Lifelong Learning, Governance and Active Citizenship in Europe

ETGACE

EU RESEARCH ON SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

Lifelong Learning, Governance and Active Citizenship in Europe

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EU RESEARCH ON
SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

Lifelong Learning, Governance and
Active Citizenship in Europe
ETGACE project

Final report

Education and training for governance and active citizenship in Europe:
Analysis of adult learning and design of formal, non-formal and
informal educational intervention strategies

Project HPSE–CT-1999-00012

Funded under the ‘Improving the socioeconomic knowledge base’
key action of the fifth framework programme

Directorate-General for Research
European Commission

Issued in
March 2003

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http://improving-ser.jrc.it/default/, the database of socio-economic projects funded under the 4th and 5th Framework Programme.
Within the Fifth Framework Programme of the European Union (1998-2002), the Key Action “Improving the socio-economic knowledge base” had broad and ambitious objectives, namely: to improve our understanding of the structural changes taking place in European society, to identify ways of managing these changes and to promote the active involvement of European citizens in shaping their own futures. A further important aim was to mobilise the research communities in the social sciences and humanities at the European level and to provide scientific support to policies at various levels, with particular attention to EU policy fields.

This Key Action had a total budget of 155 Million Euros and was implemented through three Calls for proposals. As a result, 185 projects involving more than 1600 research teams from 38 countries have been selected for funding and have started their research between 1999 and 2002.

Most of these projects are now finalised and results are systematically published in the form of a Final Report.

The calls have addressed different but interrelated research themes which have contributed to the objectives outlined above. These themes can be grouped under a certain number of areas of policy relevance, each of which are addressed by a significant number of projects from a variety of perspectives.

These areas are the following:

- **Societal trends and structural changes;**
  16 projects, total investment of 14.6 Million Euro, 164 teams
- **Quality of life of European Citizens,**
  5 projects, total investment of 6.4 Million Euro; 36 teams
- **European socio-economic models and challenges**
  9 projects; total investment of 9.3 Million Euro; 91 teams.
- **Social cohesion, migration and welfare**
  30 projects, 28 Million Euro; 249 teams.
- **Employment, and changes in work**
  18 projects; total investment of 17.5 Million Euro; 149 teams
- **Gender, participation and quality of life**
  13 projects; total investment of 12.3 Million Euro; 97 teams
- **Dynamics of knowledge, generation and use**
  8 projects; total investment of 6.1 Million Euro; 77 teams
- **Education, training and new forms of learning**
  14 projects; total investment of 12.9 Million Euro; 105 teams
- **Economic development and dynamics**
  22 projects; total investment of 15.3 Million Euro; 134 teams
- **Governance, democracy and citizenship**
  28 projects; total investment of 25.5 Million Euro; 233 teams
- **Challenges from European enlargement**
  13 project; total investment of 12.8 Million Euro; 116 teams
- **Infrastructures to build the European Research Area**
  9 projects; total investment of 15.4 Million Euro; 74 teams.
This publication contains the final report of the project “Education & Training for Governance & Active Citizenship in Europe: Analysis of Adult Learning & Design of Formal, Non-Formal & Informal Educational Intervention Strategies”, whose work has primarily contributed to the area “Education, training and new forms of learning”.

The report contains information about the main scientific findings of this thematic network and their policy implications. The research was carried out by 6 teams over a period of 30 months, starting in March 2000.

The ETGACE project has explored the nature of citizenship in six contrasting European countries (UK, Belgium, Finland, Netherlands and Spain and Slovenia), and in particular it sought to investigate how people learn to be active citizens, and what kind of education measures exist to support this.

The abstract and executive summary presented in this edition offer the reader an overview of the main scientific and policy conclusions, before the main body of the research provided in the other chapters of this report.

As the results of the projects financed under the Key Action become available to the scientific and policy communities, Priority 7 “Citizens and Governance in a Knowledge Based Society” of the Sixth Framework Programme is building on the progress already made and aims at making a further contribution to the development of a European Research Area in the social sciences and the humanities.

I hope readers find the information in this publication both interesting and useful as well as clear evidence of the importance attached by the European Union to fostering research in the field of social sciences and the humanities.

T. LENNON,
Director
ABSTRACT

Across Europe, declining engagement in traditional democratic processes causes concern to governments, companies and other organisations, which are seen as increasingly remote from their stakeholders. A common response is to devolve decision-making in various ways. This requires active engagement by organisations and citizens at lower levels. Both organisations and individuals are called on to learn. The ETGACE project explored the nature of citizenship and governance, how people learned to be active citizens, and the nature and effectiveness of lifelong education interventions for citizenship, in six contrasting European countries.

The project found evidence of governments attempting to re-engage citizens in these ways. However, the sense of citizenship is embedded in each individual’s life history, and in their relationships with others, so no standard model for developing citizenship is applicable. Active citizens have a strong sense of responsibility, rooted in notions of justice and care. Early life experiences, particularly in the family and the community, are probably more important than the school in their motivation to become active. School education for citizenship seems to have played little part in the formation of individual active citizens, though extra-curricular community activities, and opportunities to take part in running their own school, appear to be helpful.

Active citizenship is a lifelong learning process. Learning citizenship is interactive, and deeply embedded in specific contexts. People learn relevant skills through actively trying to solve a problem or fulfil a mission, rather than through organised or institutionalised processes of learning. The outcomes of citizenship learning are unpredictable, and public interventions are most likely to be effective if they provide individuals with opportunities to explore and acquire skills in context, rather than through formal instruction.

The skills and knowledge that active citizens develop in one area are frequently transferred into other areas. However, the importance of support for citizenship learning in civil society is not sufficiently recognised, and this area is generally under-resourced, particularly in comparison with workplace learning. As a result, initiatives to develop citizenship skills tend to be short-term, less systematic and less sustainable. The people who suffer most from this are those most vulnerable to social exclusion in any case. Gender and educational attainment are important factors. Other areas of difference (e.g., ethnicity, disability, sexuality) interact with these to create complex patterns of inclusion and exclusion.

Governments should create opportunities for individuals to learn citizenship skills and attitudes through practice and participation in activities relevant to them. Support should be given especially to learning in the voluntary and other civil society organisations, especially in their embryonic stages. Funding organisations must recognise the ‘process’ character of citizenship learning, and establish funding regimes in which civil society organisations are long-term and equal partners.

The crucial importance of family and home in citizenship learning is insufficiently recognised. Support for those providing informal education, such as parents and carers for young children, may produce long-term benefits. Governments and schools should encourage extra-curricular opportunities for citizenship learning, including international exchanges. There is a serious lack of research into processes of informal learning, especially in civil society.
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Context of the research

It is widely believed that globalisation calls for new, and more devolved kinds of political and social structure, in which individual citizens will play a more active part. However, across Europe, there is clear evidence of declining engagement in traditional democratic processes, and governments, firms and other organisations are felt to be remote, and insufficiently accountable to their stakeholders.

This suggests that people need to be re-engaged as ‘active citizens’, and enabled to take informed decisions about their lives, communities and workplaces. However, many people lack the skills, knowledge or understanding to do this, and this is particularly true of those with least formal education, and most at risk of social exclusion on other grounds.

Governments have sought to address the issue through programmes in formal schooling, but this can only have an impact in the long term, and the benefits have yet to be demonstrated. Firms are seeking to address the issue through new processes of employee engagement and the notion of the ‘learning organisation’. In the domain of civil society we see the rise of alternative social movements and changes in the nature of the voluntary sector.

Perceptions of learning, its importance, and how it is supported have also been shifting in recent years. For a decade policymakers have extolled the importance of lifelong learning, recognising that a developed economy and society require individuals to continue to learn throughout life. Associated with this has been a more slowly growing recognition that developing lifelong learning will involve a greater emphasis on learning embedded in the contexts of adult life – the workplace, the home and the community – rather than in formal education and training institutions. It would therefore seem natural to consider lifelong learning as an instrument for remediying perceived ‘democratic deficits’, and that such approaches would wish to pay attention to how individuals learn to be responsible and effective citizens through informal and embedded processes, as well as through formal teaching in initial schooling. This naturally raises complex questions about how the state can intervene to encourage such learning, which is outside the direct control of governments.

However, relatively little is known systematically about how individuals have learned to become active citizens, the role of formal schooling in this, and the potential role of lifelong learning, including its less formal modes. The principal aim of this project was to investigate this.
1.2 The Project Aims and Methodology

1.2.1 Aim

The ETGACE project’s aim was to explore the nature of citizenship in six European countries,\(^1\) to investigate how people have learned to be active citizens, and what kinds of education and training exist to support this. It sought to clarify:

- how today’s active citizens learned to be active citizens;
- whether and how this process differs by gender;
- whether and how it varies between generations;
- what current support (formal, informal and non-formal) exists to assist people to learn to be active citizens;
- what interventions might improve this.

1.2.2 A comparative study

This was a comparative study conducted in six countries, selected because of their contrasting experience of democracy and participation in recent decades. The fieldwork was carried out in parallel in all six (UK, Belgium, Finland, Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain). The same sampling strategies, interview protocols and focus group processes were used in each country, and researchers came together periodically to reflect on and compare findings.

1.2.3 What are citizenship and governance?

The project’s initial literature review identified three distinct definitions of ‘citizen’:

- a status - describing who is, and is not, a member of a nation or other community;
- a set of rights and obligations – describing what a citizen can and should do;
- a set of practices – those activities which define and demonstrate membership.

The first of these is a passive notion, requiring minimal activity. The second and third, on the other hand, imply active engagement. While different commentators vary in the emphasis which they place on responsibilities and rights, there is a general view that ‘activity’ is desirable, and should be encouraged and supported.

It was also evident that individuals are members of multiple communities, with people increasingly drawing their sense of identity and membership from communities of gender, lifestyle, or consumption patterns, as well as from nations, work organisations, religious groups or political parties.

The review also suggested that citizenship is practised in many domains, not merely the formal political one. Individuals play a part as citizens in their local communities, their homes and workplaces, and through a very wide range of kinds of structure,

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\(^1\) Five European Union countries (Belgium, Finland, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom), and the Republic of Slovenia.
from formal political parties to informal social and family groups. To provide a useful picture of the range and nature of citizenship activity, and of the learning associated with it, it was necessary to examine citizenship in a range of such domains. A definition of ‘active citizenship’ was therefore adopted which recognised active engagement in any one or more of four ‘domains’, and each national project examined individuals with experience in each of these:

- the state/formal politics,
- the workplace,
- civil society,
- the private domain.

Governance was taken to mean those networks, processes and practices through which ‘citizens’ exercise control over the organisations to which they belong. Informants agreed that patterns of governance are changing, with new mechanisms for accountability and participation being called for by policymakers, and demonstrated in practice.

1.2.4 Learning active citizenship

Based on the literature, three key dimensions to the learning of ‘active citizenship’ were distinguished:

- effectivity or capacity: developing a sense of agency, of competence and ability to make change happen;
- responsibility: taking responsibility for some social issue, responding to and coping with a challenge;
- identity: forming one’s personal identity, developing convictions, opinions and ideas and connections between oneself and other people.

1.2.5 Gender and age

Within the general field of citizenship learning there were two particular issues which were felt to require special attention. Firstly, it was thought that men and women might have very different experiences, both in terms of the expectations which society places on the roles of women and men, and their different experiences of learning. Special attention was therefore paid to the gender mix of interviewees, and gender issues were discussed explicitly in transnational meetings.

Secondly, it was also thought that the experience of learning citizenship might change over time, and especially that those brought up in immediate post 1945 Europe might have a different view of their roles and responsibilities than those of a later generation, brought up in a more affluent and politically stable world. The interview sample was therefore carefully constructed to include balanced numbers of people aged 55-70 and 25-40.
1.2.6 The research process

The research consisted of four distinct processes, each carried out in parallel in each country, using the same protocols and processes, and then synthesised through transnational seminars:

- A literature review. This made it possible to identify broad trends of thinking about citizenship, and how far this differed between countries. A synthesis report summarised trends and issues identified (ETGACE, *Citizenship and Governance Education in Europe: a Critical Review of the Literature*, 205pp., 2000).

- A life history study, examining how individual ‘active citizens’ had learned the skills and knowledge required for the roles which they play. In each country, the researchers identified a sample of individuals who were regarded as ‘active citizens’. Each of these was interviewed at length twice during the project. The interviews were conducted around a common protocol, developed through transnational meetings where pilot interview transcripts were discussed. The first interview invited subjects to reflect on their lives as active citizens, seeking particular evidence of incidents and events associated with learning, and their relationship with life transitions. The transcripts were examined and discussed across all countries to formulate hypotheses about the learning processes which were then tested in the second interviews. A synthesis paper was produced (ETGACE, *Learning Citizenship and Governance in Europe: Analysis of Life Histories*, 268pp., 2001)

- Focus groups of education and training experts in each country to explore what kinds of education and training are available to support learning relevant to citizenship. Unusually, the national focus groups each met for two whole days, working to an agreed set of processes. The results of these were again written up and summarised in an overview report (ETGACE, *Focus Groups: Intervention Strategies for Citizenship and Governance Education*, 220pp, 2001)

- A dissemination programme, including seminars in each country, three scientific workshops, and an international conference held in Brussels in March 2002 to share preliminary findings with policymakers and researchers involved in other relevant research.

1.2.7 Products

Five major reports were produced for the Commission: on the Literature Review, on the Life Histories, on Intervention Strategies the manuscript of an edited book, which is being revised for publication, and the present Final Report.

The project also produced a project Website, a design manual and a set of practical materials to support those undertaking citizenship education, and an online learning package for citizenship educators.

The researchers have in total published 29 book chapters, journal articles or theses based on the project, and presented aspects of its findings at 34 conferences. The work has also led to the production of two further research proposals.
1.3 Key findings

1.3.1 The Changing Nature of Citizenship
The academic observers, educators and active citizens all confirmed the view that decision making is being increasingly devolved in organisations of all kinds. There were two reasons for this: a belief that large centralised systems are difficult to manage and plan; and a concern to secure democratic legitimacy for decisions and action. In several countries there was evidence of government trying to re-engage its citizens in these processes, and of individuals finding themselves disorientated by the decline of traditional ideological structures of politics and religion.

1.3.2 What are Active Citizens Like?
Active citizens have a strong sense of their place and responsibility in the world, and are driven by a sense of commitment to other people, rooted in notions of justice and care. They often articulate their commitment in terms of some form of ‘grand narrative’, rooted in religious affiliation, political ideology or enhancement of modernisation.

Active citizens engage with the state when they wish to do so and on their own terms. They are driven by personal ethical values, and many are resistant to the competitive cultures of traditional political processes and parties.

1.3.3 What are the Roots of Citizenship?
There is no simple standard model of what an active citizen is, nor any single process of developing citizenship. Rather, the sense of citizenship is embedded in each individual’s unique life history, and formed through relationships with others (individually and in groups). Childhood experience appears to play an important part, and our evidence suggests that the predisposition to become an active citizen is often formed early in life, in the private domain, the family and community, as much as in the school. Many of our subjects had been active in youth movements, and many mentioned the importance of role models in convincing them that they could play an active part in whatever domain they entered.

1.3.4 Generational Differences
Despite notable changes in the operation of formal democracy, and in social structures, over the last half century, we did not find significant differences between those who had become active citizens in the 1940s and 1950s, and those who did so a generation later. This may mean that change has been overstated or that the factors which make individuals active citizens remain constant, but apply to different, or fewer, people.

1.3.5 National Differences
There was some evidence of national differences in individuals’ understanding of citizenship, which appear to mirror differing historical experiences. In those countries
which have relatively recently established or re-established democratic government, the awareness of the role of citizenship in social transformation appeared stronger, while those with longer established democratic traditions were experiencing an erosion of traditional structures, but some growth in alternative forms of collective activity. However, in view of the size and nature of our sample, these findings should be treated with caution.

1.3.6 Citizenship in Civil Society
In the domain of civil society, active citizens had been active in associations and groups providing public services, in campaigning groups and interest groups.

It was evident that the voluntary sector is changing in many countries, with a decline in participation by housewives and students, and a relative increase in the retired. Nevertheless, this sector remained one of the ways in which individuals found themselves a role and mission in life, and many re-entered formal learning through such routes.

While lifelong learning has become a major focus of policy attention for government and private sector organisations and social movements, and NGOs have succeeded in stimulating significant learning in the civil society domain, the potential of civil society as a site of learning is generally underestimated by governments. Learning of citizenship in the domain of civil society appears to be under resourced by comparison with similar learning in the workplace, and as a result, work to develop citizenship skills in civil society tends to be short term, less systematic and less sustainable. Those who suffer most from this are those who are already most vulnerable to social exclusion and least likely to become active citizens in any context.

1.3.7 Citizenship in the State Domain
Traditional notions of citizenship focus strongly, and often exclusively, on the formal political processes of the state domain. In this domain active citizens had been active in political parties, in pressure and interest groups, in local or national government, or in providing expert support for political causes.

Several interviewees expressed disillusion with conventional politics, and many had chosen to work outside the more formal processes, within alternative groups of various kinds. There was a widespread view that the competitive and hostile processes of conventional politics deterred many people from more active participation in the state domain.

1.3.8 Citizenship in the Workplace
The workplace is a significant location of "citizenship" activity, and increasingly participation in the workforce is seen as a requirement to be a full citizen. Active citizens in the workplace were active as trades unionists, in founding companies, in bringing a personal vision to the workplace, using professional expertise in the wider
community. Frequently they had chosen their current employment because it offered an opportunity to pursue a sense of personal mission or social obligation.

There was a good deal of evidence of change in the internal processes of workplaces, under pressure to adopt approaches which balance social obligations with economic performance. There was evidence of flatter organisations increasing the need for individuals to engage in decision making, and develop new kinds of skill in communication and negotiation. The notion of the ‘learning organisation’ was often linked to this. However, there was also widespread concern that those who participated most, and benefited most from such changes were the better educated and more senior, and that those with basic skills needs might suffer greatly from these changes.

1.3.9 Citizenship in the Private Domain

The private domain is often not recognised as a location for citizenship activity, and this tends to discriminate against women, and to undervalue an important set of roles. Active citizens in the private domain engaged in caring roles, in discussion and debate, reading, reflection and studying, and receiving exchange students. Many women saw caring as the core of their role as citizens, although it was more common for the private domain to be seen as the place where individuals learn to be citizens before going out into the wider world.

1.3.10 Transfer between Domains

The skills and knowledge which active citizens develop in one ‘domain’ (political, work, civil society and private) can be, and frequently are, transferred into the other domains. Active citizens are notably energetic people, and are typically active in several spheres.

1.3.11 Gender and Other Forms of Difference

Gender is a significant factor in determining how and where people engage as citizens, conditioned particularly by expectations of gender roles and broader social and political structures (which vary between the countries studied). There was much evidence of women abandoning or deferring their own ambitions in deference to partners or to caring roles. One important dimension is the low value typically placed on citizenship in the private domain, which is unfortunate since the home and early upbringing (still typically dominated by women in most countries) are critical in creating the predisposition to be active citizens in the next generation.

Other important areas of difference, including ethnicity, disability, and sexuality, interact with gender to create complex patterns of inclusion and exclusion. In addressing this it is important to ensure that educational interventions (aimed at citizenship or other objectives) seek to give individuals the ability to analyse critically how institutions and cultures differentially affect individuals. They also need to use group solidarity as a basis for empowering those least inclined to put themselves forward for active roles.
1.3.12 Citizenship and Social Inclusion

Although there is no evidence of a direct causal connection, active citizens appear in general to be more highly educated than their peers. There is therefore a danger that citizenship becomes yet another area of exclusion for those who have previously been less successful in education, and who are already more prone to exclusion. Many laudable interventions to promote more active citizenship appear to have this effect, and this was stressed as a serious concern in all the national reports. Those who become active despite low levels of initial education often re-engage with formal education as a result.

