

European citizenship
in Dutch secondary education.

A comparison between different types of schools

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ABSTRACT

In this study European citizenship competencies of students in Dutch secondary education are analyzed. For the analysis Main Study data from the European regional module and the Student questionnaire – as constructed for the International Civic and Citizenship Study (ICCS) – have been analyzed and compared with data from a study amongst students in the same target grade in so-called ELOS schools (Europe as a learning environment). The framework that the ELOS schools use, show a great resemblance with the Assessment framework of ICCS. The study has been carried out considering the changes made in the instruments after analysis of the Field Trial data (IEA 2008). It is assumed that secondary analysis of the two datasets provide empirical support for a specific European orientated form of civic and citizenship education. The variation in students' European civic attitudes are explained by employing multi-level analysis with the type of school/curriculum (ELOS versus ICSS) being an important explanatory variable.

Although a general test-score could not be compared, ELOS students perform significantly better on six of the cognitive items of a set of nine items from the ICCS European Module. Moreover it seems that better scores are achieved by ELOS students in each of the Dutch school tracks (from pre-vocational to pre-university). As expected, students in the 'Europe focused' ELOS schools report a (slightly) greater sense of European identity than their peers in other schools. Multilevel analysis, employed on two conceptual scales, shows that ELOS students value equal chances for European citizens more than their peers in ICCS schools. A significant school effect was found. The scale scores on attitude towards a (possible) enlargement of Europe however did not indicate such an effect. In general the results of this study provide some empirical support for the ELOS programme.

Keywords: European civic and citizenship education, secondary analysis, ICCS, ELOS

1. INTRODUCTION

Civic and citizenship education has become the centre of a major debate and review over the past decade while becoming one of the major goals of educational policies across the world (Birzea, 2003). Responding to the generalized need for reformation in the field, international studies were conducted in order to gather information concerning the improvement of civic knowledge within and across countries (Birzea, 2003; Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Oswald & Schulz, 2001). A very important contribution to the field is expected by the 2009 IEA International Civic and Citizenship Study (ICCS). ICCS is the successor to a previous IEA study in Civic and Citizenship education called CIVED. In ICCS students' civic and citizenship achievement is measured with three instruments: a cognitive test, a student questionnaire - measuring attitudes, activities and student background variables - and a regional module. The regional module consisting of a cognitive test and a questionnaire is optional for each participating country, and there are three different ones: an Asian, a Latin-American and a European module.

The European module aims to measure citizenship in a broader European context (Kerr & Lopes 2008) 'European citizenship' therefore can be seen as a minor cognitive and affective-behavioral domain within the broader definition of citizenship as formulated in the ICCS assessment framework (Schulz *et al.*, 2008; Kerr & Lopes, 2008). The Netherlands were one of the countries where the development of the European module was greatly anticipated and where several trials of test-items were conducted. A European report with the results of the international data from the European module is scheduled for September 2010.

Although on a policy level the international orientation of students in secondary education has a long history in the Netherlands, ‘European citizenship’ is considered a relatively new concept in the field of educational research. A plea for a stronger focus on internationalisation of schools was made in the Dutch Minister’s white paper “Crossing borders” that was issued in 1991 (Ministry of Education, 1991). One of the implications of these policy initiatives were the adaptation of attainment targets for lower secondary education towards internationalisation, as well as a change in subjects to be tested in the final exams at the end of secondary school. Following the Ministry’s white paper, the first national and bilateral programmes were established (e.g. like the student exchange programme *Iku*, the study visit programme *Plato*, and the programme for bilingual education) (Oonk, 2007). Since then, educational policy has strengthened its international focus, both through stimulating exchange programmes between students and teachers across countries, and through stimulating foreign language skills and knowledge of other countries. One of the major structural developments in the enhancement of a more European and international orientation (EIO) in Dutch secondary education has been the establishment of a network of 15 ELOS schools in 2004. ELOS stands for Europe as a Learning Environment. The network has expanded since then.

