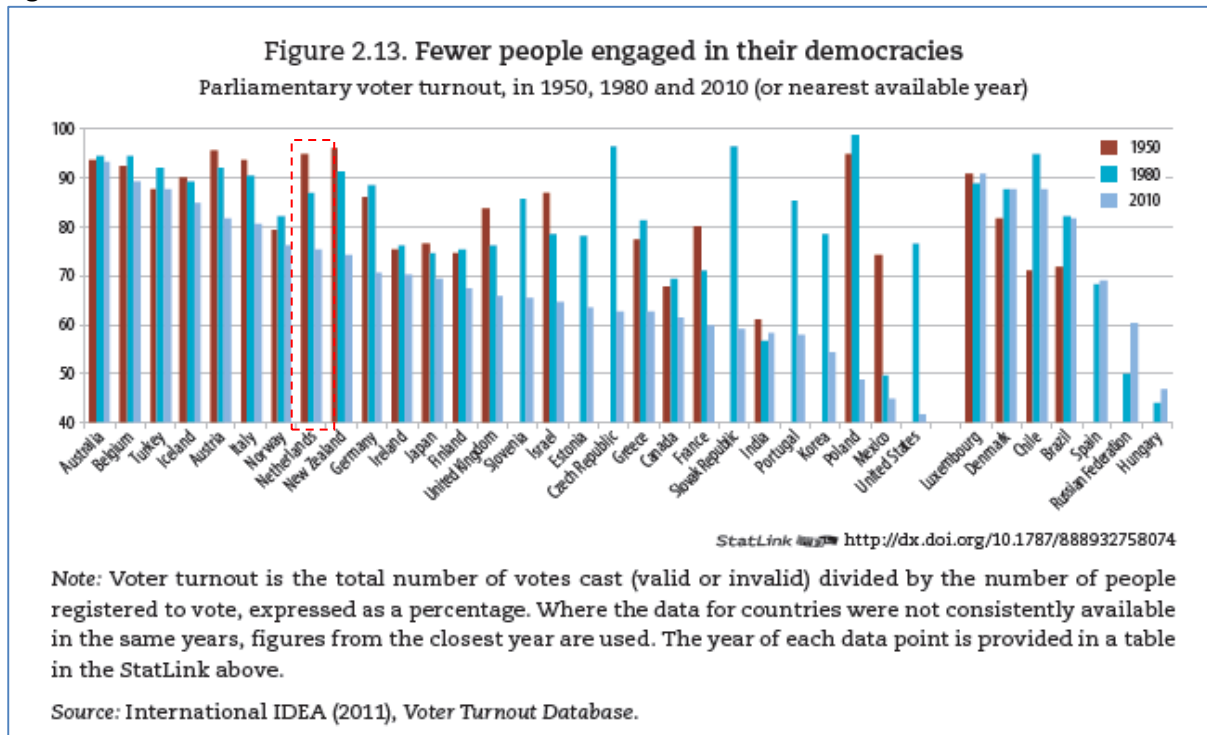
Trust and Civic Engagement

The current state of civic and social engagement is also a concern among many OECD countries. Measures of civic engagement include both political and non-political processes such as voting, volunteering, and contributing to philanthropic activities. Higher levels of civic engagement are associated with higher levels of trust and tolerance in communities and are considered a fundamental aspect of healthy democracy (OECD, 2010). The literature indicates that civic engagement improves labour market outcomes, reduces crime and fosters well-functioning democratic institutions and health (OECD, 2010).

Empirical studies highlight the positive role played by interpersonal trust in promoting economic growth and institutional efficiency as well as in reducing corruption (OECD, 2010). Interpersonal trust represents the degree to which individuals believe that others mostly look out for themselves, try to take advantage of others or can be trusted (OECD, 2010). However, according to global surveys that monitor trust, there has been a sharp decline of trust in the system (OECD, 2010). The breakdown in trust which has been reflected in people no longer trusting banks, political parties, or governments resulted from failures in the system. The loss of trust matters because it impacts the economic and social consequences of a country. It is associated with reduced compliance with laws, reduced investor trust, and increased risk aversion (OECD, 2010).