1.3.13 How People Learn Citizenship

Active citizens usually learn their citizenship skills through trying to solve a problem or to fulfil a mission, rather than by setting out to ‘learn to be good citizens’. Learning, and citizenship itself, emerge as a consequence of this primary motivation. Learning therefore has to be embedded in those processes.

It follows that learning citizenship is unlike many more formal kinds of learning. It is interactive and deeply embedded in specific contexts. In this sense, its processes are unlike those of formal schooling, which, drawing on perspectives from developmental psychology, often present learning as a linear and predictable process.

1.3.14 Providing Opportunities to Learn Citizenship

The outcomes of citizenship learning are unpredictable, and public interventions are most likely to be effective if they provide individuals with opportunities to explore and acquire the skills in context, rather than through formal instruction. This kind of informal learning remains seriously under-researched, and the educators we interviewed were less confident about how to stimulate and support informal learning than formal and non-formal modes.

It was felt important that, where opportunities are provided, they recognise the need for learning to embrace three distinct but interrelated dimensions: learning to solve concrete problems, developing social skills, and acquiring critical thinking skills which enable individuals to continue to be active and to challenge stereotypes. Many of the examples of interesting interventions focused less on group educational processes than on facilitation, moderating and mentoring.

It was also evident that where learning approaches were more formalised, successful models allowed learners to collect and analyse information themselves, used the group as an educational instrument, and integrated learning with action and reflection.

There were a number of interesting examples of uses of the internet not merely to disseminate information but to engage citizens in debate on community issues.

1.3.15 The Role of Formal Education

Formal education in citizenship seems to have played little part in the formation of the individuals we studied. Where there was evidence of impact it was on encouraging young people to become good citizens rather than active ones. On the other hand,
extra-curricular activity during formal education does appear to have been important, as do structures which gave students a voice in the running of their educational institutions. However, once again, such processes are often taken up disproportionately by those who are already advantaged.

1.4 Key recommendations

1.4.1 Opportunities to Develop Citizenship Skills

Governments and others should create opportunities for individuals to practise and learn citizenship skills

Since citizenship is learned through practice rather than instruction, governments should create opportunities for people to practise citizenship, and should support the development of learning resources for this. This enables individuals to learn to participate in ways which they see as relevant. While formal courses can be useful, they are not the principal means through which individuals learn to be active citizens.

Governments and others should support the development of citizenship skills in a range of contexts

There is strong evidence that individuals who develop citizenship skills in one domain transfer them to other domains.

For example, Nigel had a successful career as an insurance broker in the UK. When, in the 1980s, several of his gay friends died of AIDS, he felt challenged – as a gay man – to become active, and used his financial and social skills to raise funds for social activities. He helped establish, and has subsequently chaired, a lesbian, gay and bisexual ‘helpline’. Sara from Belgium was involved – often at the same time – campaigning against nuclear weapons, caring for rape victims, fighting the extreme right, working for adult literacy, counselling young people. Some of these were linked to her work, others voluntary.

Financial support to agencies in any one domain can have unseen and disproportionate benefits in other fields. It is important that returns on investment in citizenship related activities should not be measured too narrowly in terms of a single domain.

1.4.2 Inclusive Approaches to Citizenship

Governments, political parties, employers and trades unions should seek to develop more inclusive approaches to engagement in the political and workplace domains

Many active citizens find the competitive culture of political and workplace organisations difficult to engage with.

For example, Olga became a member of one of the small political parties established in newly-independent Slovenia, and was twice elected to the national parliament. But when she voted against the party line, she was expelled. Political parties, she now felt, are not democratic organisations. In Finland, when Hannu sought to be a member of parliament, he felt that senior politicians betrayed him.
If government and employers wish to develop more inclusive approaches to citizenship they need to develop processes which are less hostile, and more supportive. The development of mentoring processes may be useful in helping the less confident to develop relevant skills and capability.

For example, in the Netherlands Echte Welwaart links the activities of several hundred projects and associations, bringing together their experts, decision-makers and professionals in workshops and master-classes. Using a variety of methods, people share knowledge, common values and goals, and inspire each other, without threatening their own identities. It is a learning network, which creates and supports a diverse and rich coalition, according to its advocates.

1.4.3 Citizenship in the Workplace

Employers, trades unions, and governments should support the development of ‘learning organisations’

The development of the notion of the ‘learning organisation’ reflects the same social and economic trends which underlie the present project. There is evidence that they do increase the engagement of workers as ‘workplace citizens’.

For example, in Spain Tómas told us that you have more responsibility at work ‘if you participate in decision-making or in the group’s organisation’. ‘Working groups are more dynamic, because there are common things and questions to all of its members. There is a lot of communication. … [There] are only a few of us and hierarchy is virtually non-existent. That’s why I’m doing well here. There is a lot of teamwork.’

However they also sometimes appear to reinforce existing kinds of exclusion, being taken up more by the better educated and more senior staff. Trades unions continue in most countries to play a significant part in assisting less advantaged individuals and groups to play an active part as citizens in the workplace, both through personal development and training, and through the provision of resources. Governments may wish to provide support to the development of workplace based citizenship activities.

1.4.4 Citizenship in Civil Society

Governments and civil society organisations should provide more training for citizens in the civil society domain

In the civil society domain, formal education is less important in determining who becomes active. Indeed, participation in voluntary organisations is a route through which many people find their way back into the formal education system after previous failure. There is evidence of demand for more training in this domain, both to develop skills and technical knowledge, and to develop the personal capacities of individuals. Far fewer resources are available for such activity in the civil society domain than in the work related one. Such funding needs, however, to recognise that this kind of informal education needs to be embedded in the working of the organisation, reflecting its values and mission and those of its participants.
Governments and civil society organisations should provide support for emerging organisations in the civil society domain

We found many examples of individuals and groups who had developed organisations to address particular issues, but with minimal support or expertise. The learning associated with this was important, but could have been more effective with modest amounts of external expertise and support.

For example, the Scarman Trust in the UK is ‘dedicated to helping people gain greater power over their lives, especially by formulating new “deals” between community-based organisations and decision makers in government.’ Its Can-doers programme aims to empower people and enable local communities to make a difference. About 500 resourceful people – catalysts or ‘can-doers’ – are ‘setting up saving schemes or food clubs, getting young people off the street and into sports or the arts, renovating estates, or setting up not for profit businesses to achieve their aims.’ In collaboration with central government, its Community Champions programme aims to increase the range of community activities by supporting ‘forward-looking people’, good at networking and sharing ideas, and with the ‘persistence to see things through’.

We recommend that structures should be put in place to provide such support to enhance the learning of such embryo organisations and their activists.

1.4.5 Citizenship in the Private Domain

Governments and education providers (formal, non-formal and informal) should support development of citizenship skills in the private domain

It appears that a disposition to become an active citizen is developed very early in life, and principally in the home.

For example, Mieke in Belgium told us: ‘I think home has been a very determining factor: my dad and my mum were both part of a youth movement, they took on leadership […] And we’ve sucked it up with our mother’s milk. My home context was one where societal commitment was the norm. There was no other possibility than to have some sense of active citizenship.’

Support should be provided to encourage those with the primary caring role for young children to recognise and develop their role in forming citizens. Parent and family education, and education for women (who still play the major role in this in most countries) are particularly relevant. Such investment may produce significant long term benefits.
1.4.6 The International Dimension

The EU and national governments should continue to encourage international exchanges

International exchanges for people of all ages enable individuals and groups to see alternative perspectives, and develop their ability to think laterally and be constructively critical of the status quo.

1.4.7 The Formal Education Sector

Schools and governments should encourage extra curricular activities for those in formal schooling

During formal schooling citizenship skills appear to be developed more through extra curricular activities than through the formal curriculum.

For example, Leena from Finland is typical: her best memories of youth were of 4H club activities; as a young adult, away from home, she joined a youth organisation and studied to be a youth leader – the start of a busy life of activities in several domains.

Such activities should be encouraged, and effort should be made to ensure that they are equally accessible to all, since they are often disproportionately taken up by those from upper social classes. Particular initiatives to engage young people in the governance of their own institutions may be particularly helpful in creating a sense of engagement.

1.4.8 Research into Informal Learning

EU, governments, and research funders should support further research into the informal development of citizenship skills and knowledge

We found a serious lack of research into the processes of informal learning within the workplace and the civil society domain. Since our evidence suggests that some of the most important learning of citizenship takes place in informal modes research is needed to investigate how this operates, and how it might be facilitated.
2. BACKGROUND & OBJECTIVES

2.1 Rationale

In policy terms, the starting point for the ETGACE project lay in two parallel trends:

- The growing emphasis, in the policy perspectives of the European Union and its member states, on the centrality of ‘learning’ to the success of the European project. Developing through the 1990s, this emphasis was to be found in key policy texts (e.g., CEC 1994; CEC 1995; Lundvall & Borras 1999), and has continued.

- The growing concern with ‘governance’, emerging strongly during the later 1990s in policy circles within the EU and its member states. Key political institutions, increasingly distant from citizens, were losing legitimacy, contributing to a ‘democratic deficit’. The supposed solution – labelled ‘governance’ – involves a range of mechanisms to make rulers more responsive to citizens. Again, this trend can be located in key policy texts (e.g., Lebessis & Paterson 1997; CEC 2001).

These parallel developments presented two paradoxes. First, the two trends appeared to occupy rather distinct policy worlds. Such concepts as ‘lifelong learning’, the ‘learning society’, and the ‘learning economy’ tended to stress, at least relatively, the role of informal learning, but focussed on the world of work, economy and employment. At the same time, those concerned about governance sought solutions through creating new structures for participation, but by and large ignored the possibility that how people participate may have an effect on how they (informally) learn.

Second, since the 1980s there had been a growing emphasis on the role of ‘informal and incidental’ learning for vocational capability (e.g., Marsick & Watkins 1990), but little attention had been paid to informal and incidental learning of attitudes, values and skills relevant to citizenship, governance and forms of social regulation. *Accomplishing Europe through Education and Training*, for example, argued that education’s ‘important role in the promotion of active citizenship’ took place not only in formal educational institutions, but ‘equally in primary and peer groups, in the community, and through the mass media’ (CEC 1997, p. 54); but in practice its emphasis was on developments in curricula, pedagogies, and management at the school level (CEC 1997, pp. 56-62; see also Birzea 1996).

In seeking to make sense of these trends and paradoxes, the ETGACE project started from the premise that

the attitudes, skills and behavioural patterns which equip adults to participate actively as citizens, and to conduct tasks of governance and
social and economic regulation, are not learned simply – nor even primarily – through formal or targeted educational provision. They are constructed – learned incidentally – in socio-institutional and cultural processes. (ETGACE 1999a, p. 4)

We based this view on a range of theoretical perspectives and literatures. Beck (1992; Beck, Giddens & Lash 1994) had stressed the risky character of contemporary social transformations. Sennett (1998) had seen work organisation under contemporary capitalist conditions itself reducing levels of social participation and active citizenship. We drew also on social theorists who stressed work (Senge 1990) and civil society (Walzer 1983) as domains of life-experience. Other authors had explored links between forms of political participation and the personal, private domain (cf Giddens 1991 on ‘life politics’; Beck 1997 on the ‘reinvention of politics’). We knew that learning theorists had emphasised ‘situational’ or ‘contextual’ influences on learning (cf Jarvis 1987, Biggs & Moore 1993, Lave & Wenger 1991, Wenger 1998). Educational strategies had tended to assume agency in citizenship and governance was derived chiefly from primary ideological affiliations (socialism, Christianity, etc.), yet more recent scholarship had emphasised diverse, subjective or pragmatic affiliations – gender, ethnicity, migration, pollution, etc. (Lyotard 1984; Bauman 1993; Benhabib 1992).

We felt such social changes, and the new environments they created, should be examined as new sites not only of citizenship, but of informal and incidental learning. As we wrote in the project proposal: ‘New learning contexts are created; other learning contexts are radically reshaped. Old learning contexts are interpreted in new lights.’ (ETGACE 1999a, p. 9) We therefore planned to examine learning contexts which were new, or being radically reshaped by social change.

This raised a final possibility. The transformation of European society since about 1970 had been widely characterised as a transition from ‘modern’ to ‘late-modern’ or ‘post-modern’ conditions. Ingelhart (1977, 1990) had seen an ‘intergenerational value change’ from ‘materialist’ to ‘post-materialist’ values, greater ‘cognitive mobilisation’ and a ‘growing potential for élite-directing political behaviour’. New social movements, for example, offered ‘a different kind of political participation’ – less élite-directed, and more shaped by individuals’ values and political skills (1990, pp. 369-70, 392). Perhaps new social movements were more likely to be organised democratically rather than hierarchically. The assumption that political agency had radically shifted was implicit in the increasingly extensive new social movements literature, (cf Castells 1997, Eyerman & Jamison 1991, Holford 1995, Klandermans 1997, Melucci 1996, Rochon 1998, Schehr 1997, Waterman 1998).

What we therefore sought to do was examine, in a series of contexts, how notions of citizenship and governance are learned by adults. We sought to cover a range of national and regional location, and social, economic and political domain. We believed this would provide a good basis for understanding how citizenship and governance were learned across Europe. To conduct our examination, we proposed a theoretical framework. This analysed learning of citizenship in terms of:
• four domains (work, state, civil society and the private domain), derived from major traditions in social theory (cf Sociaal en Cultureel Rapport 1996, p. 538);

• three dimensions of agency: effectivity, responsibility and identity, derived from principal themes in learning theory and social theory (cf Bloom 1956; Crittenden 1978; Giddens 1984); and

• three modes of educational intervention: formal, non-formal and informal (cf Coombs 1985).
2.2 Original and Revised Objectives

Using this framework, which is explained in more detail in Chapter 3 below, the ETGACE project aimed ‘to develop and support education and training of adults for tolerant, inclusive and accountable approaches to governance and active citizenship at European, national and local levels’.

2.2.1 Project Aims

These overall aims were subdivided as follows:

In order to achieve these overall aims, the project will identify, elaborate and analyse the significance for the EU and for a cross-section of European countries of:

- how and where adults have learned attitudes, values and behaviour relating to governance and citizenship;
- the comparative processes of learning of citizenship and governance by females and males;
- the comparative processes of learning by two age cohorts, selected to permit exploration of the impact of transition from ‘modern’ to ‘late-modern’ or ‘post-modern’ social conditions on constructions of citizenship and governance;
- pressures towards integration and diversification;
- the potential and limitations of current practice in citizenship and governance education;
- intervention strategies for citizenship and governance education which most effectively harness processes of learning. (ETGACE 1999b, p. 3.)

2.2.2 Project Objectives

Eight specific research questions were posed. During the conduct of the research, some of these were slightly reoriented. In this section, the original research questions are set out, and any reorientation explained.

(a) First Research Question

Our first research question was originally stated as:

‘How are practices and concepts of “active citizenship” and “governance” being reshaped under current conditions of social transformation, such as “Europeanisation” and globalisation?’

Reorientation. In the conduct of the research, we reframed this question slightly, in two ways. The first, rather minor, amendment saw the phrase ‘under current conditions’ replaced with ‘in the current context’. This aligned the terminology with a development of our theoretical framework explained in Chapter 3. Second, as we reviewed the literature, and during our empirical ‘life history’ research, it became
clear that the contemporary social transformations must be conceived not only in terms of ‘Europeanisation’ and globalisation, but also of individualisation (cf Beck 2002, Field 2000, Giddens 1991, Hake 1998). In view of these considerations, the research question as operationalised was:

- How are practices and concepts of “active citizenship” and “governance” being reshaped in the current context of social transformation, such as “Europeanisation”, globalisation and individualisation?

(b) Second Research Question

Our second research question was originally stated as:

‘What connections exist between “active citizenship” and dysfunctional citizenship in the political (“state”) domain, and related notions of active and non-participation in regulation in other domains (work and civil society)?’

Reorientation. This question was reconfigured in several ways. First, we found the normative connotations inherent in describing some forms of citizenship as ‘dysfunctional’ unhelpful. In particular, we believed it might hinder our analysis of social exclusion. Although an important feature of both the original proposal (ETGACE 1999a) and the Technical Annex (ETGACE 1999b), this had not been fully articulated in the original research questions. We specifically wished to address the possibility that new forms of governance might exclude, as well as include. We therefore replaced this term with the more neutral ‘non-active’. Second, we replaced the term ‘non-participation’ with ‘non-active participation’: we were concerned lest the former lead us to ignore forms of participation which were important but not in traditional terms ‘active’. Third, we discarded the term ‘in regulation’: we felt this implied an over-narrow focus on ‘top-down’ motives for participation. In view of these considerations, the research question as operationalised was:

- What connections exist between ‘active citizenship’ and non-active citizenship in the political (‘state’) domain, and related notions of active and non-active participation in other domains (‘work’ and ‘civil society’)?

(c) Third Research Question

The third research question was originally stated as:

- What is the mutual articulation of ‘effectivity’, ‘responsibility’ and ‘identity’ in the formation of citizens with a real capacity as agents of change?

On reflection, the phrase ‘citizens with a real capacity as agents of change’ seemed to us to be merely an alternative elaboration of the term ‘active citizens’, and for the elimination of doubt we therefore operationalised the question as:

- What is the mutual articulation of ‘effectivity’, ‘responsibility’ and ‘identity’ in the formation of active citizens?
As will be explained in Chapter 3 below, the concepts ‘effectivity’, ‘responsibility’ and ‘identity’ were developed into related concepts: ‘capacity’, ‘challenge’ and ‘connection’ respectively.

(d) Fourth Research Question
The fourth research question was used in its original form:

- How do processes of learning for citizenship and governance vary between men and women, and between selected age-cohorts?

(e) Fifth Research Question
The fifth research question was originally stated as:

- To what extent does adult learning in formal, non-formal and informal education contribute to the development of new balances between economic development and civic involvement?

Reorientation. On reflection, and particularly as we engaged with the evidence from our interviews and focus groups, it became clear that the original formulation was on the one hand overly restrictive, and on the other unanswerable from our data. We felt the chief need here was to uncover evidence about how adult learning contributes to various forms of active participation or citizenship in and beyond the workplace; evidence on the ‘balance between economic development and civic involvement’ could only be incidental. The reformulated question therefore became:

- To what extent does adult learning in formal, non-formal and informal education contribute to the development of new forms of active citizenship in the work, state and civil society domains?

(f) Sixth Research Question
The sixth research question was used in its original form:

- What approaches to education for active citizenship and governance have been advocated in literature at various levels of governance? What have been the prime modes of intervention (formal, non-formal, informal), and what have been their effect on different individuals and sectors in society? How far have these addressed citizenship and governance as gendered notions?

The term ‘prime modes of intervention’ was interpreted to mean ‘traditional’ or ‘established’ modes of intervention.

(g) Seventh Research Question
The seventh research question was used in its original form:

- What new approaches to educational intervention for active citizenship and governance are currently being developed given current changes in societal contexts? Which approaches should be fostered in view of the challenges with which Europe is confronted?
Eighth Research Question

The eighth research question was used in its original form:

- What modes of educational intervention have proved most effective for learning citizenship and governance? What modes are likely to prove most effective in the future?