The different knowledge and attitudinal topics in the European module constructed to assess citizenship in the European context show a great resemblance with the elements in the framework used by Dutch ELOS schools to implement the education of ‘European citizenship’. This *Common Framework for Europe Competence (CFEC)*, developed in 2006 by the international scientific Committee of the ELOS network, includes three domains: knowledge, skills and attitudes (EIO1), successful communication and exchange skills in a European context (EIO2) and language skills (*The Council of Europe’s Common European Framework for Languages (CEFL)*). The implementation and use of this Framework in the Netherlands was evaluated in 2008 (Maslowski *et al.*, 2009). The evaluation of the ELOS project also contained an effect study wherein the different competencies and achievement levels from the CFEC framework were measured. Several cognitive items and attitudinal scales with regard to European and international Orientation were constructed and finally administered to grade 8 as well as grade 11 students of 15 ELOS schools. For possible future comparison with national outcomes, the ELOS students were also administered the set of cognitive items and some attitudinal scales from the Field Trial version of the ICCS European module.

This study aims at comparing European citizenship competencies of students in Dutch secondary education, by conducting secondary (multi level) analysis of two data sources. Conducting secondary analysis of international studies is regarded as a gain for the theoretical development educational effectiveness research and also as an opportunity to look at international studies from a comprehensive theoretical perspective.

The current study intends to answer the following questions:

1. Is there a difference in the civic knowledge of Europe between grade 8 students from general secondary schools in the ICCS sample and students from ELOS schools?
2. Do attitudes and civic competencies concerning Europe differ between students in these two studies?
3. Do these differences still remain if corrections are made for several factors on student and school level (such as student background characteristics, school type)?

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 European citizenship

There has been a focus on European citizenship in education in the Netherlands since the early 1990s. Relevant research for the present study is however scarce and emerges mostly from national educational policy studies (Blankert & Stamm, 2005; Scholtes *et al.*, 2005). Research conducted by Oonk (2004) shows that the core goals of European citizenship in education are: teaching an understanding of the language and culture of other countries; countering prejudice; and enlarging knowledge of and improvement of the student skills in modern foreign languages. Oonk states that these goals are foremost obtained within the context of student exchange trips and –programmes. These lead to more knowledge about other (European) countries and the European Union. More importantly: students that exchange are more involved with Europe (Oonk, 2004; 2007). Oonk defines EIO as follows: ‘European and International Orientation for a school or training institute and for pupils and students refers to all of the educational activities that are intended to provide specific knowledge, insight and skills with regard to European and international developments’. He states that European citizenship education is only possible if an acceptable combination of national and European elements is found. This view is in line with his hypothesis on national identity and European commonality: ‘Within the European Union there is a constant search for the right balance between the need to maintain national identity on the one hand and the improvement of European cooperation on the other. These are the two poles that alternately repel and attract each other both in politics and in education’ (Oonk, 2007, p.144).

European identity

The efforts to be engaged in education on Europe are directed towards enhancing European citizenship and European identity in most countries, or to prepare students for a future in an international setting. EIO in the ELOS study and European citizenship achievement in ICCS are closely related concepts and both relate to the extent a person (student) can relate to a wider European reality outside the personal and national spheres. It is assumed that achievement in European citizenship increases if a student identifies himself more with being part of Europe.

European identity is the topic of several recent studies. Jamieson *et al.* (2007) found that young adults certainly have developed attitudes towards Europe (whether positive, neutral or negative) and have sensed to what degree they conceive themselves as being Europeans. The authors note that one possible way of gaining a sense of connectedness to other parts of Europe is through friends and family. Fuss and Grosser (2006) indicate that young men and women who identify themselves rather positive with Europe tend to discuss social and political issues concerning Europe, like the European unification, more often at home. Moreover, a positive attitude of parents, grandparents and friends is likely to stimulate a positive opinion with adolescents as well (Du Bois-Reymond, 1995). Next to this, local and national political cultures are important as they provide young people with a stock of predominantly positive or negative views of ‘Europe’ or the European Union. Jamieson *et al.* (2007) report that national and local media were found to provide stereotypes of immigrants and views on immigration, in some cases linking enlargement of the European Union with discussion of immigration issues. Bruter (2003) has also highlighted the importance of symbols in media on the European identity of citizens. Youngsters are very likely to be influenced by the information provided by the media (television,

printed media and especially internet) on Europe, either directly through reading or listening to the information they receive, or indirectly through the opinions of their parents or other relatives.