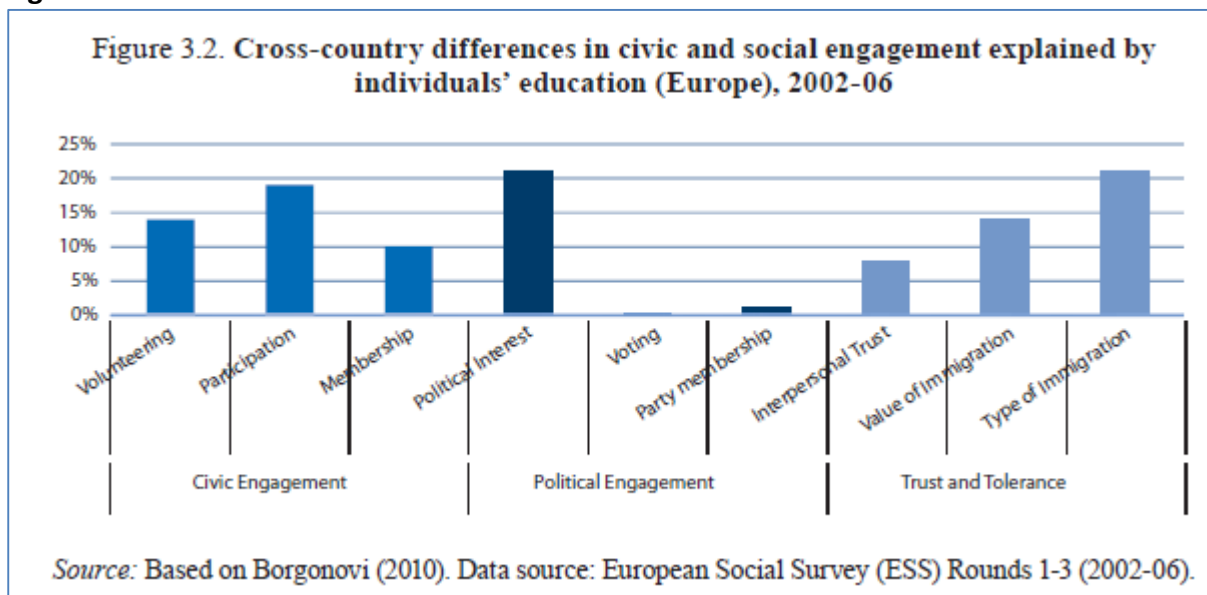
Decline in trust also results in lower voter turnout. In the Netherlands, data show that voter turnout was over 90% in 1950, a figure which has dropped to just over 70% in 2010 (see Figure 7).

Figure 7.



Cross-country variations in the indicators of civic and social engagement pose a question as to whether education systems might explain these differences. As Figure 8 shows, education explains a sizeable portion of cross-country differences in outcomes: 21% in political interest, 14% in volunteering rates and 8% in interpersonal trust dimension.

Figure 8.



There are various ways in which education can help promote a vibrant civic society. Education can help individuals to gain access to better jobs, higher earnings, social status, partners and social networks. This might allow individuals to gain access to civic activities as well as to social and political power by providing relevant information, teaching basic

competencies and social skills, imparting values, attitudes and beliefs that can help individuals to make informed and competent decisions. If the right individual attributes are developed, they make it easier to gain access to various forms of civic and political activities and to value social cohesion and diversity.

The Implications for Education: Civic and Citizenship Education

Civic engagement is one of the ways individuals can make a difference in their communities and societies, and education systems have the potential to strengthen the civic and social engagement of young citizens (OECD, 2015). Schools offer an ideal environment in which children can learn these skills and traits, both through the curriculum and by experiencing democracy in action. Research suggests that classroom climate and confidence in school participation are positively associated with some of the knowledge, skills and behaviours that underlie civic participation (OECD, 2010). A school environment including its norms and ethos should encourage students to express their opinions openly and to challenge teachers as it ultimately helps to develop a sense of active citizenship (OECD, 2010).

The International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) examined the ways in which countries prepare their young people to undertake their roles as citizens (Schultz et al., 2009). It investigated student knowledge and understanding of civics and citizenship as well as student attitudes, perceptions, and activities related to civics and citizenship among more than 140,000 students in more than 5,300 schools from 38 countries. Results have shown that student interest in political and social issues was most evident in regard to domestic political and social issues and least evident in regard to foreign issues and international politics. Student interest in politics and social issues appeared to be little affected by immigrant background or socioeconomic background (measured through parental occupational status), but was associated with students' reports of parental interest in those issues. Active civic participation in the community was relatively rare among students surveyed in ICCS. Civic participation at school tended to be much more frequent, and also to be associated with higher civic knowledge and interest scores. A large majority of students said they intended to vote in national elections, but only minorities expected to become politically active as adults.