2.2.3 A Note on Gender, Exclusion & the Private Sphere

A key component of the original proposal was the investigation of learning active citizenship and governance in four areas of social life: work, the state, civil society and private domains (ETGACE 1999a; cf Sociaal en Cultureel Rapport 1996). The investigation of the private domain was regarded, inter alia, as key to understanding aspects of gender and social exclusion. For budgetary reasons (it reduced significantly the number of interviews we needed to conduct, and in a methodologically defensible way), and in the light of feedback on the original proposal from the Commission’s reviewers (which had tended to downplay the significance of the private sphere for learning citizenship), we decided to remove formal investigation of the private domain. We attempted nevertheless to locate some evidence about the private domain from our interviews and focus groups across other domains. This proved possible to some degree, and to this extent where three domains (work, state and civil society) are mentioned in the research questions above, the private domain may also be taken to be addressed.

2.2.4 Other Objectives

In order to ensure that the project’s findings were made accessible to policy-makers and practitioners, the project also aimed to:

- develop background and guidance documents to support the development of policy;
- contribute to scientific and professional knowledge and debates;
- develop innovative learning manuals and exemplar materials (including operational frameworks for pedagogical analysis and planning) for use by professionals and organisations to foster good practice in citizenship education.
3. SCIENTIFIC DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

3.1 Organisation of the Inquiry

At its simplest, the ETGACE research can be seen as having incorporated four main phases. We began by reviewing key areas of literature in each country, and at the European level. Then came the two principal empirical phases, each linked to a specific method of inquiry. First, we undertook life history interviews with a sample of individual active citizens in six countries; each individual was interviewed twice, at considerable length. Next, we organised a series of focus groups of citizenship and governance education experts in each country. Separate, and substantial, research reports were submitted relating to the literature review and each of the two empirical phases (ETGACE 2000, 2001a, 2001b). Finally, we undertook various activities intended to analyse the research and make the findings accessible and relevant to professionals, practitioners and policy-makers. Issues of method related to the two principal empirical phases are discussed in the relevant sections below, and need not detain us here. However, it is important at this stage to draw attention to three overarching themes in our approach.

3.1.1 Participatory Methods

It was clear from the literature, as it became clear in our research, that key notions such as 'active citizenship' and 'governance' are highly contested. One of the advantages of conducting research across a range of European countries was, we believed, the opportunity to investigate the range of meanings and practices attached to such notions. We also believed that the contexts within which citizenship is practised, and the challenges citizens face, are changing fast. One of the challenges we faced was to capture something of the range and diversity of these practices and challenges.

In order to achieve this, we designed the project with a participatory orientation throughout, trying to establish strong links with 'policy-makers, professionals and other end-users' (ETGACE 1999b, p. 9). A key mechanism for achieving this were advisory panels, established in each country. These comprised about ten members each, with a range of expertise designed to provide links with a range of established, changing and new arenas of citizenship practice, as well as with key areas of policy-making and professional practice (see Table 3.1). These met periodically throughout the project. As anticipated, membership varied slightly with national conditions and individual expertise. A broadly equal gender balance was achieved in all countries; certain other features of importance were also taken into account (e.g., in Spain, a gypsy woman was included).

Except in Slovenia, the advisory panels met on at least five occasions in each country. ¹

¹ The number of meetings held were: Finland (7), the Netherlands (6), Spain, Belgium and the UK (5 each), Slovenia (4).
Panel members in all countries were experts, with busy agendas, and some difficulty was experienced with attendance.1

Table 3.1 Indicative Categories and Membership of Advisory Panels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicative Category of Expertise</th>
<th>Indicative number of members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>national &amp; local government policy-making (education &amp; other)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adult and school education; industrial and commercial training</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>media; ‘new learning professions’, e.g. management consultancy</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not-for-profit organisations; social movements; welfare agencies; churches</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employers; trade unions</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In our original plan, the advisory panels were seen as having ‘a central role in project design’ (ETGACE 1999b, p. 9). In practice, although important, this was to overstate their role. They proved to be invaluable in supporting both the implementation of the research, and in relation to dissemination. Advisory panel members also debated our ideas with us, and provided both support and critique. They did not, however, play a major role in shaping or designing the research. This was for pragmatic reasons: by the time panel members were appointed and met, the project design had been completed and endorsed in contractual form with the European Commission. The contract specified in some detail not only the methods to be used (including numbers of interviews, categories of interviewees, etc.), but also a schedule of ‘deliverables’ (reports, conferences, workshops and so forth). The scope for reshaping the project design was closely circumscribed. So although some advisory panel members made criticisms of aspects of the research design, and/or proposed other approaches, in practice such critique could be accommodated only at the margins.

The panels were, however, able to make key contributions in various areas of project implementation, and in interpretation. They helped project teams to identify ‘active citizens’ and ‘experts’ for the life history interview and focus group phases of research (working within the framework described below). In so doing, their interpretations were incorporated in operationalisations of the core project concepts and methodology. They heard and discussed reports on the project, its activities and its findings, contributing formative critique. Our interpretation of the evidence, and our perspectives, have undoubtedly been influenced by these discussions.

Apart from the advisory panels, we sought to strengthen our participatory orientation in other ways. Our interviews and focus groups provided opportunities for active citizens and experts to contribute to our perspectives. The focus groups were particularly effective in this respect. We undertook two ‘network audits’ in each country, designed to provide indicative ‘maps’ of citizenship activity and citizenship learning. We organised a number of ‘dissemination’ events (workshops and conferences), and these proved valuable not only in dissemination, but also in advancing our understanding and analysis. We issued a version of our findings in a ‘user-friendly’ guide, and we prepared a learning package for use by active citizens and citizenship educators.

1 In Belgium a somewhat different approach was taken: the panel comprised 28 members in all, spread across the specified categories; an average attendance of ten was achieved in each meeting.
3.1.2 Comparative Approach

Although not in the narrow sense a project in ‘comparative education’, the international comparative dimension was central to the project. We studied a cross-section of six European countries (five EU member states plus the Republic of Slovenia). The countries were selected to provide an illuminating cross-section of European states in terms of geographical and demographic size, economic and industrial structure, political and cultural institutions and history, and period of membership of the European Union and Communities. This was designed to permit cross-cultural analysis of citizenship and governance learning in relation to political, economic and social power.

A number of (chiefly quantitative) social and political indicators showed that the selected countries provide an appropriate range of contrast, both historical and contemporary. The list in Table 3.2 indicates the main indicators consulted. For illustrative purposes, the countries are described for each stated criterion as ‘high’ (H), ‘medium’ (M) or ‘low’ (L), based broadly on the EU average, where available.

### Table 3.2 Comparative Indicators of Countries Studied

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>NL</th>
<th>FIN</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>SI</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of accession to EU (or predecessors)</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of continuous democratic govt</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L: less than 10 yrs; M: 10-30 yrs; H: &gt;30 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L: &lt;10 millions; M: 10-35 millions; H: &gt;35 millions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population density</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>L: &lt;50 per km²; M: 50-199 per km²; H: &gt;200 per km²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP per capita</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L: &lt;15,000; M: 15-18,000; H: &gt;18,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry as per cent of total employment</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>L: &lt;30%; M:30-39%; H: &gt;40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main religious affiliations</td>
<td>P/C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>P/C</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P/C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>P: Protestant; C: Catholic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorce rate</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M*</td>
<td>L: &lt;1 per 1000 pop; M: 1-3 per 1000; H: 3+ per 1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Births outside marriage</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H*</td>
<td>L: &lt;12%; M:13-30%; H: &gt;30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide rate (men)</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>H*</td>
<td>L: &lt;15/1000; M: 15-45/1000; H: &gt;45/1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>L: &lt;8%; M: 8-15%; H: &gt;15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students at 3rd level per 100,000 population</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L: 2000-2999; M: 3000-3749; H: 3750-4200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV receivers per 1000 population</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L: 350-449; M: 450-549; H: 550-650</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The countries studied thus provided data about a range of political, social and cultural contexts, with distinct – though in some cases inter-related – histories, traditions and institutions. In the event, this diversity was to prove important and illuminating.
3.2 What the Literature Tells Us

At the outset of the project we undertook a review of the literature. This had a dual purpose. It was intended to provide a broad contextualisation for the research. However, more specifically, it also addressed two of our research questions:

- How are practices and concepts of “active citizenship” and “governance” being reshaped in the current context of social transformation, such as “Europeanisation”, globalisation and individualisation? (The first question.)

- What approaches to education for active citizenship and governance have been advocated in literature at various levels of governance? What have been the prime modes of intervention (formal, non-formal, informal), and what have been their effect on different individuals and sectors in society? How far have these addressed citizenship and governance as gendered notions? (The sixth question.)

3.2.1 Globalisation

Underpinning our research, or providing a backdrop to it, lies the notion of globalisation. For our purposes, globalisation – a much debated term – refers to internationalisation of society, in which all kinds of human relations transcend national borders: not only traded goods and services, but also information, ideas, cultural relationships – the worldwide diffusion of cultural products, lifestyles and consumption patterns. Central features of many discussions of globalisation include the dynamic of internationalisation, which takes a particular form in the European context, the weakening of the nation-state, and the future of democracy (Goldman 1998, cf Delanty 2000). Globalisation challenges contemporary citizenship, blurring the boundaries, both material and psychological, which defined citizenship in modernity (Faulks 2000). A key issue is how globalisation affects social relations and institutions. Castells (1996, p. 470) argues that a central mechanism in social, economic and political dynamic of globalisation is the ‘network’, comprising a ‘set of interconnected nodes’.

Such global networks challenge nation-state based social and economic policies. They provide conditions for new forms of global social relations. The primacy of information increases the purely cultural dimension of social interaction. These networks – our social environments – become our ‘natural’ habitat, offering new challenges and opportunities which we have (to learn) to deal with as citizens.

An important qualification to early discussions has been the appreciation that globalisation is not just the inexorable advance of worldwide forces, but reaction to these by local and particular actors. Robertson (1992) refers to the ‘universalization of particularism and the particularization of universalism’ (p. 102). Whether, following Robertson, we regard ‘gestures of opposition, ... anti-global gestures [as] encapsulated in the discourse of globalization’ (p. 10), or as conceptually distinct, the importance of the global-local dialectic is unavoidable. In our research, we came upon many examples of such ‘gestures’.

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1 The sixth question was also addressed in the focus group research: see §3.4. below.
Many discussions link globalisation to other radical shifts in social relationships, seeing these as constituting together a transition to ‘late-’ or ‘post-modernity’. For our purposes, several transformations are of note: from one national, social body to a whole range of small sites with their own ‘stories’; from an industrial to a post-industrial or informational mode of production; and from a classical welfare state to political power based on participation and diversity (cf e.g. Dekeyser 2001; Usher, Bryant, and Johnston 1997). Postmodernity also implies a loss of general frameworks: of ‘meta-narratives’ about progress and emancipation linked to ideology and technology, for example (Lyotard 1984). In postmodern conditions, in the global network society, concepts of individualisation and risk have particular salience (Turner 1993). Individualisation can have several different meanings. Some see it as a social development in which people increasingly act out of self-interest. For others, it is a process of emancipation, allowing individuals to express much more their own unique emotions and values. In broad terms, we follow Beck (1992) who defines individualisation as a sociological process comprising three elements. There is a liberating dimension, which refers to a process of disembedding, of removal from historically-prescribed social forms and commitments, from traditional contexts of dominance and support. Second, there is a dimension of disenchantment, involving the loss of traditional security in relation to practical knowledge, faith and guiding norms; this tends to erode stability. Third, there is a dimension of re-integration, in which individualisation becomes a re-embedding, producing new forms of social commitment.

Giddens (1991) and Beck (1992) have suggested that the period we are entering, high modernity or risk society, is characterised not only by globalisation but by de-traditionalisation and amplification of risk. In relation to citizenship, Faulks (2000) mentions such risks as migration, international crime, nuclear power, environmental problems, and ecological damage. Growing global risk has huge implications for the role of nation-state, governance and citizenship: such concepts as global citizenship and global civil society are relevant, and will be discussed below.

The institutions of the European Union provide, of course, a regional framework in which globalisation is manifested; but they also represent an attempt to ‘manage’ globalisation, individualisation and risk. This has implications in the economic frame (e.g., the Euro and the constraints it places on national economic policies), as well as politically – European Citizenship, expansion to the east and south, questions of European identity, tensions between EU institutions and member states. (Bellamy & Warleigh 2001; Holmes and Murray 1999; Preuss et al. 2003; Schuster & Solomos 2002).

3.2.2 Citizenship

What is citizenship? Why does it matter? The literature on citizenship, already substantial, has grown markedly in recent years. Diverse understandings and perspectives have emerged across a range of disciplines (Kazepov et al. 1997) from constitutional law to sociology, as well as historically (Crick 2000) and geographically. With so contested a concept, the quest for an “essential” or universally true meaning’ is bound to be vain (Crick 2000, p. 1), and a general caveat is worth making. Citizenship is both a descriptive and a normative concept: it can describe who is a citizen, what citizens do, and so forth; it can also define, or seek to
define, what they should do. Much of the literature involves some conflation of the two. Two
further points deserve slightly more elaboration.

First, lurking behind many if not all uses of ‘citizenship’ is the assumption that it refers to
membership of a community, and to the nature of the relationship between the members of
this community and those who govern them: a ‘particular bond’ between the people and the
state (Poggi 1990, p. 28). It was in this context that Marshall developed his classic
sociological account of citizenship. Marshall distinguished three elements of citizenship: the
civil element, comprising the rights required for individual freedom; the political element,
‘the right to participate in the exercise of political power’ through membership of a political
body, or through electing them. The third element, the social, comprised ‘the whole range
from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full
in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilised being according to the standards
prevailing in the society’ (Marshall 1950, p. 11).

Second, citizenship can also be seen as ‘a set of practices (cultural, symbolic and economic)’
(Isin & Wood 1999, p. 4) – as inherent in the activity of citizens, in what they do. On this
approach, it is closely linked to notions such as role and identity. Citizenship practices occur,
and gain their meaning, within group or collective contexts; together, they establish or define
an individual’s membership of some kind of community.

In an important sense, therefore, citizenship is constructed actively by people – and it is this
dimension we wish to emphasise. However, we do not see active citizenship simply as
descriptive of what people do. Active citizenship is not any form of activity. It has an ethical
dimension. We argue that active citizenship involves the act of taking responsibility for
others, typically beyond what is strictly required – for example, by legal or contractual duty.1

The assertion of a primary location for citizenship practices – the political realm in the nation
state – is no doubt an inevitable and natural claim from the state’s point of view, but
historically now appears a ‘special case’. With the social, economic and cultural pressures of
late modernity, more diverse practices, groupings and identities have become salient: Turner
(1990) has drawn attention to the increasing fragmentation or plurality of citizenship. We
have tried to operationalise our view that citizenship should be thought of in terms of
communities of gender, lifestyle, consumption, occupation, and so forth.

3.2.3 Governance

The starting point for our consideration of governance was the increasing use of the term in
European and national contexts. In a European context, the term came into greater use during
the 1990s, and referred in particular to the attempt to reshape the institutions of the European
Union to address problems of growing distance between the European project – as
represented in the major institutions of the EU, such as the Commission and the European
Parliament – and the citizens of the various EU member states. We find this in the work of the
European Commission’s Forward Planning Unit during the late 1990s (Lebessis & Paterson
1997).

1 The term ‘active citizenship’ has, of course, often been used in rather different ways from this - within
essentially political projects designed to encourage certain forms of citizenship activity (rather than others), as
Rose (1999) has eloquently argued.
New modes of governance were seen as having ‘potential’ for providing alternative forms of ‘accountability’ and ‘representation’. This line of thinking was taken up by Romano Prodi:

> Europe needs a new division of labour – a new, more democratic form of partnership – between civil society and the other actors involved in governance. ... It means EU institutions, national governments, regional and local authorities and civil society interacting in new ways: consulting one another on a whole range of issues; shaping, implementing and monitoring policy together. It means citizens having a greater say at all levels.

But if civil society is to play an effective part in European governance, we have to ensure that European policy initiatives are debated in Europe-wide fora. The media must be involved, obviously, but also trade unions, business associations, churches and all the various non-governmental groupings which make up civil society. (Prodi 2000)

This line of thinking was taken forward into the White Paper on *European Governance* (CEC 2001):

> Today, political leaders throughout Europe are facing a real paradox. On the one hand, Europeans want them to find solutions to the major problems confronting our societies. On the other hand, people increasingly distrust institutions and politics or are simply not interested in them. ... Democratic institutions and the representatives of the people, at both national and European levels, can and must try to connect Europe with its citizens. This is the starting condition for more effective and relevant policies. ... The White Paper proposes opening up the policy-making process to get more people and organisations involved in shaping and delivering European policy. (CEC 2001, Executive Summary)

‘Government’ and ‘governance’, therefore, have come to refer to different views of the relationship between the state and its citizens. From a ‘government’ perspective, the relations are seen in formal, constitutional terms, while ‘governance’ implies more complex and dynamic relationships. In contrast to the narrower term government, governance covers the whole range of institutions and relationships involved in the process of governing. It links the government with its environment (Pierre and Peters, 2000). Ansell (2000, p. 14) characterises the new forms of governance as a ‘networked-polity’. While these concerns took on a specific form in the EU context, many national governments have faced parallel problems about ‘democratic deficit’.

The ETGACE research investigated governance processes in four different domains. Each can be seen as a system, a loose network of interconnections, which fulfils particular functions for the state. In each of these, particular concerns arise – which can be articulated through key theoretical contributions. In the state domain, for example, neo-republicans worry that declining interest in politics, exemplified in declining electoral turn-out and political party membership, presages a collapse of politics and democracy (Van Gunsteren, 1992). They advocate strategies to raise citizens’ interest in representative democracy as well as strategies to introduce new forms of direct democracy, such as public consultations and collaboration with social movements. In the work domain, neo-liberals define citizenship in terms of individuals’ duty to participate in the labour market. They worry about declining motivation

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1 The state (or ‘politics’), work, civil society, and the private domain.
to work, and address policy and organisational measures to make citizens face up to a fundamental duty.

The need for a strong civil society, long taken for granted, has recently been seen as essential to democracy (Walzer 1983). Voluntarism and philanthropy are seen as indispensable partners of the welfare state. Here and in the private domain, communitarians (Etzioni, 1997) fear in particular the collapse of the local community and the family as socialising institutions, and urge citizens to take up their duties to care for others. Another source of growing interest in the private domain has been the feminist movement and its emphasis on the unequal, or just different, roles of men and women.

Recent literature has explored the notion of ‘social capital’: ‘connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them’ (Putnam 2000, p. 19). Drawing on the work of Bourdieu (1997) and Coleman (1997), Putnam has argued that social capital is critical to the effectiveness of civil society and democracy (Putnam et al. 1993), and that declining levels of civic participation in the USA in recent decades have damaged social capital (Putnam 2000). Social capital has been linked to participation in learning, and other features of social life (Field and Spence 2000; Field & Schuller 2000; Schuller & Burns 1999; Baron, Field & Schuller 2001). The key feature for our purposes is its emphasis on the symbiotic relationship between networks and trust in society, social participation, forms of citizenship activity, and participation in governance.

3.2.4 Learning

The Study Group Report Accomplishing Europe through Education and Training argued that education plays an important part in the promotion of active citizenship. ... Citizenship education does already exist in most member states: but under different names and for different purposes, for different amounts of time and for different ages and pupil groups – and the European dimension of citizenship is very underdeveloped, which is not surprising, given that European citizenship is an ambiguous, contradictory conceptual space. (CEC 1997, p. 54)

The ‘learning society’ approach (e.g., CEC 1995) has highlighted the role of informal and non-formal learning contexts. Following the work of Marsick and Watkins (1990), the importance of ‘informal and incidental’ learning for vocational capability has been explored, and underpins the outcomes-based or competency approach to assessing learning. However, little attention has been paid to informal and incidental learning of attitudes, values and skills relevant to citizenship, governance and forms of social regulation. ‘Democratic, socially integrated and active citizens are not born, but are created (reproduced) in a socialisation process. ... [D]emocracy has to be learned and needs to be maintained’ (Veldhuis 1997, p. 8). Yet the tendency is still to see citizenship education in formal terms.