Risse (2005) states that stimulating a European identity does not imply that youngsters are going to less identify with their own country or local community. On the contrary, according to Citrin and Sides (2004), youngsters who identify themselves more with their local, regional or national community, also feel more attached to Europe. In this line the concept of European citizenship offers possibilities to find out what people in Europe unites with respect to common opinions and experiences. For this reason European citizenship is not necessarily contradictive to the attention of education to national values and norms. However, it remains to be seen if European identity is something all categories of young people can develop. It might be relevant for higher educated persons, but we also know that lower social status groups are less enthusiastic about Europe, while at the same time emphasizing more their own national identity (Maslowski *et al.*, 2009)

European knowledge

Research of results and effects of (specific) Europe Citizenship on student level are also scarce. It is to be expected that with the publication of the ICCS international report and the European report more (international) publications will emerge. The study of ELOS schools in the Netherlands (Maslowski *et al.*, 2009) reveals that students in upper secondary education have considerably more knowledge on Europe than students in lower secondary education. Grade 8 students had around 10 per cent less questions correct than students in Grade 11. As the test that was used to determine students' knowledge on EIO contained specific questions that are not likely to be learnt in other settings, the authors state that this difference in knowledge could probably be attributed, to the education on Europe provided in ELOS schools. Despite this, students in upper secondary education are more likely to have gained knowledge through newspapers, television news or discussions with peers and parents. As such it is difficult to determine to what degree the higher knowledge level of Grade 11 students can indeed be attributed to Europe oriented education at school, rather than a 'natural' growth that could have been observed in other schools as well (Maslowski *et al.*, 2009). Unpublished results from the same study indicate however that ELOS students in grade 8 perform significantly better on the cognitive test items from the ICCS European module than their peers in the ICCS schools from the Dutch Field Trial. The test scores of the ELOS schools were higher in every educational track of grade 8 classes.

European civic attitudes

European citizenship focuses on more than European identity and knowledge alone. In both the CFEC framework and the Assessment framework for ICCS a lot of emphasis is put on civic attitudes. In the European module there are several measured, for instance: the European Union in general, the political organisation of the EU, the financial organisation of the EU, the enlargement of the EU, equal opportunities for EU citizens, migration within the EU, cultural differences throughout Europe etc. In the study of Dutch ELOS schools responses towards two attitudinal aspects were compared. For students' sensitivity of cultural differences between people no difference between the two grades was reported. This means that, on average, students in upper secondary education neither show more respect for people from other European countries nor indicate to a larger extent that they acknowledge that the behavior of people from other European countries may differ from their own because of other values and norms. The same was found for

students' attitudes towards their future in an international context. Upper secondary students were not more inclined to attend future classes, lessons or studies in another European country, nor were they more interested in a future job in a foreign country than students in lower secondary school. Based on these findings, Maslowski *et al.* (2009) conclude that attitudes towards Europe are resistant to change. This is in line with an earlier study in the Netherlands by Oonk (2004), who concludes that students' European self-image hardly changes as a result of exchange programmes students participate in.

A survey by Matuzevičiūtė (2003) among 850 grade 8 pupils in Lithuania, however, points in a different direction. After implementing a school programme directed towards enhancing cultural, geopolitical and social-economic facets of Europe and the European Union, students indicated a strong commitment to Europe. Pupils identified more with Europe than with their local community, and felt rather European than global citizens. Moreover, the Lithuanian Grade 8 students listed a number of values considered to be important for the future of Europe, like justice, respect for human rights, social welfare and environment protection. The results indicate that schools can have a role in contributing to positive attitudes of students towards Europe.