Civic and Citizenship Education

Findings from The International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) show no agreed approach across the ICCS countries to civic and citizenship education but rather a mixed, tripartite approach, with civic and citizenship education positioned as a specific subject, integrated into other subjects, and included as a cross-curricular theme (Schultz et al., 2009). Thirty-two of the participating countries provide civic and citizenship education by integrating it into several subjects. Twenty-nine countries provide civic and citizenship education through a cross-curricular approach. Most of the countries providing civic and citizenship education through integration in other subjects also provide civic and citizenship education through a cross-curricular approach. In a large number of countries, the national ICCS centres reported provision of civic and citizenship education by way of assemblies and special events (28 countries), the classroom experience and ethos (29 countries), or extra-curricular activities (28 countries) (2009). Opportunities to exercise the skills and

competencies necessary for democratic civic engagement organised by schools within the examined countries include: activities related to the environment, human rights projects, activities related to underprivileged people, cultural activities, multicultural and intercultural activities, campaigns to raise people's awareness such as AIDS World Day, activities related to improving facilities for the local community and participation in sport events.

Citizenship education can be defined as educating children, from early childhood, to become clear-thinking and enlightened citizens who participate in decisions concerning society (UNESCO, 2014). Citizenship is the development of the skills, attitudes, beliefs and values that will predispose students to participate, to become and remain engaged and involved in society, culture and democracy. Citizenship education is based on the distinction between the individual as a subject of ethics and law, entitled to human rights, and the citizen entitled to civil and political rights recognised by the national constitution. All human beings are both individuals and citizens of the society to which they belong and therefore human rights and citizen rights are interdependent. Human rights include both civil and political rights; thus a comprehensive human rights education takes account of citizenship. At the same time, citizenship education trains good citizens to be aware of the human and political issues in their society but also hold ethical and moral qualities (UNESCO, 2014).

Citizenship education aims to inculcate respect for others and recognition of the equality of all human beings and to combat all forms of discrimination (racist, gender-based, religious, etc.) by fostering a spirit of tolerance and peace among human beings. Thus, there is a significant complementarity between citizenship and human rights education. Overall, citizenship education has three main objectives:

1. To educate people in citizenship and human rights through understanding of the principles and institutions that govern a state.
2. To learn to exercise one's judgement and critical ability.
3. To acquire a sense of individual and community responsibility.

These three objectives correspond both to educating the individual as a subject of ethics and law and to educating citizens. Developing responsible, active citizenship among youth is fundamental to any education system. Evidence indicates that raising cognitive skills, developing social and emotional skills, and forming habits and attitudes towards active citizenship show promise in this respect. As research has shown, social and emotional skills can play an important role in developing civic and social engagement (OECD, 2015). Education may foster the development of these competencies through general courses, through content-specific modules within general courses (history, social science classes) and also through citizenship education designed specifically to foster civic and political engagement and understanding of the importance of democratic values. The evidence indicates that providing information on democratic practices and institutions through civic education plays a limited role in promoting civic and social engagement. Hence, schools should help to build attitudes necessary for student empowerment by giving pupils opportunities to be heard, participate and collaborate. Democratic exercises, such as student council, youth parliaments and model United Nations provide students with opportunities for direct experience. These kinds of experiences in addition to classroom