The premise of the ETGACE research was that the attitudes, skills and behavioural patterns which equip people to participate actively as citizens, and to conduct tasks of governance and social and economic regulation, are not learned simply – nor even primarily – through formal or targeted educational provision. Rather, they are constructed – learned incidentally – in socio-institutional and cultural processes.
In order to provide analytical purchase on interventions to provide or encourage learning, we adopted Coombs’ distinction between formal, non-formal and informal education (Coombs 1985; Coombs & Ahmad 1974).\(^1\) While formal and non-formal education refer to processes and institutions normally termed ‘education’, Coombs uses the term ‘informal education’ to refer to:

The life-long process by which every person acquires and accumulates knowledge, skills, attitudes and insights from daily experience and exposure to the environment – at home, at work, at play; from the example and attitudes of family and friends; from travel, reading newspapers and books; or by listening to the radio or viewing films or television. Generally, informal education is unorganized, unsystematic and even unintentional at times, yet it accounts for the great bulk of any person’s total lifetime learning – including that of a highly ‘schooled’ person. (Coombs and Ahmad 1974, p. 8)

The term ‘informal education’ is therefore similar to more recent terms such as ‘incidental learning’. Insofar as it is the product of interventions by governments or organisations, these are typically interventions designed principally for non-educational purposes.\(^2\)

Following Illeris (2002, pp. 13-21) we define learning here generally as all processes that lead to relatively lasting changes of capacity whether it be of a motor, cognitive, emotional, motivational, attitudinal or social character. Illeris focuses particularly on three dimensions of learning:

Firstly all learning has a content of skill or meaning. The acquisition of this content is primarily a cognitive process …. Secondly, all learning is simultaneously an emotional process … a process involving psychological energy, transmitted by feelings, emotions, attitudes and motivations …. Thirdly, learning is also a social process taking place in the interaction between the individual and its surroundings, and thus in the final analysis a process dependent on historical and societal conditions. (Illeris, 2002, p. 18)

Although all three dimensions are relevant in the ETGACE research, we tend to focus on the third, social, dimension of learning. We follow particularly the theoretical model that Hurrelmann (1988) formulated for social learning, which describes the individual as ‘a productive processor of reality’:

The interactions between person and social environment are conceived as reciprocal relations. Approaches advocating a purely social determination of

\(^1\) Formal education and training occurs in school and post-school institutions, typically in the public sector, and is the major mechanism of public intervention in education. It is characterised by relatively centralised, stable and sequential curricula, and well-established structures of assessment. It is the main locus of most state ‘civic education’ policies and expenditure. Non-formal education is systematic educational activity outside formal system (e.g. work-based training, community education programmes in health, co-operation, etc., adult literacy programmes). It has been the main traditional source of state intervention in post-school learning, and the main context for provision by NGOs, SMEs and the voluntary sector. Informal education is unorganised, unsystematic and/or unintended lifelong learning, e.g. from home, work, and media. It is the source of most learning over a lifetime, but the outcomes are strongly dependent on individuals’ learning environments. Recent policy emphasis on ‘lifelong learning’ and the ‘learning society’ has brought this into the policy mainstream, but strategies to operationalise it are not well-articulated or understood. (Cf Coombs 1985, esp., pp. 20-26.)

\(^2\) With the recent popularity of notions such as ‘lifelong learning’ and the ‘learning society’, parallel terms, formal, non-formal and informal learning, have appeared (cf., e.g., Eraut et al. 1998, Eraut et al. 2000). These seem to add confusion to an already complex territory.
personality development are regarded as being just as obsolete as those that propose an organic and psychological maturation determined by natural laws. Instead, children, adolescents, and adults are regarded as productively processing and managing external and internal reality and actively establishing and shaping relations with the societal and material environment. The concepts of education and development are applied to the entire life span and represent the lifelong process of the individual’s interaction with his or her living conditions. (Hurrelmann 1988, pp. vii-viii)

Social learning in relation to citizenship is taken in this project to have three aspects: effectivity or effectiveness, responsibility and identity (see §§2 above and 3.3 below).

In recent years, a substantial body of literature has emphasised the situated, contextual nature of learning. We find this most strongly in notions such as the learning society, the learning economy and the learning organisation. Although there are various approaches, the commonalities are marked. In one of the most influential works, Lave and Wenger (1991) emphasise the role of the learner as ‘practitioner’ whose ‘situated learning activity’ occurs within a ‘community of practice’. Knowledge (or ‘knowing’) is located in the relations between practitioners (learners), and in the ‘social organisation and political economy of communities of practice’ (Lave and Wenger 1991, p. 122). Whether consciously or accidentally, those who constitute a community of practice are organised in relations of power: these structure access, framing of issues, understandings of what is and what is not legitimate knowledge and appropriate behaviour, and so forth. This point can be cast in the language of social theorists such as Bourdieu or Foucault (Bourdieu 1991; Bourdieu & Passeron 1977; Foucault 1972; cf Gore 1993; Usher, Bryant, & Johnston 1997): the important issue is that the social organisation of the communities within which people learn shape how and what they learn. This consideration has been of central importance in our thinking about issues of power and exclusion in citizenship learning; and in particular in our investigation of the ‘gender dimension’ within our empirical work.

Finally, in the title of the project, we referred to ‘education and training’. The meaning of these two terms has, of course, been long debated – at its simplest, training has been linked merely to the transfer or development of skills and knowledge, while education has been seen as a deeper, more ethical, concept – affecting values, identity, meaning (Peters 1966; Peters 1967). We rapidly came to the conclusion that the learning of citizenship is unavoidably ethical: even ‘training’ courses relevant to citizenship and governance have ethical implications. Mainly for this reason – though partly also because it allowed us to set aside the complexities of different national understandings of the education/training dichotomy – we dispensed with any attempt to use the term ‘training’ to describe a distinct category.

3.2.5 Active Citizenship, Active Learning, Citizenship Education

Our research has focussed not on citizens and citizenship per se, but on ‘active citizens’ and ‘active citizenship’. Attaching adjectives to citizenship – ‘good’, ‘responsible’, ‘active’ – has a long history, and our use of ‘active citizenship’ in part reflects recent EU concerns, but it has a wider provenance. Crick argues that active citizens are ‘willing, able and equipped to have an influence in public life’, have ‘the critical capacities to weigh evidence before speaking and acting’, take part ‘in volunteering and public service’, and have the individual confidence to find ‘new forms’ of activity (Crick 2000, pp. 2-3). There are rightist and leftist
interpretations. To the right, an citizen becomes active by engaging in voluntary community work, making charitable donations, and so forth: activity is biased toward the responsibilities of a citizen. On the left, the active citizen is involved in constructing and regenerating civil society: there is an emphasis on the citizen’s exercise of rights. It should be mentioned, however, that advocates of the ‘third way’, including many from the centre-left, tend to take a ‘communitarian’ position, and to emphasise responsibilities as well as rights. (Deem et al. 1995, Evans 1998, Heater 1990, Heywood 2000)

The notion that people play an active part in their own learning is well-established within the literature of adult education (e.g., Freire 1972, 1996; Jarvis 1987; Taylor 1993). People’s active engagement is not only an advantage in enabling them to learn more effectively (Knowles 1980), but also means they play a part in constituting the knowledge which they learn (Lave & Wenger 1991).

The sixth ETGACE research question asked, inter alia, ‘What approaches to education and training for active citizenship and governance have been advocated in the literature at various levels of governance?’ Detailed evidence on this question was provided in an earlier report (ETGACE 2000); we have space only for a brief summary here.

Within the formal systems of education, several countries have seen a desire in recent years to strengthen learner autonomy. School students should ‘think for themselves’; the emphasis should be on generic, ‘transferable’ reasoning and analytical skills, rather than on the accumulation of specific forms of knowledge. Thus Rinne et al. (1999) suggest that the model citizen in official Finnish educational discourse is an active and ethical learner, capable of continuing and varying self-evaluation. In Spain, Cortina (1995) argues that the most effective antidote to tyranny is active ‘personalism’, responsible participation, and solidarity, while Sánchez Ferrer (1996) suggests citizens must, inter alia, be capable of making political judgements and participating politically. In Belgium, educational aims for pupils aged 14-18 emphasises that schools should pursue ‘political formation, citizenship, tolerance, solidarity, self-reliance, autonomy and responsibility’ (Vanderpoorten 2000, p. 30). This is, of course, always influenced by other debates. For example, in Britain it moves in parallel – and some tension – with concerns to increase the degree of central direction of the curriculum, with a strong reaction against ‘student-centred’ learning methods, and with an emphasis on making schools more accountable to their ‘stakeholders’ (principally, parents and business). In Slovenia, the changing role of the Catholic Church in education overlays and influences the debate (Kerševan 1997; Stres 1999). The way in which learner autonomy is reflected in practice is, therefore, always shaped by the nature of other national concerns. A developing concern with formal teaching about civics or citizenship is also noticeable in several countries.

Beyond the formal system, the picture is far more patchy. We found reports of a good measure of non-formal education related to citizenship. In the Netherlands, for instance, Klandermans and Seydel (1996) discussed public information on topics such as the environment, health and crime, while Heyman explored how far such provision is educational (van Gent & Katus 1995). Public information programmes are a feature in all countries. Community development and community education are also quite widespread, often associated with voluntary and social movements of various kinds – trade unions, churches, and various NGOs. In Belgium, for instance, the role of the socio-cultural sector in active
citizenship and governance education is explicitly endorsed, and current issues – exclusion, poverty, migration, etc. – are being explored (Anciaux 2000, pp. 68-74). Some of the organisations had long traditions of work in this area, so that – more than in formal education – the nature of national provision of non-formal citizenship education is relatively strongly shaped by non-governmental influences.

Understandings of the role of informal citizenship education appear to be quite diverse. We found work as diverse as broadcasting and the media, the activities of social movements, the influence of trade unions, and the role of such organisations as schools councils and parent-teacher associations. The overall picture was of increasing concern with citizenship education, but relatively diverse interpretations of what might be understood by this term.

3.2.6 Gender

The ETGACE research started with the hypothesis that concepts of citizenship and governance are gendered – that the way men and women learn what is valued in terms of active citizenship and participation in decision-making determines their identity as citizens, their perceived entitlements as members of a given society and their perceived role within society. In this respect, the research aimed to interpret gender issues broadly, to explore diversity rather than impose an essentialist dichotomy between men and women. The focus of our approach specifically relates to the marginalisation of women – so often relegated to the private sphere, their voices unheard – with recommendations for how that marginality can be addressed for a future European notion of active citizenship.

The following brief overview of recent literature on gender, citizenship and governance argues for a pluralistic, ethical dimension to learning active citizenship – one that requires new values, and expectations so people will learn how to value women and other marginalised groups differently.

(a) A Gender-sensitive Active Citizenship Agenda

The notion of ‘citizen’ is both a status within European law and an ideology of social practice (Lutz 1997, p.93). The feminist critique claims that the concepts of ‘citizenship’ and ‘active citizenship’ have been presented as universalist – yet distinctly male and predicated on an idealist notion of the white, European, middle class, able bodied man. But the meaning and status of female citizens in European nation states varies (Siim, 2000; Hobson 2000).

The most commonly cited way in which women are excluded from the public world of citizenship is through the duty of motherhood – specifically, the procreation of tomorrow’s citizens. The private world of motherhood itself is not regarded as a (public) citizenship activity. From this private/public divide emerges a range of discourses that are associated with valued masculine characteristics (reason, disinterest, impartiality, independence) and less-valued, female characteristics (emotion, interest, partiality, dependence) – the more personal values required for caring and motherhood. Difference has ‘merely private significance’ (James 1992, p. 51). More recent attempts to incorporate women within citizenship mean women are often targeted in public policy as a unitary whole – yet these measures of inclusion often benefit only the affluent (McRobbie 2000).
Alongside this Sawer (1996) points to an association across Europe of state ‘public’ care with the ‘feminine’. ‘Care’ is seen as weak and not stimulating individuality. The new ethical purpose of the state is construed as protecting personal freedom through reducing its care role. This protects the ‘haves’ from the ‘have-nots,’ and assumes dependence and reliance on the state are incompatible with citizen autonomy. This notion of self reliance, she argues, conceals the interdependence of the family, and by implication the relationship between family activity and citizenship rights and responsibilities.

(b) Recognising Women-friendly Active Citizenship?

There appear to be two issues at stake here: a need to empower women to act with equal status across society, and a need to recognise women-focussed activities as having equal status with citizen roles more commonly associated with men (or the non-marginalised). Siim’s (2000) four models of feminist positions on new citizenship provide a framework for analysing prospects for change. We focus on her last two positions: the pluralist participatory model and the postmodern challenge.

The pluralistic participatory model aims to democratise both family and public spheres whilst accepting differences between private and public politics. Lister (1997) suggests that much of women’s political activity is prominent locally rather than nationally. She argues that neighbourhood action should be seen as active citizenship, and that political activity in pursuit of women’s issues should be located in formal democratic structures. Moreover women and minorities should not simply be seen as responsible for women’s or minority issues. A pluralist notion – of equal citizenship rights and responsibilities but also highlighting issues of marginalisation – is an ideal, but how this will be achieved within present power imbalances remains unclear.

The postmodern challenge is for a strategic construction of difference. This enables us more directly to embrace activities that challenge existing power relations. Yuval Davis (1997) suggests that including the private (family) sphere in the state and civil domains will influence systems of welfare, power and political organisation. Flax (1992) argues that even the discourse of ‘equality’ needs to change – for example, that the term ‘justice’ (p. 194) is more appropriate, signifying the need to question and analyse relationships and behaviour which have created power imbalances. Fundamental behavioural change is needed.

Prokhovnik (1998) proposes a re-definition of the public/private distinction, to recognise citizenship practice in the private realm and a diversity of citizenship practices. In this respect she differs from Lister but claims feminist citizenship needs to take account of what citizenship means to differently situated women (p. 96). In doing so, she also claims space for opening up new definitions of masculinities and citizenship, encouraging men to deconstruct their own gendered practices.

(c) Governance

From a gender perspective the issue of who governs citizens and what mechanisms of governance are in place has a direct impact on women in terms of representation, voice and methodology – and what kinds of space women are given in which to act as individual or collective citizens. Terms such as ‘dialogue’ and ‘partnership’ are irrelevant for marginalised groups if institutional systems and practices do not create opportunities for their voices to be
heard. The gendered nature of institutional management, and women’s struggles have to work within or change them, or to create alternative modes of organisation, are articulated by writers such as Meyer and Prugle (1999) and Bown (1999).

(d) Future Citizenship Education

Davies (2000, p. 281) points out that the school system itself rarely provides its pupils (male or female) with an opportunity to experience democracy. Even more rarely does it encourage a gender critique of governance. A new emphasis for learning about citizenship is proposed. Snick & De Munter (1999) call this an ethical social practice, acknowledging power differentials. An ethical education for citizenship would allow the voices of different groups to be heard, encouraging a pedagogical approach which explores a wide range of perspectives. While it can be argued that education systems claim to do this already, the indications are that this is within a liberal, rather than postmodern, framework.

3.2.7 Method

We wish here only to indicate the broad traditions and perspectives which surround the methodological choices we made. We begin with some broad views on qualitative research; we then turn to the specific choices we made in relation to our life history and focus group methods.

(a) Traditions in Qualitative Research

We see three main epistemological traditions in qualitative research. The radical hermeneutic position, a philosophical tradition, develops insights about how people make sense of, or give meaning to, the world with the help of dialogue and discourse (Dilthey 1976). Habermas (1976, 1984) and Ricoeur (1979), strengthen Dilthey’s distinction by noting that in the human sciences the subject of investigation and the investigator are interlinked in a communicative way. Empirical research is ultimately a discourse on the meaning of action. Beyond hermeneutics we find, secondly, a tradition that agrees on objectivity as an ultimate goal, but stresses that in practice our best hope is inter-subjectivity. There are different views of methodological inter-subjectivity (Smaling 1992). Consensus is a common one, recognisable in methodological ideas such as inter-subjective verifiability, conformability, testability, repeatability, reliability, or reproducibility; inter-observer agreement and reliability. Others include inter-subjectivity by regimentation and by explicitness: these focus on the research process. Regimentation refers to the regulation needed to ensure replicability, controllability, correctability and criticisability. This is closely related to the second traditional requirement, to be as explicit as possible about research design, specific procedures used, and interpretation strategy.

A third tradition in qualitative research rejects a strict division between quantitative and qualitative research, and maintains that –for both – the general concept of objectivity can be partitioned into two components: validity and reliability (Kirk & Miller 1987). Maxwell (1992) distinguishes five types of validity relevant to qualitative research. While validity refers primarily to the accounts, reliability refers primarily to the data and the method. How do we know replication will generate the same results? In qualitative in-depth research, the challenge is to optimise the likelihood that all relevant data will show up again when the
investigation is repeated. The method should therefore be designed to deliver the greatest variety of data. The key is therefore not limiting data – as in quantitative research – but striving for completeness.

The ETGACE research team followed a pragmatic approach to these epistemological questions. In developing our research approach, we used definitions of validity and reliability within the realistic, third tradition. Nevertheless we also found it helpful occasionally to apply methodological standards developed in the second tradition. But in reporting our data we acknowledge that life history and focus group research is ultimately, as the hermeneutic tradition underlines, a discourse on the meaning of action. Therefore we used techniques that stimulated our respondents to give feedback on the transcripts of the life history interviews and the focus group discussions.

(b) Biographical Research

To gain insight into people’s learning processes for active citizenship, we adopted a life history (or biographical) research methodology, for several reasons. Biographical research focuses on the ways in which individuals give meaning to and account for their actions in the social world over time (Alheit 1997). In recent years biographical research has become a major theme in social science generally (Chamberlayne et al. 2000) and in research on adult learning in particular (Alheit, 1996; Antikainen et al. 1996; Dominicé 2000; West 1995, 1996). In our research, active citizens were considered experts who could give us insight into their learning processes. The biographical research method relates to our view that learning should be seen as contextualised. In developing their accounts or narratives, interviewees not only provide evidence about the world, but become active agents in the process of knowledge construction. In this way, a biographical approach can represent new connections between the individual on the one hand and the collective and the political on the other (Alheit 1999; Bron 2001).