2.2. Possible indicators for civic and citizenship education outcome

The findings of the previous IEA Civic and Citizenship Study (CIVED) as well as the ones from the secondary analyses that the study made possible, lead to identifying a set of variables that are positively related to students' civic achievement. A first factor that significantly relate with student civic achievement is gender. Both IEA Civic Studies (1971 and 1999) identified a significant influence of gender on test performance (Torney-Purta *et al.*, 2001). These findings reflect also the outcomes of secondary analyses of the CIVED data (Schultz, 2002). Even after controlling for other factors boys have slightly higher scores than girls (Torney-Purta *et al.*, 2001).

Another set of relevant variables are the ones related to the home environment of the student. Among these, the home literacy resources that students possess seems to be an indicator; the more books students report having at home, the higher their level of civic knowledge (Schultz, 2002; Torney-Purta *et al.*, 2001). In addition, a positive predictor of performance in civics seems to be students' expected further education. This variable can be regarded as an indicator of students' general ability and motivation and proved to be a strong predictor of knowledge in both IEA civic education studies (Torney-Purta *et al.*, 2001) as well as in the study of Schultz (2002).

Most studies on civic education give special attention to school-related variables while emphasizing the important role that schools play in developing civically knowledgeable students. Due to the sampling procedures in IEA international studies different factors that are distinctly associated with classroom and school level are treated often as located at school level.

Most variables identified in this category have positive effects on students' civic knowledge. For example, the inclusion in the curriculum of classes in which civic topics are studied as well as the quantity of social studies instruction has a significant positive impact on the levels of students' civic achievement (Niemi & Junn, 1998; Homana, Barber, & Torney-Purta, 2006). It is therefore expected that schools that include special attention towards (European) citizenship in the curriculum will show higher outcomes.

Another predictor of knowledge is an “open classroom climate”. This variable reflects students’ perceptions of an open classroom climate for discussions and it was proven to be a strong predictor of knowledge in several studies (Campbell, 2005; Homana, Barber & Torney-Purta, 2006; Torney-Purta *et al.*, 2001; Schultz, 2002).

In this study the variables ethnicity of the student and percentage minorities on the school level are introduced. Ethnic background is currently a ‘hot topic’ in citizenship education in the Netherlands. Analysis of the citizenship instrument (Ten Dam *et al.*, 2007) used in the national cohort study COOL5-18 (www.cool5-18.nl) show that grade 9 students with a non-Dutch background show higher scores on the civic and citizenship aspects attitude, reflection and skills (Kuyper & Naayer, 2010).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 General design and data sources

The datasets that have been used for the analyses come from the Main Study of ICCS in the Netherlands and the ELOS study (Maslowski *et al.*, 2009). In both studies the population consists of grade 8 students (14-year-olds). In both studies the students completed an instrument that consisted of cognitive items (multiple choice and true/false items) and Lickert scale items measuring attitudes, skills and (European oriented) activities. In the ELOS study all of the cognitive items and most of the other items from the Field trial version of the ICCS European module were administered. In the cognitive part of the ELOS-instrument several items were added measuring specific cognitive and attitudinal domains from the CFEC-framework. Also, in addition to the extended questionnaire, students in the ELOS study received a second questionnaire in which all of the items concerning student background from the ICCS student questionnaire were included. For the analysis data from 1838 grade 8 students from the ICCS data and 639 grade 8 students from the ELOS study were available. Within ICCS, only one classroom was sampled from each participating school (85 schools in total), so it is not possible to disentangle school from classroom effects (Schultz, 2002). In the ELOS study, in which all of the 15 Dutch ELOS-schools participated, the general structure was to sample two classes, one from the lower (vocational) track and one from the higher tracks. In the end however, three schools participated with only one class. Because of this the higher tracks are somewhat overrepresented in the ELOS study.