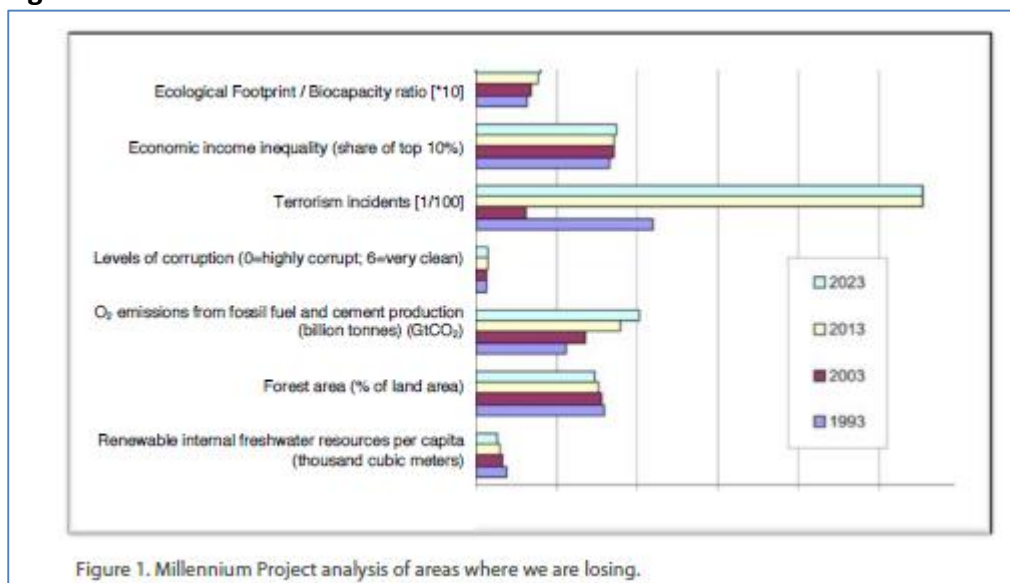
climate and school ethos are likely to promote habits and positive attitude towards active citizenship. Schools can also promote these competencies by mobilizing open classroom climate with a range of curricular and extra-curricular activities, and leveraging situated learning which provides children with a taste of what civic participation is all about. The family and the community can also play a role by providing children with an environment conducive to developing positive attitudes and values towards civic and social engagement (OECD, 2010).

Character Education

Education for citizenship and character education have always gone hand in hand. Since ancient times, the goal of education has been to cultivate confident and compassionate students who become successful learners, contribute to their communities, and serve society as ethical citizens. Character education is no novelty. If we look at the history of schooling, the cultivation of character was typically given pride of place, with the exception of a few decades towards the end of the 20th century when, for a variety of different reasons, this aim disappeared from the curricula from many Western democracies.

Contemporary character education tends to be better grounded academically in moral philosophy and recent trends in social science, such as positive psychology, that have revived the concepts of character and virtue (Jubilee Centre). The aim of character education is to acquire and strengthen virtues (qualities), values (ideals and concepts), and the capacity to make wise choices for a well-rounded life and a thriving society. Facing the challenges of the 21st century requires a deliberate effort to cultivate in students personal growth and the ability to fulfil social and community responsibilities as global citizens. The Millennium Project tracks 30 variables globally to discern the ‘State of the World’ and identifies ‘where we are winning, losing, and unclear/little change’. Worryingly, areas where humanity is losing (Figure 10) are largely ethical - environmental issues, corruption, terrorism, and income inequality (CCR, 2015).

Figure 10.



Source: Centre for Curriculum Redesign, 2015

Through citizenship education, the hope is that students, the citizens of the future, will be able to make knowledgeable and wise decisions that address the challenges above through a sense of personal and ethical responsibility (Jubilee Centre). Schools should aim to develop confident and compassionate students who are effective contributors to society, successful learners and responsible citizens. Students need to develop a commitment to serving others, which is an essential manifestation of good character in action. Questions of character formation should be part of the educational goals, as belonging to a school community is a deeply formative experience that helps make students the kinds of people they become.

In a wide sense, character education could permeate all subjects, wider school activities and general school ethos. It should aspire to cultivate the virtues of character associated with common morality and develop students' understanding of what is ethical in diverse spheres of human endeavour. Character education can be understood as an umbrella term for all explicit and implicit educational activities that help young people develop positive personal strengths called virtues. Traditional school subjects such as government, civics, history and literature, when properly taught, ought to provide the necessary conceptual framework for character education. However, character education should be more than just a subject and also have a place in the culture and functions of families, classrooms, schools and other institutions. Research also shows that the ethos or culture of the school and of the classroom exert powerful influences on what students learn about authority, responsibility, justice, civility and respect (Jubilee Centre). Therefore, schools that seek to strengthen the character of its students might affirm its commitment to doing so in its mission statement and think about the kinds of future citizens it aims to help develop and outline the underlying approach. Character qualities could be also reinforced outside of the classroom; on the playing fields, corridors, interactions between teachers and students, in assemblies, posters, head teacher messages and communications, staff training, and in relations with parents. Schools should also provide opportunities for young people to participate in learning by doing both in and beyond school and thus engage students in volunteering and service learning experiences. The process of character formation is not only one of acquiring ideas. It is about belonging and living within a community – for schools are, together with the family, one of the principal means by which students form their character. Despite the fact that the evidence base for the relationship between character education and social outcomes is still limited, there is a growing interest in character education among various education systems.