(c) Focus Group Research

Morgan (1997) defines focus groups as a research technique that collects data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher – ‘focus’ refers to the topic the researcher has in mind. He or she focuses the group’s discussion through specific questions to be addressed by the group. The ETGACE focus groups were expert panels. Expert panels are valuable sources of information because they are capable both of reporting and interpreting data (Vaughn, Schumm, and Sinagub 1996). Focus groups generally deliver a lot of information in a short time; this is particularly true for expert panels with their well-informed participants. They also deliver multiple interpretations. This is true also for expert panels, particularly if participants come from different fields (ETGACE experts came from state, work and civil society domains) and levels (e.g., officials and practitioners). The ETGACE focus groups also linked research with dissemination – participants were invited to participate in a workshop towards the end of the project, and to discuss ways to disseminate the results. Of course focus groups have weaknesses too. It is difficult, as we shall see below, to achieve a balanced group, particularly because many experts decline invitations or prove ultimately unable to attend. Moreover the group discussion can be biased by a tendency among participants to agree – to avoid deep or controversial discussion of issues that divide the group (Chioncel et al. 2003).
3.3 Learning Active Citizenship & Governance: What Life Histories Tell Us

3.3.1 Method of Inquiry

(a) Sample

Section 3.3 is concerned with what we discovered about the learning of active citizenship and governance from the ETGACE biographical (or ‘life history’) research. Our sample was purposive, selected in the light of our theoretical position and the objectives of the project. The aim was to secure patterned diversity. The primary criterion for selection of the sample related to our starting definition of active citizenship. We were looking for “agents of change” – people who, in their own social environment, can be considered active as citizens (ETGACE 1999a, p. 25). They were agents who had some kind of broader social commitment and explicitly pursued objectives which contributed to organising social, community or economic affairs in a democratic way. We decided not to include citizens, however active, whose agenda was explicitly undemocratic, or rejected the democratic premises of present day politics.

With this caveat, we sought diversity in our respondents. A sampling framework was therefore developed, as outlined below. A total of 96 learners was selected, 16 in each country\(^1\) following specifications agreed upon by all partners and set out in a methodology paper.

Table 3.3 Selection of Life History Interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Female Active Citizens:</th>
<th>Male Active Citizens:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>‘Traditional’</td>
<td>‘New’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-40</td>
<td>State Work</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civil Society</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-70</td>
<td>State Work</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civil Society</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We hoped to find not only ‘classical’ or ‘traditional’ practices of active citizenship, but also ‘new’ or ‘innovative’ ones. In practice we found – as we expected – that these categories were by no means mutually exclusive. Some people moved from ‘traditional’ to ‘new’ practices, and vice versa. We sought to stay alert to innovative approaches by opening up space for alternative experiences and meanings in the conduct of the interviews.

\(^1\) A sample of 16 was interviewed in each country. In two countries, additional people were interviewed (five in the UK, one in Belgium), so the total number interviewed was 102. This followed discussions with Advisory Panels, which felt that the initial samples under-represented significant categories of active citizen (e.g., trade union members, environmental activists, ethnic minorities). The project team considered whether analysis should be based only on 96 (i.e., discarding some of the respondents), but concluded this would be a pointlessly ‘strict’ interpretation. The additional interviews all fell within the categories of the sampling frame, and there was no attempt to draw conclusions from the samples on a quantitative basis. The additional interviewees have not altered our main conclusions, but they have added texture and depth to our understanding.
The interviewees were active in one or more of the four domains – the three specified in Table 3.3, which were formally used in the sampling framework applied by the advisory panels, plus the private domain. Citizenship is not reducible to role, but – by way of illustration – our respondents included trade union representatives and team leaders (work domain), environmental activists, lay members of religious organisations, and club secretaries (civil society domain), and social workers, welfare rights officers and local political party activists (state domain).

The equal representation of men and women learners in each country was designed to permit investigation of the hypothesis that notions of active citizenship are gendered. Some modes of activity and collaboration – we hypothesised, those practised preponderantly by women – may simply not be treated as ‘citizenship’. So in our analysis we tried to be sensitive to alternative conceptions and practices of active citizenship, and to forms of citizenship activity which might occur in the private domain. Did people’s biographical experiences suggest differences in the way men and women learn to become active citizens, or in how they enacted their citizenship roles?

Two age cohorts were selected (aged 25-40 and 55-70 years respectively) in order not only to explore whether there were differences in the citizenship practice by age, but also specifically whether there was an important difference between those who underwent their primary and secondary socialisation before 1965, and a ‘post-modern’ or ‘late-modern’ generation who became adult between the late 1970s and the early 1990s.

(b) Interviews

Although we refer to ‘biographical’ or ‘life history’ research, our interest was in elements of life related to active citizenship, rather than to biographies as a whole.

Each respondent was interviewed twice. Interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed. These transcripts of the respondent’s life stories formed the basis for our analyses. The first interview was relatively unstructured and explorative and was approached inductively. Respondents were asked to reflect on their own lives as active citizens. We paid particular attention to critical moments, incidents, confrontations, influential people and phases in a person’s life that appeared to have influenced their learning related to becoming and being an active citizen. Such critical elements in each life history were registered as key moments of the individual’s learning process. Transitions in life histories were also explored by asking about changes in the personal, social and societal contexts, which preceded, and might have triggered, their learning. We also asked about possible changes in people’s patterns of activity, and about how their perceptions of their context changed in the process of learning. In analysing the first interview, we formulated hypotheses about underlying learning processes, which were investigated in the second interview. The second interview was more structured, guided by the analysis of the first interview. The interviewers sought deeper understanding, going deeply into the various critical elements identified from the first interview, clarifying the ideas – stemming from the first analysis – about the respondents’ learning processes and their transitions in social identity, responsibility and effectivity.

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1 One interviewee in Finland, and four in the Netherlands, fell slightly outside these age ranges.
(c) Analysis

Analysis of the first interview resulted in a profile of the respondent. In this profile, preliminary answers to major research questions were formulated. It consists of four elements:

- A learning context profile: personal biographical context and broader societal context elements.
- In the content profile we looked for notions, terms or axes to characterise the respondent, in his or her own words. This led us to different meanings of active citizenship and helped us to set aside our prejudices and presuppositions.
- In the dimensions profile we described the main phases of the respondent’s life story in terms of effectivity, responsibility and social identity. The different phases were marked by turning points or transitional moments, when the respondents (re)constructed new meaningful connections or new schemes of meaning.
- In the learning process profile we went deeper into these transitional moments, because they are at the heart of the respondent’s learning process.

3.3.2 Learning Active Citizenship: Who & Where?

The starting point for the ETGACE study was, of course, that the attitudes, skills and behavioural patterns which equip adults to participate actively as citizens, and to conduct tasks of governance and social and economic regulation, are not learned simply – nor even primarily – through formal or targeted educational provision. They are constructed – learned incidentally – in socio-institutional and cultural processes. (ETGACE 1999b, p. 3)

It was therefore important for us to investigate the contexts in which this learning might take place, and our second research question focussed attention on this:

- What connections exist between ‘active citizenship’ and non-active citizenship in the political (‘state’) domain, and related notions of active and non-active participation in other domains (‘work’ and ‘civil society’)?

(a) Formal Politics: The State Domain

‘Traditional’ political structures continue to be important sites for active citizenship. (Examples are given in Table 3.4.) In the Netherlands, for example, Merel was ‘active at the top level of her political party, dealing mainly with women’s issues’, while Antoine was a local party activist and municipal councillor, interested ‘in revitalising neighbourhoods through decentralised urban planning and support for social-cultural initiatives’. But political activity is not confined to traditional mechanisms, such as political parties. Two young men from Britain, Victor and Adrian, were both politically active. But while Victor joined the Young Conservatives at 18, became a local councillor at 26, and aimed to be a Member of Parliament by his early 30s, Adrian’s commitments were to a group to defend social benefits and research labour relations, workers’ conditions and welfare, and to a group reading and discussing political texts (like Das Kapital) and publishing political magazines.
Table 3.4 Active Citizenship in the State Domain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Examples of Interviewees’ Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Party political commitments</td>
<td>Being a member of a political party, helping with electoral campaign arrangements, standing as a candidate for elections and for positions of trust, contributing to the establishment of a new party.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political pressure and interest groups</td>
<td>Resisting attacks on benefits, fighting for the rights of minorities, publishing booklets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in political decision making at the local level</td>
<td>Borough or town councillor, serving in a committee, participating in regional projects, working as a mayor or a deputy mayor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in political decision making on the national or international level</td>
<td>Being a member of parliament or active at the top level of a political party.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having an effect through the expert knowledge</td>
<td>Participating in the preparation of legislative proposals or law-drafting, preparing reports and writing policy recommendations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Several interviewees were disillusioned with party politics; others – still active – spoke negatively of their experiences. In Finland, Hannu felt betrayed by senior politicians in his first attempt to become a Member of Parliament – leaving him to rely on his own, younger, generation. But reservations about parties – even strong ones – do not imply lack of concern for politics. In Spain, long involvement with community affairs led Luisa to develop a critical perspective on organisation, and a belief in grassroots initiatives:

“One reason why I would never work in a political party is because of its hierarchical organisation that sets a fixed way of doing things, and gives you little space to create or invent, thus cutting your initiative. (Luisa, Spain.)

But election to the local council was still important for Luisa: ‘I’m representing an important group of people [...] my work consists in doing all that is in my hands at the municipal level, because people have entrusted me to do so.’

Other interviewees worked outside formal politics, but stressed the need for strategic relations with politicians within the parliamentary system. As a student, for instance, Kirsi became active in forest conservation in Finland. She obstructed logging and organised a forest conservation congress – some of her activities crossed the boundaries of legality, and she was fined for civil disobedience. Nevertheless she saw influencing politicians in the state system as crucial:

“The fundamental issue is what button (yes or no) they are pushing in a ballot situation. [...] The relationships with ministers are very important. They have the power [...] the parliament decides it totally. (Kirsi, Finland)

(b) The Work Domain

Our interviews included many examples of active citizenship at work (see Table 3.5). Some chose jobs which enabled them to further something they believed in. Some brought their own values to work. Some were active in trade unions or held positions of trust in work-related groups (such as professional associations and producers’ organisations); some did voluntary work. In addition, some sought alternatives to paid work.

We encountered two types of entrepreneur. Some created a business to pursue their concerns. Jane from Britain and Olga from the Netherlands, for example, both believed in ecologically and ethically sustainable food. Jane set up a vegetarian lunch club, while Olga started a store selling health drinks. The second type of entrepreneur did not establish enterprises to pursue a
social aim, but found entrepreneurship offered space and other resources which allowed such commitments to flourish.

Table 3.5 Active Citizenship in the Work Domain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Examples of Interviewees’ Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having an entrepreneurial approach</td>
<td>Establishing a company, contributing innovations, enthusiasm, breaking down the division between work and other life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bringing one’s own visions and values to work</td>
<td>Promoting democracy, equality or ecological values in work, extending the working role, using professional knowledge outside the workplace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice of a career</td>
<td>Choosing a job that is in line with one’s own commitments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade unionism</td>
<td>Being an active trade union member, lecturer, shop steward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitments in other work related organisations</td>
<td>Being an active member of the chamber of commerce; presidency of woman’s section of a managers’ association; local representative in a producer’s organisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking alternatives for non-profitable work</td>
<td>Running a give-away shop, doing voluntary work only.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rok, is an example of the second type. He is now a successful Slovenian entrepreneur, co-founder of a private charitable foundation. This work also benefits his business activity by helping to build a good social environment. Originally, he wanted to be a researcher, but found his environment limiting:

I realised the whole institute didn’t achieve anything in a year, [...] I mean a whole bunch of engineers and doctors and others, [...] and I decided I’m going to move from this environment [...] I actually moved from science to entrepreneurship [...] I just changed the philosophy, didn’t I? (Rok, Slovenia)

Running his computer firm, Rok noticed differences between Western Europe and Slovenia:

I realised the environment where I have been living does not comprehend it [information technology] in the way it was introduced abroad, so I have increased my activities in this field. I started to write and to participate in round tables, seminars etc.

Rok joined, and became a leader of, the Slovenian Informatics Society, working to promote ‘Slovenia as an information society’. To influence key areas of decision-making, he helped prepare a book, later adopted by government as the national informatics strategy document, and promotes the strategy through lecturing and a weekly newspaper column.

To Antoine from the Netherlands, his duty is to manage his shoe shop in line with his principles. This involves an open relationship with his employees:

I see myself as a person who is engaged every day in his business honestly and conscientiously and who talks about it with a lot of people. On the one hand you try to listen to people, but on the other hand there should be an interchange of ideas. (Antoine, the Netherlands)

For many, the choice of job seems to have been related to citizenship. While only a few explicitly made this claim, we found an interesting coherence between active citizens’ biographies and their jobs – almost half the biographies hint at this. Several activists began as volunteers in an association or movement, and eventually became employees. For example, Charlotte from the Netherlands, finding that a nature reserve with which she identified was in danger, joined a movement to preserve it: she proved able, and became a paid worker.
A significant proportion of Europe’s working population is unionised: 16 of our interviewees had been trade union activists. Having left school at 16 with few qualifications, Mandy (UK) took up union activities when she went to work in a factory. Unhappy that her union ignored younger workers, she became a shop steward. As a result, she attended union courses, became senior shop steward, and now occasionally works as a tutor for the union and is currently studying for a Masters degree in industrial relations – though she still works at the factory.

Several interviewees participated in organisations or networks related to their work. Nika was a member of the Chamber of Economy of Slovenia and of the women’s section of the Slovenian Managers’ Association. In Finland, Anja participated in the Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners.

Some active citizens devote their lives to supporting those at risk in the labour market. For instance Sandra (UK) worked in the voluntary sector developing employment initiatives for black and ethnic minority groups. Majda (Slovenia), a former social worker, continued after retirement to help find work for the hard-to-employ, including ex-prisoners. As a former youth worker, Peter (Belgium) knew the unfairness of the labour market: when he took over his father’s farm, he employed mentally retarded people.

But some of our interviewees actively sought alternatives to paid work. Two anti-globalisation activists shunned employment to devote themselves full-time to the cause:

The state sees paid work as an ideal. […] They make a lot of voluntary work impossible, because you have to have a paid job, because you have to complete your study within a certain time limit. People hardly get space to do what they want to do. […] I think it should be possible that everyone gets a certain amount of money and that it would be up to the person whether for instance he wants to earn some extra money. (Rita, the Netherlands)

We try to show the economy can be organised also in a different way. For instance by running a small non-profit shop for periodicals and a give-away shop, to demonstrate that trade is not necessarily to do with earning money. We also have a health food restaurant […]. Some of these initiatives are really successful, for instance the give-away shop […] this shop is visited each week by hundreds of people [including …] migrants, just common people, who like the idea of not throwing away things but using them again. (Donald, the Netherlands.)

Much governance literature stresses human resources development (HRD) approaches – such as the learning organisation (Senge 1990). This perspective sees organisations as needing to engage employees through such initiatives as works councils and teamwork. Nearly all the employers in our sample were active supporters of such approaches. Leo (Finland), for example, developed electronic performance support systems for learning organisations. Tomás (Spain), on the other hand, is an employee enthusiastic about HRD policies. He enthuses about how his enterprise fosters collective work and favours co-operative and supportive relations among colleagues:

If you participate in decision making or in the group’s organisation [there is more responsibility]. […] Working groups are more dynamic, because there are common things and questions to all of its members. […] There is a lot of communication. […] Here in Barcelona they are only a few of us and hierarchy
is virtually non-existent. [...] That’s why I’m doing well here. There is a lot of teamwork. (Tomás, Spain)

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the voice of ‘ordinary people’ – just living a decent life and doing their work properly – though under-represented in our data, is not entirely absent. But such people tend not to see ordinary hard work as active citizenship. For example:

The idea I had about marriage and family was that I had to work and earn a living for all the other family members and that only the father had to work. [...] I worked hard and all the money was for my family’s subsistence. [...] I have never been interested in parties or associations. [...] I just acted to accomplish the mission I had been trusted to do and that was it. (Manel, Spain.)

(c) Civil Society

Our interviewees played many roles in civil society. Some were highly active – chairpeople, counsellors, educators, campaigners. Others’ contributions were more modest – occasionally serving coffee. They were active in a large range of organisations, networks and groups: global movements like Amnesty International and Greenpeace; national organisations such as – in Britain – the National Childbirth Trust and the Royal National Lifeboat Institution; local groups such as Lapikas, a Finnish student association. Table 3.6 gives brief examples of our interviewees’ activities, though the rather arbitrary categorisation – voluntary service, new social movements, miscellaneous – does not do justice to the richness of our data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Examples of Interviewees’ Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Associations and groups of public utility (care for children and youth, culture)</td>
<td>Area post-natal organiser and a breast-feeding counsellor in an organisation for young mothers and babies; leader in Girl Guides Association; publicist for an amateur theatre; leading a sports association.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New movements (economy, the third world, environment, animal rights, human rights, minorities, peace, women rights)</td>
<td>Participating in anarchist collective searching for alternatives to globalisation; working for an organisation fighting for third world development; activist for an environmental protection organisation; campaigning for animal rights; treasurer of a local Amnesty International group; board member of a disabled people’s or gay organisation; action committee member for anti-nuclear weapons organisation; member of a women’s anti-rape group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous (age concern, community and neighbourhood, education, religion)</td>
<td>Participating in interest group for the elderly; participating in local group fighting for the preservation of ‘heritage’ (historical districts); member of school governing body; doing pastoral work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maria (Spain) was active from the age of 19 as a trainer in the scouting movement. The movement had deep roots in Catalonia and had stood out for its role in the struggle against the Franco régime. Later, as a teacher, Maria joined a movement for pedagogic renewal, which stressed co-education and local language and culture. This found opportunities even during Franco’s last years:

[During the dictatorship] we had some negotiations to organise a school that was co-educational and Catalan […] Culturally, we had to fight a little, because these were hard times. We had boys and girls in the same classroom. Whenever the inspector visited us, we would send the children to a nearby forest, because the inspector already knew […] it was complicated. (Maria, Spain)
Miha, who became a powerful politician in independent Slovenia, would, as a young Christian, only join organisations which did not endanger his religious position. He explains:

In order to make something happen in the town, we did [...] somehow organise a youth organisation [...] We liaised with the municipal conference of the youth association and it obviously came to their attention that we were ‘making noise’ and I was given some functions there as well. But then, I think, followed the question of entering the [Communist] Party to which I gave a negative answer and then it was plainly obvious to which level one could actually get [...] Some started from the viewpoint that nothing could be done. I did not agree, I wanted to explore what could be done. (Miha, Slovenia)

Other advocates of civil society refer to the limitations of the welfare state and see civil society, based on voluntarism and philanthropy, as an indispensable partner. On this view, the welfare state cannot realise its social and cultural ends alone: it lacks the necessary finance and capacity to mobilise volunteers. Marius and Carla are two of many unpaid workers. Marius (the Netherlands) sits on the board of many charities and is an expert on fundraising. Carla (UK) is an indefatigable volunteer organising arts events. Among her activities were chairing the local choral society, organising concerts for children and open air festivals for adults, and setting up a database of local arts events.

Moreover, volunteers sometimes do better than professionals. For instance, after a rebellious youth Oiva (Finland) joined a local church, was ‘born again’, and became a youth worker for the congregation. Although later distanced from the church, he became a notable youth worker with drug abusers, hooligans and troublemakers. He says he can do this because he has himself been ‘a life escapee for years, I know addiction extremely well’; since adolescence he has lived ‘the life of a backpacker or vagabond’.

\((d)\) The Private Domain

Active citizenship has generally been associated with activities in the state and civil society domains (and to a lesser extent, work). The private domain seldom receives attention. In recent decades, however, family and educational problems have focussed attention on the private domain. In our active citizens’ biographies, the private domain was prominent especially – but not only – for women. We came across many activities in this domain, as Table 3.7 shows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Examples of Interviewees’ Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>Bringing up children and managing the household; caring for the sick, elderly parents or disabled family members; looking after relatives with difficulties; supporting learning among family members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life style</td>
<td>Being a vegetarian or a responsible consumer; choosing to live in the countryside; having exchange students in one’s own home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discursive activities</td>
<td>Engaging in dialogue about politics, social issues and the environmental concerns; advising and counselling friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemplative active citizenship without constant external action</td>
<td>Reading, studying, reflecting, contemplating.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
However, we had some difficulty in interpreting this data. Many, if not all, of the activities listed in Table 3.7 would typically not be considered expressions of ‘citizenship’. Marjaana, an older Finnish woman, clearly saw family issues – parenting, caring for relatives – as the core of her active citizenship. She also had wide experience of citizenship in civil society and traditional politics: voluntary service, and membership of a moderate conservative party. In contrast, the men we interviewed seldom mentioned the private domain as part of their citizenship activities: the private domain was important to them, but their citizenship lay elsewhere. They repaired, even built, the family house, or installed or maintained domestic appliances or the family car. We cannot tell from the data whether they related this kind of activity to citizenship. But though Marjaana had participated in politics and in civil society, she saw her main achievement as linked to family responsibilities. Clearly, in her case, a private role was active citizenship.