3.2. Variables used in the analysis

Outcome variable: Civic Knowledge

There are several outcome variables of interest available in the European Module, of which European civic knowledge is probably of most interest. Before starting work on this study it was opted to report on the Dutch data from the Field Trial of ICCS. Unpublished results showed a very strong support for the ELOS students (complete test scores were compared). Analysis of the international Field Trial data (IEA, 2008) however revealed that most of the cognitive items were not considered valid and/or reliable and were consequently dropped from the item-pool. The intended analysis of civic knowledge was thus greatly limited due to the large incomparability of the two datasets. Between the two stages of the ICCS study (Field Trial and Main Study) a lot of the cognitive items were dropped or were reformulated considerably. In the end only nine

knowledge items remained in the two datasets. These items do not form a reliable scale ($\alpha = .31$). Analysis of the Field Trial data also showed that the knowledge items as a single scale had a low internal consistency, and that no (reliable) subscales could be reported. This is also likely for the final items in the Main Study (IEA, 2010). One of the reasons for this is that with the construction of the European module test the items had to be ones that discriminate in achievement level. This means the test should contain items that almost everyone can answer correctly, as well as items that are answered incorrectly by most students (Maslowski *et al.*, 2009; Kerr & Lopes, 2008). It is expected that all further reports on the Main study data from the European module will be on single items. For this reason we only reported raw scores on the nine items and no further (multivariate) multi-level analysis is employed.

Outcome variables: Attitudes

The European module contains several scales for civic identity, attitudes and activities. Here too, almost half of the items (and scales) had to be dropped in the pre-analysis stage because of changes between Field Trial and Main Study, and/or because of low reliabilities. In this paper we report the results for three scales. These are: students' sense of European identity and belonging (EUIDENT, four items, $\alpha=.61$), students' belief in equal opportunities within European countries (EUEQUAL, five items, $\alpha=.81$), students' attitude toward the enlargement of the EU (EUNLA, five items, $\alpha=.67$).

Explanatory variables at student level

The explanatory variables at the student level are:

- Student background factors. Indicators of student background are gender (girls = 1; boys = 0), home literacy resources (number of books at home), parental education (highest within family) and ethnic background. Home literacy resources and parental education have been regarded as proxy indicators for the socio-economic status of the student (Schultz, 2002). The following categories were used for home literacy: 0 = "none of very few books" 1 = "11 to 50 books", 2 = "51 to 100 books", 3 = "101 to 200 books" and 4 = "more than 200 books". For parental education the categories were: 1=ISCED level 1, 2= ISCED level 2, 3= ISCED level 3, 4 = ISCED level 4 or 5A, 5= ISCED level 5b or 6. For ethnic background two categories were used: 0=Dutch ethnic background, 1=non-Dutch ethnic background.
- Expectations. Years of expected education refers to how many years of further education students expect after the current year (Schultz, 2002). It can be regarded as an indicator of students' general ability and/or the motivation to improve their achievement. Students' responses for this variable range from 0 to 6 indicating none to more than ten years of expected prolonged education.
- Class type. In general, students from the (pre)vocational education tracks score lower on achievement tests compared to students from higher (pre-university) tracks. Test scores increase if the track is higher. Furthermore it is expected that students in the vocational tracks tend to have more negative attitudes towards Europe. Maslowski *et al.* (2009) show that this is true for the students in the three distinguished tracks in the ELOS schools. A dummy variable was created for VMBO (all 5 vocational tracks) with HAVO/VWO (upper secondary education and pre-university education) as reference.

Explanatory variables at school (classroom) level.

The explanatory variables at the school level are:

- Type of school or curriculum. The main variable at the school level is the type of school. At the ELOS schools, students were considered to have been following a Europe orientated type of curriculum in the months before the date of the test. Two categories are used: ICCS=1, ELOS.=2.
- Aggregated student variables. Variables which are thought to provide information of the school as a context. Percentage of girls, average home literacy resources and average parental education are measured. These are aggregated from the student-level data. To distinguish schools/classes in their ethnic composition a percentage of minorities was aggregated also from the student-level data.

3.3. Analytic strategy

Due to the nested structure of the data, multilevel analysis (Snijders & Bosker, 1999) was considered to be conducted on all outcome variables. As stated above, the intended analysis was greatly limited due to the large (and unexpected) incomparability of the two datasets. Because no single scale for European civic knowledge could be constructed, knowledge is reported on item-level using the regular independent sample t-test.

