



# Civic Education in a 'Post-National' Europe

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Inclusion / Exclusion: The Social and Political Boundaries of Citizenship in Europe

# Principles of Civic Education

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- ↳ Broadly defined, the purpose of civic education is to develop the “requisite *cultural conditions* for effective citizenship”
- ↳ While this focus has traditionally centred on projects of nation-building and knowledge acquisition, contemporary concern has become centred on enhancing the capacity of citizens to be active participants within their society
  - ↳ Emphasis upon participation and action implies a preference education *for* citizenship rather than education *about* citizenship
- ↳ “Post-national” approaches to civic education are principally divided between *technical-economic* instrumentalism and *global social justice* instrumentalism

# Education for Future Integration

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- 👉 Educating for Nation-Europe (1950-1970)
  - 👉 The European Civics Campaign promoted by the Council of Europe positioned individuals as citizens of their “own country ... but also of Europe and the world”
  - 👉 Emphasized the ethno-cultural ties between European citizens
- 👉 Educating for the development of European identity (1970-1992)
  - 👉 Emphasized developing affective ties between the citizens and the institutions of Europe ( and to the exclusion of a global dimension)
  - 👉 Policy documents provide vague references to “promote and organise ... educational activities with a European content”

# Educating European Citizens, 1992-present

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- Two key developments shaped the third phase:
  - Formal citizenship through the Treaty on European Union
  - The democratization of Eastern European
- Increasingly rights-based approach to civic education
  - Rights are presented in a multifaceted way that are granted by European and international frameworks as well as nation-states
- Citizenship is now depicted as *post-national*—the link between citizenship and state borders, national cultures, or ethnic markers are now decoupled
  - A greater emphasis is placed on the citizen as a member of the political community of Europe (as opposed ethno-cultural ties)

# Implications for Civic Education

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- ✎ Delinking civic education (and citizenship) to nation-states exacerbates a belief in the hollowing out of the state
  - ✎ Curricular emphasis on globalization (over-) emphasizes global/macro-regional constraints on national policy
  - ✎ Leads to cognitive disengagement from political behaviour
- ✎ European initiatives, such as the Tuning Process (2002), promotes a *technical-economic* model of civic education through the focus on employment and mobility related skills
  - ✎ Dovetails with the promotion of life-long learning
  - ✎ Centers civic education on equipping “employers and their employees with the skills needed for a global economy”