A conceptually similar case is that of Dorian, a young Belgian woman, who calls herself an ‘armchair politician’ and ‘street philosopher’. While studying philosophy and psychology at university she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis; her family abandoned her, and she now needs help from social services for many everyday tasks. Reading and studying is her way of being an active citizen. She communicates with friends and family about politics, social issues, and the environment, writes ‘open letters’ to newspapers and politicians, tries to influence others. ‘People leave my house different from when they came in,’ she says. Dorian is, of course, physically disabled, but there seems no reason to suggest that only for the disabled can contemplative or discursive activities be seen as active citizenship – many able-bodied interviewees mentioned reading, studying, reflecting and arguing, though we cannot say whether they typically regarded them as expressions of citizenship.1

Several of our interviewees enthusiastically described their hobbies and participation in social events. Were these active citizenship? They told us of activities such as having fun with friends and organising parties. Perhaps they wished to show they are not only ‘activists’ but human beings living a full life. But it is possible they saw these activities as part of their citizenship. Such activities do, of course, strengthen networks and community links. For some of our interviewees, however, choices in their private life were consciously part of their citizenship. For example, some were vegetarian, or bought produce from organic farms or fair trade organisations, or developed life-styles that expressed their concern for the environment or for spiritual values (slowing down, non-violence). Bas, for example, a Dutchman active in the anti-globalisation movement resisted consumerism in his private life too:

I am not averse to a little bit of luxury. But I would not buy a second car; I do not have even a first one. [...] People buy too much unnecessary clutter, I do not join in. [...] On the one hand you lose the meaning of things that are really crucial. [...] On the other hand it produces a gigantic trash heap. People buy a new car, but what happens to the old one? (Bas, the Netherlands)

1 There is some evidence in our data that our disabled interviewees had experienced discrimination restricting their potential to become active citizens: it is hard to participate, for example, if there is no physical access for wheelchair users. It is also worth mentioning that five out of six advisory panels picked members of minorities as examples of active citizenship: not only disabled persons, but also minorities related to cultural origin and sexual orientation.
We were struck, then, by the extent to which activities in the private domain could be considered – by citizens themselves, or by us – as forms of active citizenship. Very often, however, it seems easier to accept the private domain as a site where citizenship is learned, rather than of citizenship activity itself.

(e) Connections between Domains

We conclude, therefore, that we can meaningfully speak of active citizenship being practised and learned in all four domains. We also found, however, that our active citizens were very commonly involved in more than one domain, and that what they learned in one domain often seemed to lead to, or prepare for, participation in another: what is learned in one domain can be used in another for a different purpose. There are many examples in our transcripts.

A typical pattern is the transfer of skills from civil society to the political domain, for instance Tatja, a young woman from Finland. When she began primary school she joined the scouts. From the ages of 15 to 19 she was herself a group leader, played volleyball – she learned leadership skills as team captain – and participated in many meetings. As a student she became active in (and finally chaired) a student association, where friends convinced her to stand for election to the city council – to which she was recently elected.

Another typical pattern in the ETGACE material is the active citizen who uses skills learned in the work domain in civil society. Nigel (UK) had a successful career as an insurance broker in the City of London. He was challenged to become active in civil society during the 1980s when – as a gay man – several friends died of AIDS. As a result, he became more politicised and began to use his financial and social skills for fund raising through social activities and to establish a lesbian, gay and bisexual helpline (of which he is currently chair). Antonio (Spain) raised this to a point of principle: ‘What we achieve in the workplace needs to have continuity in the neighbourhood in order to improve it, to improve the schools.’

A further pattern is the transfer of skills from the private domain to activities in voluntary social care. There are many other combinations, some less obvious. Daniel (Spain) who lives in a Gypsy community in Barcelona. As a child he dropped out of school for economic reasons. He has worked as a travelling salesman with his parents, and in a warehouse. He is now a security guard and animator at the school he used to attend. Through this he has become actively involved in this school becoming a ‘learning society’ – i.e., an open space for family, volunteer and community participation. His active engagement with this process of transformation at school taught him, for instance, that ‘we [the monitors] cannot go shouting because children see it and then they take this as reference […] dialogue is the best way to resolve things and to arrive at an agreement’. But this involvement in transforming his work at school also led to a series of changes in the private domain. He encourages his wife and children to read and write (no small thing, considering the high level of illiteracy among Gypsies) and to be serious about education.

Active citizenship often involves confronting difficult situations, and managing – in the fullest sense – a complex array of commitments and pressures. Sara from Belgium was involved – often at the same time – campaigning against nuclear weapons, caring for rape victims, fighting the extreme right, working for adult literacy, counselling young people. Some of these she undertook professionally (i.e., in the work domain), while others were voluntary commitments. When interviewed, she was active in her children’s school’s parent-
teacher committee, and was doing door-to-door research about rebuilding her neighbourhood. Thus Sara (Belgium) eventually ended her involvement with rape support because she no longer felt qualified to cope with the heavy problems she confronted, or properly to help the women involved. She quit a socio-cultural association after eight years because she felt empty and burned out. Time management also matters. Handling multiple citizenship agendas requires target-orientation and the ability to move on from projects when their – or the individual’s – aims have been achieved, or one can contribute no more. In practice, the changing focus of active citizenship means that an activist’s close associates are likely to change many times over a lifespan.

A common theme in our interviewees was the positive influence of childhood experience, in and around the home:

If you ask me where my interest and active citizenship originates from, I must say it stems from home. I think home has been a very determining factor: my dad and my mum were both part of a youth movement, they took on leadership […] And we’ve sucked it up with our mother’s milk. My home context was one where societal commitment was the norm. There was no other possibility than to have some sense of active citizenship. (Mieke, Belgium)

Similarly, active membership of youth organisations was common. Leena from Finland is typical: her best memories of youth were of 4H club activities; as a young adult, away from home, she joined a youth organisation and studied to be a youth leader – the start of a busy life of activities in several domains.

(f) Differences between Domains

Although many citizens move and transfer skills and learning between domains, we found some evidence of significant differences between the domains. Many active citizens described the state domain as both strongly hierarchical and very competitive in the struggle for positions of power within this hierarchy. Many citizens who became involved in politics left it rather quickly because of this harsh climate. There are also people, committed for many years to the political domain, who came in the end to express similar bitter criticisms. After the Slovenian transition, Olga became a member of one of the small, newly established, political parties and was elected twice to the national parliament. In 2000 she voted against the party line and was expelled. She learned, she said, that parties are not democratic organisations at all.

Active citizenship in the work domain – at least within unions – seems sometimes to share this hierarchical character. Alfonso (Spain) is critical of the hierarchical organisation of unions since the transition:

I entered the CNT [anarchist union] because I continued to be faithful to my ideals. I became disillusioned with the unions to which I had belonged. I heard a lot about the CNT, but I became also disenchanted with the CNT and left the union because I was nothing but a bureaucrat over there. (Alfonso, Spain)

In civil society, in contrast, many active citizens see teamwork and mutual trust as essential. Ronald, who has an impressive activist experience against nuclear power generation, ‘retired’ from this heroic life and to enjoy the different climate of civil organisations, in his case foundations for local media and to support young musicians:
When I first came there, I thought ‘Yeah, what a mess here’, so to say. But at a certain moment, I saw, together with a couple of board members, possibilities to really develop that club. There is so much potential in such an organisation. All possible ways that remained unused, because it just plodded on, you know. So in that sense, it is inspiring, that the possibility is there, because you try to work there with those people. That is why I stay. I mean, there is a lot possible, and I like to see how such an organisation develops and what your part in that development can be. (Ronald, the Netherlands)

Regardless of domain, active citizens often stress the importance of determination, perseverance, steadiness. We have many examples of such statements from people in leading positions, but it seems also true for the rank-and-file active citizen. The story of Jeffrey (Belgium) reads like the Biblical book of Job. As a young man he led the good life: good marriage, good job, lots of money, lots of friends, flings with other women, and so on. But in mid-life he felt trapped. He started a travel agency, but then his fortune started to unravel. Very hard work led to marriage problems, severe depression, and admission to a psychiatric hospital. He had experience not only with soft drugs and alcohol, but heroin. Then his wife filed for divorce and things went from bad to worse. Six or seven years later he began to feel better and a bit more in control of his life. At this time he came across an advertisement from an organisation which desperately needed AIDS buddies – and he started to feel he could contribute something to the lives of other people in similar hopeless situations. Some ten years as an AIDS buddy has helped him regain self respect and confidence; but his experience also means he has much to offer these people.

\(g\) The Impact of National Context

The countries investigated provide a cross-section of European nation states: long-established democracies, and those with more recent transitions from two forms of authoritarian rule; some former colonial powers (leaving a legacy in immigration and so forth); some with strong regional identities, others strongly unitary; and so forth. We expected these diverse national histories to have had an impact on the nature of citizenship and learning about it. We found evidence to support this.\(^1\)

Where democracy is relatively long-established, traditional political structures appear to have been eroding in recent years. In Finland, the UK, Belgium and the Netherlands, we noticed a focus on a sense of identity and responsibility, increasingly located in the self – a growing emphasis on ‘authenticity’ and ‘lifestyle’, suggesting learning of citizenship may be increasingly diverse and personal. Thus:

For me it’s all about authenticity, and not about all that bullshit about being powerful. I always want to grow, develop myself. If you ask me why I am alive, I’ll say you live to enlarge your consciousness. I really like doing that. […] Life is an adventure. I want to grow open and critically. (Olga, the Netherlands)

\(^1\) A caveat is necessary at this point: we should be cautious about reading too much into apparent similarities and contrasts between national findings. Although selected by a formally common procedure, the number of respondents in each country was limited, and should not be taken as a representative sample for that country. The purpose of the research was not to secure representativeness, but to explore diversity and variation across Europe. The contrasts discussed in this section should be considered in this light.
I think you do everything for yourself and your own satisfaction, the realisation of your own person and identity. That is very essential to me. (Ans, the Netherlands)

You mustn’t neglect your own personality in the process, create pauses in your development and in your own person. (Antoine, the Netherlands)

Where democracy has been established – or re-established – more recently, in contrast, understandings of active citizenship seem framed by awareness that citizens have been a moving force in democratic transition.

In order to gain a right you have to fight for it. If we don’t work more than eight hours a day, if we have social security, it is not because we have a government that enacted it, but because there was a massive social mobilisation prior to it.

No political party intervened. The people have worked for it alone over the past years, and we have a historical heritage donated by all these people that have worked for a decent living and to achieve something in the past. And we want to take that heritage further. (Enrique, Spain)

Under Franco, movements confronting the régime were clandestine, and Franco the ‘common enemy’. Since the end of totalitarianism, active citizenship has been more about equality and the radicalisation of democracy. There is a strong sense of social identity, solidarity and unity:

Whatever I know – I depend on my context. How important can I be? What matters is the context you are in! […] We all depend on each other, as it has always been. (Antonio, Spain)

In Slovenia, we found a marked sense of riding a wave from state socialism to a more open, democratic society, with greater opportunity for social and economic welfare. Stability and loyalty gave way to dynamism and innovation. Under the socialist system, educational and professional opportunities were good, though opportunities for participation (e.g., in workers’ self-management and in public life) were rather formal, and the system was controlled by the Communist Party. Nevertheless, we found evidence that people acquired useful capacities and connections – in politics and the work domain – under the former system which formed a good basis for social commitment in the new system.

When those political changes in Slovenia started to take place, […] I realised that the future depends on us all, and not only on those who have made the decision themselves to direct and pass decisions in the name of others. […] In this place where I live, we founded a political party at the local level. (Miha, Slovenia)

### 3.3.3 Conditions and Processes for Learning Active Citizenship

We have shown that people learn and practise active citizenship in a number of contexts. We have shown that the practice of citizenship, through a lifespan, often involves activities spanning more than one of these, and that people are often able to draw on expertise developed in one context for activity in another. We were also interested, however, in how different forms of citizenship knowledge were related in citizenship learning processes, and it was to this end that we asked our third research question:
• What is the mutual articulation of ‘effectivity’, ‘responsibility’ and ‘identity’ in the formation of active citizens?

As we investigated this question, however, we found it continually necessary to refer back to context. The fact that active citizenship is always learned in a specific biographical and social context is inescapable and central. In any context, however, we felt that three conceptually separate though in practice overlapping conditions of citizenship learning could be distinguished:

• Effectivity or effectiveness: having a feeling of agency and of being competent is a key constituent of learning active citizenship. In our discussions, we felt the term capacity was in some respects more helpful.

• Responsibility: learning to be an active citizen involves taking responsibility for some social issue – taking responsibility involves responding to, and coping with, a challenge.

• Identity: learning active citizenship involves processes of forming and reforming identity, which can be considered in terms of connection between oneself, other people, convictions, opinions and ideals.

Table 3.8 gives the main questions we used to analyse the data around these dimensions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions of learning active citizenship</th>
<th>Questions used to analyse the biographical data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility-building</td>
<td><strong>What</strong> is the issue at stake? <strong>What</strong> is the content of the respondent’s commitment? <strong>To whom</strong> does the respondent commit himself or herself? <strong>What or whom</strong> do people feel responsible for? <strong>Why</strong> does he or she feel responsible? <strong>Why</strong> does he or she identify with, or join, a certain group?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectivity-building</td>
<td><strong>How</strong> does the respondent try to realise his or her commitment? <strong>What means</strong> do people have and use to realise their commitment? <strong>What support systems, strategies, instruments or possibilities</strong> help the respondent to achieve his or her goals and ends? <strong>What</strong> gives them a sense of effectiveness?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity-construction</td>
<td><strong>What</strong> are the reference groups to which the respondent relates? <strong>To whom</strong> does the respondent refer? <strong>With what</strong> collectivity or mutual life world does the respondent identify himself or herself? <strong>What</strong> social relations does the respondent identify with or try to develop?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) Challenge

Challenge can arise in confronting a personal problem (e.g., being ill, excluded or discriminated against) or an injustice done to others. It can also arise from a family tradition of social commitment. For one British respondent active citizenship stemmed from a personal experience of oppression. Religion, marriage, society – all these she found oppressive. She tells her life story:

I grew up thinking that everything everybody else said, was true. [...] I thought everybody else knew better than me, from the postman to the bank manager to the doctor, to everybody else. At school the priest said that becoming a mother is the most important thing for a woman. (Marlene, UK.)

Leaving school at 15 without qualifications, however, left a deep scar. During an unhappy and violent 26-year marriage, she had five children, but when they grew up, she left the family home. One day she walked into a women’s centre: ‘It felt warm, it felt friendly, it felt like it was my place, it was a place I needed to be, I wanted to be there,’ she told us. She
began to help other women in similar circumstances. ‘I think that was part of my sudden feeling of women, it was so exciting to think that women were gathering together.’ (Marlene, UK)

With rapid social change, people face a diverse range of challenges today. In responding, active citizens must balance ‘authenticity’ – knowing and being true to their own values – and developing themselves with appealing to broader social themes. For example, Gerda from Belgium found herself challenged to take up two issues: the environment and the Third World. However she felt unable to have an effect on both. She explains:

That is why I chose more for the environment issue than for the issues of the Third World [...] It is easier. The environment issue, that conviction is more obvious for me, that is a clear picture: we are exhausting the natural resources, we are driving with cars and poison the air, etc. In the story of the environment I can see clear and I know what my contribution can be [...] But the Third World issues, that is a more difficult story. We first had colonisation, now we speak of development co-operation, but what does it all mean, this is much more difficult to have a clear picture and what can I contribute? (Gerda, Belgium.)

The environment was something she could live up to in her daily life. Her lifestyle reflects her interests: thus, for instance, she is a vegetarian, a member of the Green Party, committed in a ‘foodteam’ (voedselteams) and an ecoteam.

Peter from Belgium was not raised in a socially active family, but took a job with ‘problem’ young people because he could find no other work. It was confronting injustice in others’ lives that triggered his commitment to become an active citizen. He explains:

That was something that really startled me, that there is so much misery in so many families. Even in those [where] you would least expect it. That was my first confrontation. (Peter, Belgium)

(b) Capacity

To generate social commitment, one needs also to have the means to be effective. Active citizens often have a high level of formal education, such as an academic degree. Sometimes their activities as citizens follow this education. For instance, our sample has a couple of citizens with degrees in geography and agriculture who decided during their studies to become environmental activists. But active citizenship itself also often motivates and facilitates people to return to university study. A typical pattern is poorly-educated workers who become active in their union and then take the opportunity for further study, often related to their union work. Charlene (UK) left school with few qualifications. In her work she experienced lots of contracting out and privatisation, making people feel vulnerable and insecure. She became active in her union, at regional and national levels, raising women’s and ethnic minority perspectives. For her the union was also a resource to return to learning; she took many courses and is now enrolled on a Masters degree in Industrial Relations.

Many others learn in more non-formal and informal ways. But as with degree studies, non-formal and informal learning often takes years. Fourteen years ago Teresa (Spain) began to participate in an adult education centre. This led her to join other cultural associations, such as a women’s group, and now she actively campaigns for women’s rights. She is acutely aware of the disadvantages facing ‘other’ – compared to ‘academic’ – women:
By ‘other women’ we mean housewives, women with no or lower formal education levels, because they also have to be taken in account, as academic women already have been. I think this is how it should be, and since we have not yet been recognised, we want to get the recognition we deserve. (Teresa, Spain)

Frank (the Netherlands) has been active in scouting throughout his life – starting as a scout, becoming a leader, moving to positions on boards at various levels. Sometimes this has led to special assignments – for example, for three years after retirement Frank was an almost full-time organiser of the 1995 World Jamboree, held in the Netherlands. Every step has been accompanied by skill training:

As a boy, immediately after the war, I landed in scouting and then, as happens quite often in associations, you cling to it. In the beginning it is really working with children: Cub Scout leader and so on. At a certain point, it is not satisfying enough any more, so you move on to the organisation of bigger activities for 200 to 300 children. Next you start to do something in training, firstly you are training yourself and later on you give courses for volunteers. This still happens [in scouting], although the way it is done has been changed since then. At that time it was really teaching, like you should do it like this or that, and there was not much participation, lack of time did not allow that. Fortunately, all of this has been improved now a little bit. Next you start to do some things on an administrative level […] first [on the municipal level] and later on, automatically, on regional and national level. So you just go from one thing to another. (Frank, the Netherlands.)

(c) Connection

In an instrumental sense, connection refers to the social settings one is part of and the ideas and opinions with which one identifies. Some of our active citizens acted from clear and coherent ‘grand narratives’, which define the values that guide their activity. Such convictions and beliefs were sometimes formed in their early education. But for our purposes it is more important to realise that, whenever it begins, learning how to apply such values continues throughout life, often in close-knit organisations and communities dedicated to such beliefs.