On two of the attitudinal scales, EUENLA and EUEQUAL multilevel analysis was employed. The scale EUIDENT reporting student's sense of belonging and European identity was analyzed using multi-level, because of its low reliability.

Two levels were distinguished in the analysis of the attitudinal scales: student and classroom/school. Because in the IEA civic education study one classroom was sampled from each school, the classroom level coincides with the school level. In the ELOS study most schools participated with two classes from different educational tracks. Class was not considered as an extra level because of the few ELOS schools in the combined dataset.

Some explanatory variables tested in this model showed positive effects in previous educational effectiveness and civic education research. These are gender (percentage of girls in schools), home literacy resources, parental education, expected further education, and class type (vocational tracks versus general and pre-university tracks). Each of these factors in the model is therefore expected to positively influence the outcome. For class type the variables VMBO usually tend to influence outcome negatively. It is possible that groups of factors are related to some extent and therefore there is the possibility to take each others' effects away.

After estimating the unconditional (or 'empty') model, explanatory variables at student and school levels were added (starting with student level). Given the sample sizes both at student level and, in the ICCS study, at school level, a significance level of 0.01 was employed. The fixed effects in the model were tested by using the Wald test, providing t-values for the β -coefficients. In this respect an absolute t-value should be greater than 1.96 with a p-value less than 0.01 or 0.05 in order to consider a significant effect of a variable. For the random part, the deviance test was used (Snijders & Bosker, 1999).

Prior to performing the main analysis, an issue to be dealt with was handling missing data. Because multilevel analysis in MLWIN requires complete data-sets, two procedures were employed. First, all missing scores on the outcome variables were removed from the dataset. Second there were missing values on explanatory variables at student level as gender, home literacy resources, expected further education. The missing data on the student variables were replaced with the school/classroom average. Missing data dummy variables were created to indicate if a substitution has been made (1) or the original score was used (0).

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The descriptive statistics for the nine knowledge items and the three attitudinal scales from the European module are reported in Table 1. The first two items are multiple choice items, items 3 to 9 are dichotomous items (true/false). For the three scales, measured on a four point Lickert type scale (strongly disagree – strongly agree), school averages are reported.

[Insert Table.1 about here]

Students in ELOS schools score significantly higher on six of the nine items. For three items there is no significant difference. Only on one item ('Netherlands is a member of the EU') ICCS students perform slightly better (the difference is however neglectable).

Maslowski *et al.* (2009) found that civic knowledge about Europe increases if students are from higher educational tracks in secondary education. Pre-vocational tracks achieved significantly lower scores on the European test in the ELOS study compared to students from general upper secondary (HAVO) and pre-university (VWO) tracks. Further analysis reveals that this is also the case for the nine items reported in this paper. ELOS students achieve better compared to their peers in other (ICCS) schools in each of the Dutch school tracks. The track scores for item 2 (number of EU members, a relatively difficult item) in ICCS are for instance: .40 (VMBO), .46 (HAVO) and .51(VWO). The scores of ELOS students from the same tracks are respectively .43, .51, and .63. Within the set of items no strong gender differences were found. Although boys seem to perform slightly better if the nine items were to be considered a test score, individual items report no significant differences between girls and boys. This is the case in both studies.

Attitudes

The scale scores on EUIDENT in Table 1 show that students from ELOS schools report a greater sense of belonging to Europe ($p < .01$). This was expected. The scale scores on the two attitudinal scales reveal a significant difference for the attitude towards equality for European citizens and an inconclusive difference for the attitude towards the enlargement of the EU.

Two separate models were estimated for the two dependent variables (attitude towards equal chances in Europe and attitude toward enlargement of the EU). In Table 2 the models for both dependent variables are presented. The table shows that for both variables the variance explained at the school level is very low: one percent of the variance exists between schools and 99 percent between students. Therefore, there is not much to be explained at the school level.

