

# **WP 10, Work description, summary**

## **The Danish University of education**

### **April 07**

#### **Methodological reflections**

The aims of this work package have been to chart the concepts and perspectives of teachers within intercultural citizenship education. In accordance with our focus on understandings and interpretations among teachers, and the qualitative nature of these questions, interviews with teachers have been given priority and it has been decided not to use questionnaires in the Danish case.

The intention is not to give a representative picture of Danish schools or Danish teachers in the city and the countryside etc. Rather, the interviews show us examples of various perspectives on intercultural citizenship education and how the teachers perceive their role in these educational processes.

#### **The interview guide**

The partners agreed on a general framework for the teacher interview guide based on the common research questions for the data collection, while leaving space for corrections in the guide according to the national contexts.

According to the narrative perspective of many of the questions, we decided to use the questions as a guide, more than questions to be followed strictly. One result of the semi-structured approach are interviews which differ in both length and issues elaborated on. On the other hand the open ended questions and the interviews having character of ‘conversations’ offer both a variety of perspectives on the issues raised, and at the same time point out that the teachers share some of the same concerns and reflections in relation to intercultural citizenship education.

The interview guide was piloted on a primary school teacher and the guide was subsequently revised and discussed. This process resulted in a few changes to the guide, for instance questions aimed at the curriculum guidelines tended to be perceived by interviewees as a test of whether the teacher followed the curriculum, in addition to this they were found to be difficult to answer without having the curriculum in hand. Subsequently we decided to tone down this type of questions. We also decided to add questions regarding the teacher’s personal motivation for being a teacher in order to better understand the relations between his/her role as a citizen and his/her role as an educator.

For the group interview guide we selected the questions which were found to be the most central questions in the teacher interview guide. As the group interview form is based on discussion among

the respondents, the questions were reformulated as themes to be discussed among the group of teachers. Also the group interview guide was piloted on a group of secondary school teachers and subsequently revised. In this case we experienced a lot of confusion among the teachers relating to the meaning of the central concepts 'citizenship' and 'intercultural'. Consequently, in the following interviews we attempted to make it clear from the start, that we were not looking for a specific understanding of 'citizenship' and 'intercultural education', rather we were interested in their definitions and understandings of these issues in the contexts of their teaching practice.

For both single and group interviews weight has been given to create a space of confidence, letting the teachers know that the intention of the interview was not a test of their teaching, but rather an attempt to achieve insight in teachers' understandings, experiences and visions within intercultural citizenship education. In advance we sent the teachers an overview of the themes to be discussed during the interview, rather than the complete guide, as we did not want the teachers to feel that they had to prepare for the interview. On the other hand, we thought it could be an advantage if the teachers had offered the issues some thoughts before the interview took place. Together with these themes, we also sent the teachers the following short passage, to present the background of the research project:

### ***Teacher identity and cultural diversity***

*It has been claimed that the Danish society is characterized by an increasing cultural diversity. Officials within the EU and the Council of Europe are concerned with the possibilities of creating common understandings of what it means to be a citizen within the national states and Europe, and if and how democratic education in schools can play a part in this process. Can or should the schools take part in developing a common European and multicultural identity? How do teachers understand their roles as educators in this context?*

## **Interviewguide for primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary school teachers**

The following questions focus on citizenship/democratic education in an intercultural perspective.

### **Teacher identity**

1. How long have you been a teacher?
2. How long have you taught in this school?
3. Do you have a personal motivation for being a teacher? If this is the case, does this involve a personal preoccupation with democratic education?
4. Which subjects do you currently (primarily) teach? How do these subjects contribute to the democratic education of the pupils?

### **Teachers as citizens**

6. Do you see your role as a citizen as connected with your role as an educator?
7. Have you been actively involved in any social or political campaigns related to, for example, ethnicity, multiculturalism, race, language or citizenship? Please specify.
8. Are you a member of a political party, member of a school board, board of parents, or active in any group or association concerned with educational, ethnical or multicultural issues?

### **Teachers as cultural workers and transformative agents**

9. Is there a connection between your identity and function as a teacher in the Danish “folkeskole”/gymnasium, and the cultural diversity of the Danish society?
  - 9a If there is a connection: How does it find expression/ is it expressed in the planning and accomplishment of your teaching ?
  - 9b Do you think, that your teaching contributes to changing the pupils’ understanding of what democracy is or ought to be ?
  - 9c Do you think, that you contribute to changing the pupils’ understanding of what it means to belong to one or a diversity of cultures?
  - 9d (if the teachers do not see a connection between their identity and function as teachers and the cultural diversity of the society, we will ask): Is it a deliberate choice to omit this dimension?

### **Teachers as transformative agents**

#### *Education*

10. How is citizenship education prioritised in your school in general?
11. Is democratic education a part of the planning and accomplishment of your teaching?
12. Do you work with the classroom as a democratic forum ? How?
13. Do you include an intercultural or European perspective in your teaching? When and how?
14. Which educational strategies do you find most effective in order to educate your students to become integrated members of a multicultural society?
  - 14a Are you in your teaching engaged in encouraging one or more of the pupils’ identities, for example the pupils identification with the Danish national community and/or a European community?

14b Are there other identities you find important to include in your teaching, for example the pupils' ethnic/ religious identities?

14c Are there one or more issues of identity, you find ought to have a special place in your teaching and in the education of the pupils?

14d Is there a connection between this work with identities and an intercultural democratic education ?

15. Does your team of teachers work with intercultural democratic education? How?

16. Is democratic education, European identity or intercultural issues a part of the cross-curricula activities at your school?

***Definition of concepts***

**( how do they order the world using the concepts)**

17. What do you associate with the concept of citizenship?

18.How will you define democratic education?

19. What is intercultural education? The most important elements?

***In-service courses and further education (professional knowledge)***

20. Do you feel that you have the knowledge and skills to teach intercultural citizenship education and human rights? From which sources did you get your knowledge/skills ?

21. Have you participated in any professional development courses in citizenship education or intercultural education?

22. Do you think there is a need for professional development courses in intercultural democratic citizenship education, and what should the focus of these courses be?