Character and Citizenship Education in Other Countries

Perhaps it is best to think of the relationship of character education to citizenship education as a set of partially overlapping domains. Whereas character education's knowledge focus is more on moral concepts, manners and civility, the citizenship education knowledge base focuses more on politics, government and the interdependencies of social life. The dispositions (personality traits, values and motives) of character education and citizenship education share many elements: social justice, honesty, personal and social responsibility, equality, etc. Many of the skills of character education also apply to citizenship education as general skills of self-management and social competencies are required for effective social

living. However, citizenship education also requires skills not typically of central interest to character education: e.g., resistance to political persuasion, critical analysis of political messages. The shared goal of both citizenship education and character education is to foster the development of the kinds of citizens who are both pro-social and effective at participating in a democratic society (Althof, 2012).

The United States has been promoting the practice of character education since the 1990s. The US Congress authorised the Partnerships in Character Education Program in 1994, which was to provide grants to state and local education agencies to support the development of character education. Between 1995 and 2008, the Department of Education awarded 97 grants to assist in designing, implementing and sustaining opportunities for students to learn and understand the importance of strong character in their lives. Illinois became the first state in the United States to require every school district to develop a plan for the implementation of social and emotional learning programmes in schools. The social and emotional learning (SEL) goals are to teach students how to: 1) develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success; 2) use social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships; and 3) demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviours in personal, school, and community contexts (OECD, 2015).

The Czech Republic's curriculum for basic education has six cross-cutting themes that are relevant to modern society. These themes are: 1) personal and social education; 2) education for democratic citizenship; 3) thinking in European and global contexts; 4) multicultural education; 5) environmental education; and 6) media education. They cut across education areas, which allow students to obtain an integrated view on issues and apply a wider range of skills. For example, the thematic area 'personal and social education' has three aspects: personal, social and moral development. It is addressed in curricular subjects such as language and communication, man and the world, man and society, and arts and culture (OECD, 2015).

In **Singapore**, character and citizenship education (CCE) has always been at the heart of their education system. Students learn to be responsible to family and community, and understand their roles in shaping the future of Singapore. The emerging trends and global developments that impact society such as societal changes, globalisation, and technological advancement are taken into consideration in the development of the CEE curriculum. The goal of CEE is to inculcate values and build competencies in students to develop them to be good individuals and useful citizens. The framework emphasises the interconnectedness of core values, social and emotional skills, civic literacy, global awareness and cross-cultural skills that are critical for character and citizenship education of students. Some of the programmes include civics and moral education, national education, social and emotional learning, co-curricular activities and outdoor education which aims to provide students an experience to serve the local and international communities and interact with youths from different cultures (Singapore Ministry of Education, 2014).

Conclusion

Globalisation and technological developments present a new and very important context for all of us. Preparing students with the skills and the ethical dispositions to participate in civil society and invent a future that enhances human well-being is the most critical challenge for schools in our time. Education empowers individuals by increasing their cognitive, social and emotional skills, as well as improving habits, values and attitudes towards healthy lifestyles and active citizenship. School norms, ethos and an open classroom climate that stimulates students to question and debate social issues also contribute to developing habits and raising values and attitudes regarding civic engagement. Learning by doing through experiences such as volunteering or social action can further promote the civic-mindedness nurtured at school. In addition to character and citizenship education, schools need to focus on developing global competency, foreign language skills and environmental awareness in order to best prepare students to participate in future civil society.

In this way, education can make a significant contribution to social progress and can significantly raise the level of civic and social engagement (OECD, 2010). However, societies and communities need to have clear purposes for the schools they sustain, just as teachers and principals need purposes to align their efforts in teaching students, and students need to see that the purpose of their education is to help them develop and achieve their educational goals and broader social goals in life.

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