[Insert Table.2 about here]

In model 1, the student background variables as well as the variables for expected further education, class type and ethnicity were included in the empty model. Together these variables determine a very low reduction in the (unexplained) variance for EUEQUAL and EUENLA, with a decrease in deviance of 14.79 and 17.81 respectively, and values significant at $p < 0.01$. The student level variables do not explain any of the total variance in EUEQUAL in EUENLA.

For both scales the effects of the contextual factors namely gender, number of books at home, highest parental education – the factors expected to positively influence civic outcomes – were not statistically significant. The largest effects were found for the scale measuring the attitude towards the enlargement of Europe. The variable years of expected further education shows a

positive significant relationship with the attitude towards enlargement showing that students with higher aspirations for their future tend to have more favourable attitudes towards European enlargement.

In the second model the variables at the school level were added to the model. From all variables, the type of school was expected to generate the largest effects. The variables at the school level explain 1% of the total variance. For both outcomes it was found that almost all the variance at school level can be explained by the school level variables, school type and percentage of girls. Again no significant positive effects ($p < 0.01$) are found for average number of books at home, or average parental education. However, students that attend a VMBO class (pre-vocational education) tend to be more negative towards enlargement (effect size = $-.12$)

On the school level it was found that the proportion of girls in a school/classroom does not make a difference in the scores on EUEQUAL, but has a significant effect on the attitude towards enlargement of the EU. The percentage of minorities has a very low effect on the attitudes considered. An important outcome is a significant difference between the ICCS schools as compared to ELOS schools on EUEQUAL. Students at the ELOS schools tend to be more positive towards equal chances for European citizens. A similar effect for the attitude towards enlargement was not found.

5. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The present analysis of ICCS Main Study data and data from the ELOS study revealed that grade eight students from schools with a more Europe orientated curriculum score significantly higher on several items measuring European citizenship knowledge. A more full comparison of civic knowledge between the types of schools in this study could not be carried due to the large incompatibilities in the used assessment instruments. No test scores or subscales of civic knowledge could be reported and compared, and therefore performing multilevel analysis to explain the variance in European civic achievement was not considered. The significant results on item-level however indicate that the curricula in the 15 participating ELOS schools seem to contribute to the development of European cognitive achievement of grade 8 students.

From effectiveness literature in other educational domains it is expected that the school effects for cognitive outcomes are often larger than for non-cognitive outcomes. Three attitudinal scales from the European module were included in the comparison between the two types of schools. As expected, students in the 'Europe focused' ELOS schools report a (slightly) greater sense of European identity than their peers in other schools. Moreover, ELOS students show a significantly more positive attitude towards the equal opportunities of European citizens, but for the attitude towards the enlargement of the European Union no conclusive differences were observed.

Multi level analysis, employed on two of the attitude scales, revealed that there is almost no variance explained on the school level. Unusual, but interesting is the fact, that not many student variables used in the models had an effect even if 99 percent of variance to be explained rest at student level. For further study it is of interest to look for other factors affecting these outcomes. The variables that did have a significant effect were 'expected further education' and class type (stream), with pre-vocational tracks being a negative predictor for European civic attitude.

In this study a significant effect for the type of school was found on the students' attitude towards equal opportunities for the citizens of the EU. ELOS students are more positive about equal opportunities. There was however no such effect on the attitude towards enlargement of the EU. Further school level effects were found for the percentage of females in the school.

Schools/classes with more girls tend to be more positive towards the enlargement of the EU. All other school variables did not have significant effects.

To conclude, the present study, if somewhat limited in its scope, showed the importance of investigating the student and school effects in a secondary analysis of international data. It should be acknowledged that neither ICCS nor the ELOS study was designed with the aim of detecting educational effectiveness factors and this was an important limitation for the present investigation. However, for the first time since the launch of ELOS in 2004, some empirical support has been generated for the way ELOS schools adapted their citizenship curricula. The results can furthermore provide, although again limited, information for the ongoing development of the theoretical framework for ELOS schools, as well as input for future scientific measuring of the outcomes for (European) civic and citizenship education.

