ICCS experience: Lessons from the regional modules

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ICCS - overview

• Preparing young people to undertake their roles as citizens

• Two dimensions of civics & citizenship
  – Student knowledge and understanding
  – Attitudes, perceptions and activities

• Focus of ICCS reporting
  – International comparisons
  – Variations within countries
  – Factors explaining variation
ICCS - data collection

- Southern Hemisphere school calendar
  - October 2008 - December 2008
- Northern Hemisphere school calendar
  - February - May 2009
- International instruments
  - Student test and questionnaire
  - Teacher survey
  - School survey
  - National contexts survey
Contextual differences between countries

• International assessments designed to establish common measures
  – Risk of ignoring interesting national or regional differentiation

• Approaches to allow collection of aspects omitted from international instruments
  – National options
  – International options
  – Regional modules (ICCS)
Regional modules

- Established to collect data on aspects relevant in geographic regions
- Regional student instrument administered after international instruments (optional for countries)
- Europe: 24 countries
- Latin America: Six countries
- Asia: Five countries
European module

• Targeted at specific European aspects related to civics & citizenship
  – Student knowledge about the European Union (EU) and its institutions, laws and policies
  – Attitudes, perceptions and activities related to Europe

• Instrument
  – Cognitive test items
  – Questionnaire part
Instrument development

• Writing of test and questionnaire items
  – Smaller pilots and consultations with experts and NRCs

• Field trial in participating countries
  – Analysis of results and discussion with NRCs

• Final revision
  – Additional piloting for additional test items
  – Final review by NRCs and experts
Organisation of work

- Coordinated by NFER in close cooperation with ISC at ACER
- National Research Coordinators (NRC) from region
- Experts associated with national centres
- Other expert consultants (including CRELL and ICCS Project Advisory Committee)
European outcomes

• Relatively high levels of civic knowledge in many European countries but considerable variation within the region
• Basic facts on European Union well known but considerable variation for test items measuring in-depth knowledge
• Strong sense of European identity and support for increased harmonization
• Low levels of participation in activities related to Europe
European report

- Published in November 2010
Experience with development process

• Issues with definition of “European aspects”
  – Different views of relevant issues across European national centres
  – Russia and Norway did not participate

• Issues with development of European test items
  – Lack of measurement equivalence
  – Generally low reliability
  – Very basic knowledge
Latin American module

• Targeted at aspects of civics and citizenship relevant in the region
  – Specific elements of civic knowledge regionally relevant but not included in international test
  – Attitudes and perceptions toward government, society and co-existence

• Linked to regional initiative SREDECC

• Instrument
  – Cognitive test items
  – Questionnaire
Instrument development

- Writing the test and questionnaire items:
  - Small-scale pilots
  - Consultations with the NRCs and experts
- Field trial in all participating countries
  - Analysis of results
- Final revision
  - Consultations with NRCs and experts
Organisation of work

• Coordinated by ISC at ACER
• Embedded in activities of regional activity (SREDECC)
• Regional expert group with representatives from each country
• NRCs from all participating countries
• Expert consultants on instrument development and analysis (including ICCS Project Advisory Committee)
Latin American outcomes

- Relatively lower levels of civic knowledge in these countries
- Students not supportive of authoritarian government and corrupt practices but many students prepared to justify dictatorships under certain circumstances
- Many students experience verbal and physical abuse at schools and considerable minorities support use of violence
Latin American report

• Published in April 2011 (Spanish version in preparation)

Experience with development process

• Late start of conceptual development
  – Associated with uncertainty of country participation

• Definition of “Latin American” aspects
  – Civic knowledge items form a similar dimension as international items
  – Many perception items could also be applied internationally
Asian module

• Targeted at conceptual and content-related aspects of civics and citizenship considered as particularly relevant in the region
  – Addressing specific views on civics and citizenship in Asian countries
  – Attitudes toward and perceptions of government, society and co-existence

• Instrument
  – Questionnaire
Instrument development

- Establishment of Asian module framework:
  - Consultations with the NRCs and experts

- Development of questionnaire items
  - Smaller pilots and consultations

- Asian instrument pilot
  - After international field trial
  - Analysis to decide on final instrument

- Final revision
  - By ISC in consultations with NRC/experts
Organisation of work

• Coordinated by ISC at ACER
• NRCs and national experts from all participating countries
• Further input from experts (including ICCS Project Advisory Committee)
Asian outcomes

- Large differences in views on government, use of connections and corrupt practices between two groups of countries
  - Indonesia and Thailand
  - Chinese Taipei, Republic of Korea, Hong Kong SAR
- Majorities of students think that morality is important for good citizenship and to hold political office
- Majorities of students expressed trust in civic institutions and a sense of Asian identity
Asian report

• Not yet published but in final revision stage
Experience with Asian module

- Late start of conceptual and instrument development
- Definition of “Asian” aspects
  - Short time for conceptual development
  - Difficulty to determine specific “Asian views of citizenship”
- Differences in contexts
  - Large discrepancies in cultural background, economic characteristics and outcomes
Lessons from regional modules - 1

- Interesting additional data focused on region-specific issues
- Importance of starting development as early as possible
  - Difficulties with establishment in ICCS 2009
  - Additional work load for international coordination and centres
Lessons from regional modules - 2

• Regional framework development important
  – Need to establish common frame of reference
  – Need to establish consensus among participating countries

• Instrument development
  – More difficult to develop regional cognitive assessments
  – Issues with administration at end of survey
Lessons from regional modules - 3

• Rationale for regional modules needs to be clear
  – May be difficult when there is a lot of heterogeneity within region

• Regional modules in other international studies?
  – Need to identify aspects that are different in a given region
  – May not be applicable for other international studies
Lessons from regional modules - 4

- Not possible to compare results with other regions and comment on whether patterns in a region differ from other regions
- May identify aspects of civics and citizenship that should be incorporated in international core
When can regional modules be particularly useful?

- When there are enough common aspects in a specific region regarding a particular assessment domain
- When there is a clear regional frame of reference for development
- When national centres are prepared to cooperate from the beginning
- When there is enough time & money for development, implementation and reporting
Thank you!