A typical example is the active citizen inspired and supported by his religious belief and religious community. There were men and women among our interviewees who served their church as professionals (a priest, an evangelist, etc.) In Slovenia the political transition facilitated greater political and civil activities by Christians. But Belgium and the Netherlands also had, until the 1960s, social-political systems based on separate organisations for each religious group. This has dissolved gradually since then, challenging the countries’ religious citizens to redefine their societal positions. Jaap (the Netherlands), now retired, went through this process. Born in a traditional Catholic family with fourteen children, he learned from them a deep commitment to social issues and social organisations. In the 1960s, as traditional Catholic organisations dissolved, he moved to more radical social and political positions but nevertheless continued to serve Catholic organisations, trying to redefine the mission of the Church. After retirement (as a personnel director of a big company) he became active in a Catholic organisation for the elderly. He took up important positions in the national
leadership, still wrestling to define through public debate the Christian message of such an organisation.

Another type of inspiring grand narrative is political ideology, supported by political organisations and groups of people who share these political values. Despite an apparent process of de-ideologisation in Europe, many active citizens still position themselves more or less explicitly within historical political movements such as socialism and liberalism. Martha (UK) adopted Conservative political views early in life, became active in the Conservative party and eventually became a borough councillor in 1998. As a child, her politically literate parents encouraged her to listen to the radio and watch television. Her political views sharpened when she was 10 years old and her mother became ill with multiple sclerosis. The family income was too high to qualify for social services’ support, so she and her sisters became carers for their mother:

Because you were trying to help yourself you can’t have any help! If you are living in a council house you get everything done for you […] but] my parents [had bought] their own home, [so they] could not get help with ramps and things for the [her mothers’] wheelchair – it was a nightmare. […] People in other parts of society were getting help but because my parents were choosing to be independent and buy their own house […] they were excluded. (Martha, UK)

Modern science remains a third and perhaps less likely example of a grand narrative. Our interviewees include a couple of active citizens, educated in the natural sciences, who had devoted their professional lives to disseminating new technologies. They often combined it with a mission to democratise access to these technical opportunities, by creating extra opportunities for the poorly-educated. For instance, with some friends Nika (Slovenia), an engineer who worked in a big company in the 1980s, set up (as a volunteer) one of the first Slovene initiatives in the field of computerisation and computer education. She later became its paid director:

We had as a group of friends, as a totally informal group, started with training in other enterprises on our computers, which were bought, I do not know whether in ’88 or ’87, in Germany. That was quite an interesting trip, how we bought these computers and how we then taught people to use them […]. We discovered, that we were not going to do this free of charge, since there was too much interest and too much of our time was spent. We started to think about how to shape such a work. We first and foremost established a youngsters’ association […] and then in the framework of the ZSMS (Association of the Socialist Youth of Slovenia) […] we founded the first computer club […]. I still can’t analyse what came into me then […]. I knew that if we wanted to work professionally, we couldn’t throw mud on ourselves, and the firm, by bankruptcy […]. I console myself that it was my wish for changes. (Nika, Slovenia)

But perhaps more typical today is the ‘post-modern condition’ where grand narratives, such as religious beliefs, political ideologies and science, lose their self-evident authority. In an era of individualisation, citizens often do not just follow values instilled during early socialisation. Individuals are challenged to inform themselves broadly about relevant values. They are forced into an ongoing process of comparing values and finding a personal balance
that seems adequate for every domain of their life and every stage in their development. An outspoken example of such an ongoing search process is Hans (Belgium). In the political domain he has shifted during his life from the Christian-Democratic party towards a left progressive party; then he was for a time politically independent, but returned later to the Socialist party. In the domain of work he searched for a profession that fitted his commitment, but finally found a job with a progressive educational publisher. In the civil society domain, when his children started going to school, together with several other parents he established a new school in the spirit of Freinet:

I dare to say that I am really pluralistic, this means that I constantly search for possibilities to enable change. For me nothing is fixed and people always evolve along with societal changes and trends, whether [they] explicitly choose to or not, and one is always determined by the social context. One of the basic principles of pluralism is that one can realise one’s own conviction. (Hans, Belgium)

\(d\) The Process Character of Active Citizenship

Learning active citizenship appears to be a process deeply embedded in individuals’ biographies and the socio-cultural and political contexts they live in. Individuals today face unpredictable changes in the dynamic between their lives and the changing context, which they must (learn to) anticipate, handle and reorganise. This triggers a continuous process of constructing meaning, making choices, taking up responsibilities and dealing with change. People develop through shaping their own biographies and telling their life stories, as well as through (re)constructing and transforming their environments. We refer to this process as biographical learning. It is about creating meaningful connections between narrative understanding of oneself as an actor – past, present and future – and of the context in which one operates and lives, in terms of broader themes and social issues. This entails (re)constructing meaning, acting upon the (new) meaningful connection, and taking up personal and social commitments. Such learning is often not intentional or conscious, but rather accidental, unexpected and \textit{ad hoc}.

People can experience events and changes in their lives as dramatic and ‘jagged’ (e.g., from critical or frustrating experiences), but also as smooth and easy (e.g., involving strong socialisation in the family). Carla from the UK had a ‘smooth’ learning trajectory, following a life cycle typical of middle-class women of her generation. After school she went to university, worked until she married and had children, but then devoted herself to her family. When the children grew up, she ‘reclaim[ed] her life a little bit’. She did not need to find paid work, so looked for other ways to fulfil herself: singing in a choir brought her a social network that led to other local voluntary arts activities. She has found fulfilment in local charitable work for over twenty years.

3.3.4 Modes of Learning

We were not concerned only about where and how learning of citizenship occurred, and about how far learning of active citizenship was being reshaped in the contemporary world. We were also interested in whether various forms of adult learning were themselves helping to reshape active citizenship. Our fifth research question attempted to address this:
To what extent does adult learning in formal, non-formal and informal education contribute to the development of new forms of active citizenship in the work, state and civil society domains?

What is at stake here are the relationships, possibilities for participation and opportunities for success established within and across domains. Active citizenship comes about through learning by doing and participating. Informal ways of learning that presuppose and represent equal participatory relationships seem to be particularly important. But does adult learning itself contribute to new forms of active citizenship?

At an individual level, it is clear that active citizens’ learning leads them into new forms of active citizenship. We find this frequently with informal learning. As Carlos (Spain) remarked, ‘the better way of living is doing, when you act you discover things and until you are doing you do not see them’. Enrique confirmed this in his story:

Once I entered that group, I became more and more accustomed to it, and I found my place in there. I realised I could contribute my own share and I ended up feeling like I was a part of it and identified with it. (Enrique, Spain)

And also in the story of Roos from the Netherlands:

And then you start with it, and you gradually grow into it, little by little, and you increasingly know more about it: what it is all about and how it goes, and you get mixed up with it. (Roos, the Netherlands)

In Slovenia, Pavla recounted a similar experience with non-formal learning linked to self-management:

this non-formal learning for self-management was a totally different thing. [...] With the passing of time you realise, that again you acquired some new ways, formal and informal, that a certain problem could be solved. [...] This then gives experiences for the future. If you connect all this, you get a solid base for formal and informal work. [...] All this lecturing, with one talking and the other listening, they are a little old fashioned and people don’t like them. But let’s say some workshops, circles, learning in small groups, much more let’s say in informal ways [...] It attracts people more than let’s say other things.

Formal education can also shape individual agency, though often in the background. We need to re-examine and revalue particular skills which can play a crucial role in developing active citizenship among traditionally excluded groups:

My teacher of Dutch […] really stimulated me to start reading books and newspapers. […] He is also the one who stimulated me to go to university. (Sara, Belgium)

In Slovenia, the transition from socialism involved learning which clearly generated new forms of citizenship:

When those political changes in Slovenia started to take place, […] we realised] that the future depends on us all, and not only on those who have made the decision themselves to direct and pass decisions in the name of others. [...] In this place where I live, we founded a political party at the local level. (Miha, Slovenia)
3.3.5 Generations

One of our specific concerns was raised within our fourth research question:

- How do processes of learning for citizenship and governance vary between ... selected age-cohorts?

Our focus on two age cohorts originated not from concerns about age as such, but with an hypothesis about the nature of contemporary society, and the impact of late twentieth century changes on active citizenship and its learning. These originated in debates about the transition from modernity to late- or post-modernity, but were given greater clarity by Inglehart’s discussion of materialist and post-materialist values (Ingelhart 1977, 1990). The intention was to uncover whether the nature of learning by active citizens had changed as between those who went through their primary and secondary socialisation before about 1965, and those who became adult from the late 1970s onward. Putnam’s argument, that there has been a marked change in the civic activity of Americans over the twentieth century (Putnam 1995, 2000) is also relevant. Putnam argues that members of the ‘long civic generation’ (born 1910-1940) are ‘substantially more engaged in community affairs and more trusting’ than those born later – specifically, he compared this generation with ‘generation X’ born between 1965 and 1980 (Putnam 2000, p. 254).

We found some evidence that younger active citizens may be encountering more significant transitions than former generations did at the same stage of their lives. For both older and younger people, biography now seems to play a larger role in the formation of active citizens. It seems that in former periods the structures of political and citizenship activity were more prescribed. There is some evidence that today people may be less willing to be active citizens against their own feelings – i.e., that people today are less able to feel a sense of duty on the basis of an imposed or externally-derived sense of responsibility. This suggests that the value of authenticity is increasingly directing social commitment.

In Spain, the older generation was confronted with new challenges when Franco’s regime ended, relying on capacities acquired before the democratic period. The younger generation was confronted with the radicalisation of democracy and established different connections to manage the challenge. In the Slovenian transition too, the older generation has learned how to apply their capacities in a new social environment, while the younger generation has learned how to ‘use’ new and promising opportunities. In Finland older active citizens rely more on established networks and conventional strategies, whereas younger ones seem more adventurous and willing to experiment. Active citizens in the UK are learning to relate to different issues (gender, sexuality, class, specific events like the war), while the meaning of these issues constantly changes over time. In Belgium the fading of normative institutionalised ideological networks makes room for different kinds of commitment. The Netherlands has also experienced ‘depillarisation’, which affected the challenges active citizens faced. However, we found little difference between the generations in level of education, independent critical thinking or degree of commitment.
3.4 Intervention Strategies for Active Citizenship & Governance Education: What we Learned from Expert Groups

3.4.1 Introduction

Collecting data on active citizens’ learning processes is of course important, but there is no direct or automatic link between this and knowledge of how to support such learning. For this reason, we planned to discuss the results of our life history research in each country with panels of professionals in citizenship education. More generally, we wanted to discover from them what educational interventions are in use, and what new and promising developments are emerging. Given the breadth of our understanding of citizenship, we wished to discuss our results with experts from different domains (politics, work, civil society), and we also sought people who had knowledge both of educational interventions that support governance structures introduced from ‘top-down’, and of interventions that support citizens’ participation at the ‘grass roots’.

In this section, we start with a short description of the research design. Basically we followed a focus group approach. Further information is then given about the development of the research questions, about the techniques we used for data collection and analysis, and there is a final note on diversity – on variation as the crucial characteristic that determines validity and reliability of qualitative research. The main part of this chapter is, however, devoted to reporting the research results. We start with a general overview of the results, based on a synthesis of the national reports. The synthesis is presented here in three parts. The first focusses on intervention to support governance structures. The second part is about support for the learning processes of individual citizens. The third part summarises the answers to the additional research question on internationalisation. A final section discusses the relation between formal, non-formal and informal education in supporting active citizenship.

3.4.2 Method of Inquiry

We were not interested merely in experts’ individual opinions, but much more in an in-depth discussion among them that would highlight implicit problems and innovative solutions and strategies. The focus group method seemed an appropriate way to collect such data (Morgan, 1997, 1998). Nevertheless, most focus groups in social research only meet once and only for two hours or so. In order to get more reliable results – to encourage as complete as possible a representation of all relevant arguments and facts – we wanted experts to spend more time together. We therefore embarked on a rather ambitious project to bring national experts together within each country for two full days (six effective working hours each day). The two meetings were separated by a period of about two weeks.

(a) Research Questions

The focus groups were intended to provide answers to our sixth, seventh and eighth research questions:

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1 The full text of the national reports and a somewhat more elaborated text of this synthesis can be found in ETGACE (2001b).
• What approaches to education for active citizenship and governance have been advocated in literature at various levels of governance? What have been the prime modes of intervention (formal, non-formal, informal), and what have been their effect on different individuals and sectors in society? How far have these addressed citizenship and governance as gendered notions? (Sixth research question)

• What new approaches to educational intervention for active citizenship and governance are currently being developed given current changes in societal contexts? Which approaches should be fostered in view of the challenges with which Europe is confronted? (Seventh research question)

• What modes of educational intervention have proved most effective for learning citizenship and governance? What modes are likely to prove most effective in the future? (Eighth research question)

In addition, however, we believed we might discover some evidence related to some of the other ETGACE research questions, in particular:

• How are practices and concepts of ‘active citizenship’ and ‘governance’ being reshaped in the current context of social transformation, such as ‘Europeanisation’, globalisation and individualisation? (First research question)

• To what extent does adult learning in formal, non-formal and informal education contribute to the development of new forms of active citizenship in the work, state and civil society domains? (Fifth research question)

These were quite open questions. In analysing the data, as presented below, a number of considerations emerged. Our initial research questions did not discriminate sufficiently clearly between interventions from the top down, designed to support structures of governance, and interventions at the grass roots level, designed to support individual citizens. Nevertheless in the analysis of our data it became obvious that we should disaggregate our data according to these levels of intervention.

The initial research questions were also based on a distinction between prime modes of intervention (sixth question) and new approaches (seventh question). In the analysis it became clear that we had to define ‘prime modes’ more clearly as ‘traditional modes’. Moreover, it became clear that the struggle for new intervention approaches dominated experts’ discussion and provided the most interesting data. Therefore we focus below (although not exclusively) on these new, innovative approaches.

We found, moreover, that our interest in the effectiveness of interventions could not be answered in a precise way, based – for example – on numbers of participants, the satisfaction of participants or the extent in which certain precisely defined objectives were realised. Very little such data emerged from the experts’ contributions. But they did provide a huge number of ‘examples of good practice’. For each intervention described below, we mention some of these examples.

1 Aspects of this question were also addressed in the literature review (see §3.2 above).
Finally, in our initial open questions we did not foresee, or at least did not sufficiently stress, the tendency for governance to be at the same time a mechanism for inclusion of citizens and also – often implicitly and unintentionally – a mechanism for exclusion, mainly of less educated citizens. In fact this turned out to be a central theme in the discussions of ‘our’ experts. This tendency is therefore extensively documented below.

Of the two additional research questions the fifth – about new forms of active citizenship – delivered little new data. The focus group session relating to this topic did, however, deliver some additional information about governance practices in the work and civil society domains. In the summary of the findings below we therefore include these data in the section on interventions for governance.\footnote{1}

\textit{(b) Research Strategy}

At first glance, the focus group method seems to be an unproblematic research strategy. Nevertheless there are some hidden ‘traps’. In order to check how well we fared, we compared our research procedure with three other recent European projects on adult education that also used focus groups as an element in their research design. The results are to be published separately (Chioncel et al. 2003). We highlight below three crucial elements.

\textit{Identifying and recruiting participants}. The national teams used two main strategies to identify experts: brainstorming within the national team and asking others (especially advisory panels and colleagues) for recommendations. In total, however, nine different methods of identifying participants were employed. Only about half of the experts who accepted the invitations in fact attended one or both focus group meetings. At first glance this drop out rate is shocking. However, the reality is that focus groups, like questionnaires, suffer today in general from a drop out rate of over 50 per cent. Compared with the four other European research programmes, the ETGACE figures for attendance are in fact slightly better. The major problem in all countries, as in the other three European research programmes, was that experts on education and training in the workplace were hard to get. Some declined invitations, others accepted but did not actually attend. Ultimately, in some countries, the subgroups of experts on education and training in the workplace had only four participants, and of course this may have damaged reliability in that the range of opinion may have been limited.

\textit{Focus}. As the term focus group suggests, the topics to be discussed should be structured. Therefore we developed a detailed manual. This stated the five research questions (see above) explicitly. Guidelines were proposed for timing for each of the two one-day meetings of the focus groups in each country. One or more specific session over these two days was allocated to each research question, but national teams had some freedom to re-schedule the sessions in the light of local conditions and perspectives. Three out of six countries made some changes. The most important changes refer to the unwillingness of focus groups in these three countries to split up in gender-homogeneous subgroups to discuss the gender issues in active citizenship. One of these countries redesigned the time schedule quite radically, but applied

\footnote{1 We also found significant evidence of gendered notions of active citizenship, reinforcing the results of our analysis of this point from the life histories. These results are set out and discussed in §3.5 below.}
all original research questions. Compared to three comparable European programmes, the ETGACE procedure had a somewhat more prescribed agenda for focus group discussion.

**Coding, report and feedback.** The ETGACE focus group manual suggested a specific procedure for coding. Countries were asked to divide the records of the focus group discussion into short paragraphs, to attribute each paragraph to one of the central research questions and finally to make a file of all paragraphs attributed to the same research question. Within that file researchers were asked to develop codes that reflect all types of answers to that research question. All countries followed this general procedure; two countries added some more specific analysis techniques. The manual also suggested that additional research activities could be undertaken, such as:

- collecting further evidence on examples of good practice,
- short interviews on the phone to collect further evidence from participants who made interesting statements during the discussions, and
- asking participants to make amendments to the drafted report of the focus groups.

All countries used some of these additional data collection techniques. One country describes it as follows:

> The researchers became aware that the time available during the expert symposia meetings was insufficient to ensure full answers to the research questions. It was therefore decided, in discussion with participants, to establish an e-mail list, which consisted of 33 experts. The first draft of the report was circulated to the e-mail list and comments were solicited from the experts. Participants were also asked to provide examples of materials, curricula, etc., which illustrated points they had made in discussion. The researchers also followed up the symposia with telephone calls and e-mails to specific participants to clarify, expand or otherwise illuminate points made. The final report and its conclusions are based, therefore, not simply on the discussions, but also on evidence collected by these supplementary methods; this evidence comes, however, only from experts who participated in the group discussions. (ETGACE 2001b, p. 27)

**Diversity**

Behind the ‘mask’ of a standard table of contents, and despite common guidelines and procedure, there are substantial differences between the national focus group reports in the way they address the central research questions. This is partly due to differences in national contexts. For instance, there are differences in the assessment of the role of the state between post-communist Slovenia, post-fascist Spain and post-welfare states such as Belgium and the Netherlands. But there could also be differences in the agendas of focus groups, due to differences in internal group dynamics between national focus groups. For instance, the report on Finland gives more than average attention to information and communications technology. Is this because of its vast and empty rural areas, or is it just an accident of the specific interests of the members of this focus group? The report on the United Kingdom focuses more than most on innovatory projects for fostering citizenship. Is this an artefact of a government policy that sees its role mainly as stimulating citizen participation but not
regulating and financing it on a regular basis, or again just a particular and contingent interest of the members of these British focus groups?

Moreover, because of the qualitative character of this research we should not speculate too much about similarities and dissimilarities between countries. Given the limited number of experts in each focus group and their selection on theoretical grounds, the results for each country cannot be seen as representative of that country. Qualitative research is not about representativeness but about diversity and variation. Rather than six national studies we should consider them as a single report. Together they sketch a more balanced overall description of the dynamics and variation in educational intervention for active citizenship than a single national report could do.

3.4.3 Intervention Strategies for Governance

Interventions to create structures for governance are just as important as interventions to activate individual citizens, particularly because since the 1970s traditional forms of governance have – gradually but radically – begun to change. On the one hand, many traditional organisations (such as political parties, unions and churches) have lost members, while new looser networks of citizens have become prominent. On the other hand, the structures of those traditional organisations (such as states and corporations) which have maintained their position have become less hierarchical. Participation, communication and individual autonomy became the new key concepts of social organisation.