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Table 1 *European citizenship knowledge and attitudes. Comparison between grade 8 ELOS-students and students from the ICCS study*

Aspect		Schools	n	Mean	SD	Sig.
Knowledge items	1. Flag of the EU	ELOS	638	.97	.17	**
		ICCS	1836	.93	.26	
	2. Number of member countries	ELOS	637	.56	.49	**
		ICCS	1829	.47	.49	
	3. Netherlands is member of the EU	ELOS	633	.98	.18	
		ICCS	1829	.99	.10	
	4. EU decides what is taught in schools	ELOS	631	.75	.43	
		ICCS	1822	.75	.43	
	5. EU law: Money for farming methods	ELOS	634	.60	.49	**
		ICCS	1824	.43	.50	
	6. EU law to reduce pollution	ELOS	634	.87	.33	**
		ICCS	1826	.72	.45	
	7. Euro official currency in all European countries	ELOS	633	.61	.49	*
		ICCS	1831	.56	.50	
	8. Euro official in all EU countries	ELOS	631	.67	.47	**
		ICCS	1831	.31	.46	
	9. Euro banknotes have same design	ELOS	630	.67	.47	
		ICCS	1828	.64	.48	
Attitudes	European identity (EUIDENT)	ELOS	607	2.78	.52	*
		ICCS	1811	2.72	.57	
	Belief in equal opportunities for EU citizens (EUEQUAL)	ELOS	597	2.94	.58	**
		ICCS	1718	2.84	.57	
	Attitudes towards enlargement of the EU (EUEENLA)	ELOS	597	2.75	.47	
		ICCS	1718	2.78	.46	

* Difference ELOS-schools and schools in ICCS is significant ($p < .05$)

** ($p < .01$)

Table 2 Results of multilevel analysis to explain variation in EUEQUAL and EUENLA (standardized variable); parameter estimates

	Model 0 Empty		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3 Parsimonious	
	<i>EUEQUAL</i>	<i>EUENLA</i>	<i>EUEQUAL</i>	<i>EUENLA</i>	<i>EUEQUAL</i>	<i>EUENLA</i>	<i>EUEQUAL</i>	<i>EUENLA</i>
Fixed effects								
Constant	0.01(.02)	0.01(.02)	- 0.01(.04)	0.01(.04)	0.13(.06)	0.01(.06)		
Student Characteristics								
Gender (female)			0.02(.04)	0.05(.04)	0.02(.04)	0.02(.04)		
SES - Number of books at home			- 0.03(.02)	- 0.03(.02)	- 0.04(.02)	- 0.03(.02)		
SES - highest parental educational			0.01(.02)	0.03(.02)	- 0.01(.02)	0.03(.02)		
Expected further education			- 0.01(.02)	0.07(.02)	0.04(.02)	0.07(.02)	0.04(.02)*	0.07(.02)*
VMBO			- 0.02(.06)	- 0.11(.06)	0.01(.06)	- 0.12(.06)		- 0.10(.04)*
HAVO			0.01(.01)	0.01(.01)	0.01(.01)	0.01(.01)		
Ethnicity			0.04(.06)	- 0.01(.06)	0.05(.07)	- 0.01(.06)		
School Characteristics								
School Type - ICCS					- 0.21(.06)	0.03(.06)	- 0.21(.06)*	
% females					0.03(.02)	0.06(.02)		0.06(.02)*
SES - Number of books at home (SA)					0.04(.03)	0.01(.03)		
SES - parental educational (SA)					0.01(.02)	0.03(.03)		
% minorities					- 0.01(.03)	0.01(.02)		
Random effects								
School level	0.01(.01)	0.01(.01)	0.01(.01)	0.01(.01)	0.00(.00)	0.00(.00)	0.00(.00)	0.00(.00)
Student level	0.99(.03)	0.99(.03)	0.99(.03)	0.99(.03)	0.99(.03)	0.98(.02)	0.99(.03)	0.99(.03)
Deviance	6564.36	6567.38	6549.57	6549.57	6541.75	6540.00	6550.15	6546.00

Notes. Fixed coefficients are followed by their standard error. SA = school average; * $p < .001$