For most of the experts participating in our focus groups this was not just a sociological description of what happens in late modernity. Most of our experts supported such developments, offering radical critiques of hierarchical organisations and strong support for more democratic and ‘bottom-up’ practices of active citizenship. For instance, the central theme in the Spanish report on the focus group discussion is the need to create democratic, participatory decision-making structures: democratising democracy as it is called in this report. This principle refers in particular to the facilitation of egalitarian dialogue between people. A group of Dutch experts stressed that the most important role for government is to create conditions under which people easily engage in social and political activities. The Belgian report stresses that educators should not just follow the agenda of established organisations (which they see as a ‘top-down’ approach) but should start where the people are (a ‘bottom-up’ approach). They advocate the creation of experimental spaces for such ‘bottom-up’ participation.

But what educators worry about most is that new forms of citizens’ participation often leads to exclusion of less educated people. All national reports stress again and again that new approaches to governance and citizen participation open doors for the well educated, the broad new middle class of late modern society, but leave out marginal groups. Examples mentioned include immigrants, older people, gypsies, and disadvantaged youngsters. It is a recurrent theme in the sections below.

(a) The reinvention of politics

As the Dutch wrote, secularisation and ‘the end of ideology’ has deprived people of many ideological and ethical anchor points. Consequently ideologically-based political parties and churches are losing members. There is a need for more open public debates, organised by
independent institutions. In the Netherlands cultural centres and adult education institutions, for instance, try to fulfil that need. Belgium describes the ‘Archipel Project’, which brings sixty people from different social backgrounds together over eighteen months, to discuss and work on real social issues from their own experience and expertise. It is a way to learn and participate, to form and voice opinions, to take a position and to grow personally and professionally.

The Archipel initiative is funded by the King Baudouin Foundation with the ultimate aim of improving living conditions for the population. The foundation is developing activities at local, regional, federal and also the European level. Between 2002 to 2005 the main themes involve social justice, funds and contemporary philanthropy and activities in the fields of civil society and governance. Civil society initiatives are set to help to make associations more effective in developing ‘social capital’ by encouraging citizens to get involved, bringing people with different backgrounds together, developing new forms of local co-operation between citizens, associations, businesses and local authorities, and encouraging cultural pluralism. In relation to governance, the Foundation tries to involve citizens in decision-making on science and technology and production and consumption issues and makes use of the Foundation’s role as a forum for impartial consultation to build new models for public debate and decision-making. (Focus group, Belgium)

Often these new initiatives are internet-based. Finland has an Internet programme Express your Opinion. Spain highlights the Catalan Forum to Rethink Society that produced proposals in twelve different thematic forums; all the preparation was done via the internet. The Dutch have a newly started project, also partly Internet based, called Echte Welvaart (Real Prosperity). Echte Welvaart is a network of activities and initiatives involving nearly thirty associations and institutions, initiated by the green movement and supported by churches and several charity and humanist bodies. Its goals are to achieve a better balance between economic, ecological and social values by stimulating reflection on the one-sidedness of the dominant ideology of economic growth, careerism, money making and consumerism, and to promote values, scarce in our society, such as silence, space, care, and empathy.

The network adopts, supports and links a lot of different activities and projects by all kinds of associations and institutions. The network consists of about 500 local projects, clustered by province and target group. It brings together professionals, experts and decision-makers by organising workshops and master classes. Important features of the master class method are: bringing together three learning levels (the individual, the organisation, and society), double loop rather than single loop learning, and using diversity in working methods (convert information, reflection, and practice). People share knowledge and inspire each other; they share common values and goals, without losing their own identity. Such a learning network creates a diverse and rich coalition, in which people and initiatives are strengthened. The Echte

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1 Paragraphs in italics in this section (§3.4) of the Report comprise information (or summaries of information) provided to us by members of our focus groups. They are accurate representations of what focus group participants told us, but we have not in general sought additional verification.
2 http://www.kbs-frb.be/code/page.cfm?id_page=125&ID=56
3 www.echtewelvaart.nl
welvaart project has three main functions: to do, to learn and to show. In the activity ‘to do’, the network adopts and strengthens certain projects. In the activity ‘to learn’, the projects become laboratories for the network. Finally, in the activity ‘to show’, the findings are published. It publicises articles and essays in magazines and newspapers, contributes to television programmes and has its own web site. (Focus group, the Netherlands)

One of the experts, active in this campaign explains:

We want to stimulate professionals and active members in associations of the green movement and of other social and religious organisations to reflect on their role. Changes in society towards sustainability and a higher quality of life require that people take into account the interests of others now and in the future. In this campaign we use values and notions people accept as being important. So we do not impose anything upon people. We try to trigger discussions in work and in schools, at home and in associations and churches about these values people share. We ‘mirror’ these values and ask people: so what can you do about it? We organise for instance, ‘masterclasses’ for people in which they discuss strategies and methods to realise these values in their work. (Focus group participant, the Netherlands)

A somewhat different form of the new politics, reported from Finland, the Netherlands and Spain, is a growing practice of interactive policymaking. Local, regional and incidental national authorities ask professionals to design a consultation process in which citizens’ groups and individual citizens can express their opinions through workshops, meetings, surveys, and so forth. Action and learning are interwoven. An interesting example of citizens’ participation in the public sphere is in Rubí, an area in Barcelona with 60,000 inhabitants, which is apparently implementing a participatory decision-making process for the local budget:

This example of the radicalisation of democracy, where citizens participate directly in the organisation of the community budget is based on the project ‘Orçamento participativo’ from Porto Alegre, Brazil. A project for participant democracy was initiated in the year 2000, in order to involve people in governance. This initiative emerged from the inhabitants’ disillusionment with representative democracy linked with the situation of social exclusion that is generating a shortage of educational and professional training, and precarious labour conditions which called for a real involvement of citizens in the governance of the public sphere. (Focus group, Spain)

Our Spanish team formulated four specific principles which characterise interactive policymaking: giving a voice to all citizens, direct participation, discussion based on argument and collective decision-making.

Several examples were reported of attempts to better integrate disadvantaged groups in the political domain. An example from Spain is a Research and Animation Group of Cultural Minorities (GRAMC), one of whose main objectives is to foster immigrants’ participation in neighbourhood decision-making bodies. In the United Kingdom, a project Getting Involved and Influential (GI2) aims to support educators and facilitators who are seeking to re-engage young adults in the political process by drawing them into learning.
Getting Involved and Influential (Gi2) has received positive feedback from many young people with whom the idea for the programme was tested. The planners have put in an application for a grant to fund the technical infrastructure. The programme is a partnership between two national development agencies: NIACE and the National Youth Agency, and the development work is funded by the Local Government Authority. The programme, still at the planning stage, will develop a framework of skills to support young adults in developing their influencing skills. The programme providers consider that young people need to learn skills such as ‘negotiation, advocacy, communication, research’, in order to take part in democratic processes. Learning will be facilitated by incorporating a framework with expected learning outcomes and a series of steps to achieve them. Also a set of tools, techniques and processes are provided for trying them out. In future, the programme will be made available as a web-based resource to create a community of users who can connect with each other. It will include bulletin boards and chat rooms. The plan is to make the programme highly interactive. Users will be able to post examples of activities and campaigns that work – and those that do not as well. (Focus group, UK)

(b) The Learning Organisation

The nature of business organisation has changed over recent decades. There has been a marked ‘de-industrialisation’ and growth of the service sector. Corporations have become more dependent on each other in the new network economy, and some have started to reflect on their obligations as ‘corporate citizens’. Their main challenge is to develop new business ethics to balance societal and economical aims, but this is of course a difficult and slowly developing process. A clear example in our research material of a corporation that has made remarkable progress in this direction is the Finnish marketing firm Kesko:

Kesko is the first Nordic corporation to announce its commitment to the ‘Social Accountability 8000’ standard. Based on International Labour Organisation Conventions, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, this was published in 1997 by the US-based Council on Economic Priorities, now Social Accountability International. The standard is expected to become general quickly, to complement quality and environmental standards. Kesko considers itself indirectly responsible for social and ethical issues related to the production of the goods it sells. It also pays special attention to its employees. For example, discrimination against any employee in respect of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction, social origin or comparable reason is forbidden. A safe and healthy working environment is provided. No employee is to be subject to any physical, psychological or sexual harassment, punishment or abuse. ‘Kesko has always tried to be a good citizen’ stated the manager of environmental policy in the leading newspaper Helsingin Sanomat (6 August 2000). (Focus group, Finland)

But there are also marked changes within corporations. On the one hand unions have lost members and influence. On the other hand, hierarchical organisation has been decentralised, allowing a greater autonomy for teams and individual workers on the shop floor. All our

1 The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education.
2 http://www.nya.org.uk
expert groups reported that flatter organisation required new policies for human resource development and training in employees’ communicative skills. Spain and Belgium reported in more detail the emergence of teamwork in corporations and Belgium provided an example of a radical alternative, a workers co-operative that tries to escape market imperatives to manage their business collectively. Slovenia reports on a non-profit organisation SOCIUS, established by 18 successful large companies to encourage the development of learning organisations, and also mention ELES, a national company for the production and distribution of electricity:

A training centre established by ELES provides the employees with the opportunities for formal, non-formal and informal education and learning. Formal education is necessary to meet the professional requirements of work and professional innovations, but the need of the employed to have access to knowledge that is not directly related to their jobs is recognised as well. The centre for autonomous learning gives this opportunity. The training centre also enables access to learning to the members of their employees’ families and to the local population. By doing this it improves access to education while at the same time helping to strengthen the ties between the company and local environment. A representative of the training centre describes its concept as follows:

[…] this ever growing demand for professionalism in the workplace makes people realise that they have a shortfall in certain fields […]. W]e offer them training that is non-formal, and informal, too. That means, that we make available, not only knowledge needed for the job, but also some other things […]. I]n that way we support learning and enhance possibilities for people to become active not only in their personal life but also in their social life. We also invite the families of our employees to our centre. (Focus group, Belgium)

Experts in Spain and Belgium reported the emergence of teamwork in corporations and in Belgium added a radical alternative example, a workers’ co-operative that tries to escape the dominant market imperatives and manages and runs its business collectively. All countries reported that learning organisation approaches require new training in communication skills. Much of this training is informal.

Also characteristic of the last three decades is that employment has become a basic requirement for citizenship – more evidence of work as a central facet of citizenship. But for education and training professionals this is also a worrying and crucial challenge. All national expert panels stressed the need to expand and to improve training in basic skills for the unemployed. In particular, projects for specific groups at high risk of unemployment were reported in the United Kingdom, Spain and Slovenia.

(c) Constructed communities

Traditional civil society, and in particular local communities, comprised close-knit networks of social and cultural non-governmental associations, but there were interesting differences between countries. It was reported with apparent pride from the Netherlands that – after Denmark – it has higher membership of political and civil organisations than any other

1 http://www.eles.si/
European country. On the other hand, Slovenia and Spain reported that although civil society and volunteer work had been weak under the socialist and Franco régimes, churches had played an important role. In Belgium and the Netherlands civil society had been organised in religious and ideological ‘pillars’, which were now gradually losing their significance (‘de-pillarisation’). In late modernity churches seem to be experiencing a downward trend in membership similar to other traditional membership organisations (e.g., political parties and unions). However, in Slovenia we were told that the role of the church has increased recently, while in the United Kingdom we learned of an interesting project called Church for Un-Churched People.

Where traditional civil organisations have been weakened, we may see professional interventions to strengthen local communities. Some reports mentioned initiatives to build new, looser, network structures in local communities. For instance, we learn from Spain of a project called VERN, a neighbourhood committee to co-ordinate and support smaller neighbourhood associations and cultural groups. The report of the United Kingdom mentions professional principles and projects to build community networks and bring people together: thus projects to train catalysts for community work such as Community Champions and Can-doers.

The Scarman Trust is ‘dedicated to helping people gain greater power over their lives, especially by formulating new ‘deals’ between community-based organisations and decision-makers in government. The Can-doers umbrella programme aims to empower people so ‘they are not alienated from power and institutions’. The programme enables local communities to be involved in governance, and to make a difference. About 500 resourceful people – can-doers – countrywide, identified as catalysts, are already at work, setting up saving schemes or food clubs, getting young people off the street and into sports or the arts, renovating estates, or setting up not-for-profit businesses to achieve their aims. They need some support, such as finance and connection to other networks (e.g., local government, civil service, and other local community workers).

A second Scarman Trust programme is Community Champions, run in collaboration with the DFES [the central government’s Department for Education and Skills] to increase community activities. Very often in communities where there is little activity, it might take a group of people with a common interest to make something happen. Working together helps them feel a little less powerless and a lot more able to change things for the better. The initiators of that process, ‘community champions’, are committed to helping members of their community have a greater say in the decisions that affect them. They must be skilled in helping people to help themselves. Community champions are forward looking people persistent enough to see things through. They must be good at networking and sharing ideas. In the focus group, it was reported that about 150 people were involved in London. These enterprising individuals and organisations, trying to change their communities, will – it is

1 http://www.charter88.org.uk/press/scarman1.html
2 http://www.dfes.gov.uk/communitychampions/
claimed – form new ‘civic networks [that are] the 21st Century equivalent to the parish pump’. (Focus group, UK)

We heard of many programmes aimed at overcoming social exclusion, such as programmes oriented to activating young people or immigrant communities. From Slovenian experts we heard reports of successful use of study circles. Study circles are apparently one of the most popular non-formal educational interventions in Slovenia. One of their appeals is the personal approach. As a Slovenian expert from the state domain said:

in short you don’t start with professional terminology and expertise, but you start with a person. Concrete situation, concrete problem, concrete person, that’s what it’s all about. You have to pull in the people out of anonymity who usually don’t have that opportunity. (Focus group participant, Slovenia)

Study circle participants also appreciate the method itself. Participants themselves discuss and decide the content of what they learn, depending on their interests and the problems present in their community. The method puts an equal stress on learning and social aims. A study circle mentor explained:

every circle brings something new […] I tell participants that everyone finds in a circle what he or she’s looking for […] first we only discussed things and got to know each other […] then we set our objectives […] then we prepared our plan how to realise these objectives […] we acquired all the literature needed […] then the fieldwork started […] and the final objective was the exhibition […] later we added some new elements […] and now it has become a kind of meeting place, where people meet after mass, they sit and talk […] I think that it has a long-term effect because all the community gets more self-esteem […] we’ve found out that we ourselves know best how to settle our ‘garden’.

(Focus group participant, Slovenia)

Study circles’ importance also lies in encouraging socio-cultural animation and education and learning in communities where other forms of education and social life are more or less absent. They also help develop local communities. State funds are provided, which covering both the education of mentors and organising the circles – although many also find sponsors for additional costs.

There also seems to be an interesting shift from volunteer work in associations to programme volunteers, who assist professionals in the social services in the execution of their work. Two types of volunteer programme were most often mentioned in our national reports: in the field of health, and to support immigrants.

These combined efforts seem to have had some effect. In Slovenia and Spain, political transformations to democracy seem to have encouraged a flourishing of civil society. The Netherlands addressed head-on whether there has been a decline in volunteering, with data showing the level of volunteer work has not decreased since 1975. But there has been a change in the composition of this volunteer ‘army’: in particular fewer housewives and students but more retired people. Notwithstanding this, concern about the long-term effects of the growing dominance of work was widespread: ultimately the fear is that this could damage people’s willingness to engage in civil society and the community.

3.4.4 Intervention Strategies for Active Citizenship

This section summarises our main findings with respect to interventions to support individual citizens within old or new governance structures. A crucial problem is how to motivate citizens to participate in such structures. Our experts saw two main shifts in support for the learning processes of active citizens: a shift from traditional teaching to facilitation, both moderating group discussions and individual mentoring; and an increasing impact of information and communication technology.

(a) Motivation

Although our experts thought challenging new structures of governance were the key to encouraging citizens to be active, there was some interest in other, more direct, methods. For instance, we found from the life histories that the starting point in learning active citizenship is often when a citizen identifies with a specific group or issue. Commenting on this finding, Spanish experts suggested that such identification can be fostered by offering good examples of active citizenship, while Finnish experts considered role models important.\(^1\)

Another recurring theme in the life history and focus group research was that in the late modern era, characterised by individualisation, citizens are motivated to become active not only by a societal good cause but also by the benefits they may personally reap from participation. Active citizenship can generate greater respect from others, it is a way to socialise and make new friends and acquaintances, and ultimately active citizenship can contribute to self-actualisation. This may have negative effects – as the Dutch report comments, membership becomes more volatile. Instead of lifelong attachment to a particular association, citizens tend to attach themselves for limited periods to a particular cause, and then shift their interest to another – searching for new challenges, connections, identities.

In considering motivating interventions for disadvantaged groups, it seems essential to avoid a deficiency perspective. For instance, from Spain the pedagogy of maximum was stressed. Drawing on what individuals can do (their capacities and skills), rather than on what they cannot (their deficits), this pedagogy fosters people’s self esteem.

Excluded sectors’ participation is sometimes difficult because their contributions and culture have not been valued by the whole society. For this reason it is necessary to begin with a pedagogy of maximum which draws on the capacities and skills of individuals and not their deficits. If the approach is based on the idea that people are not capable or that they do not want to participate, it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy; and with marginalised sectors the case is further aggravated. In practice the pedagogy of maximum means: ‘Quality training in which theory and practice is connected. Using this training to foster people’s motivation and self-esteem especially when they are from excluded sectors in order to contribute to their active participation.’ (Focus group, Spain)

The Belgian report also stresses this positive approach, commenting that there are many citizenship activities which do not require complicated competencies. The same report

\(^1\) In this respect it is relevant that the ETGACE project developed a publication containing examples and models from our research material for use in education and training of citizens: see ETGACE (2002a).
suggests active citizenship can be ‘sold’ by presenting it as ‘sexy’ and ‘fun’ and they mention
as an example a free magazine for youngsters in secondary school called MAKS.

MAKS is a democratic initiative that addresses youngsters from 14 to 19. It is a part of the magazine Klasse; intended for teachers, parents and pupils, and talks about participation and communication in school. Pupils are informed about their rights, about the offers available for them, to make them more involved in their education and in society at large. The magazine also provides a social platform to encourage tendencies in society that foster participation. Their intention is to stimulate youngsters to participate by giving them the feeling that they have everything in them they need to be an actor.

MAKS presents positive images: they give examples of boys and girls who are positively involved. People need to be challenged and informed in a contemporary and attractive way. It is important to stress not only problems in society, but also the capacity to solve these problems or to bring about a social change.

A concrete example created by MAKS is ‘change your desk’. Youngsters can swap with another student for a day. For example: students in Latin and Mathematics can change with somebody studying to become a baker. The project ‘change your desk’ is about giving pupils an opportunity and stimulating them to follow another subject, at their own school or elsewhere. The purpose is to deflate prejudices, to awaken their interest in other pupils and subjects, to strengthen their feeling of connection. Another example is an international exchange between schools. Stories and testimonies of other people with different experiences in different living conditions can provoke recognition, solidarity and reflection. Exchange projects can confront people with other realities and urge them to look for possible solutions together. (Focus group, Belgium)

In the United Kingdom, a project entitled Play’s the Thing uses drama to engage people who have previously been unable to take up educational opportunities.

(b) Active learning

While children’s education has long been dominated by traditional teaching methods, adult education was freed rather early from this tradition by its stress on facilitative methods. Nowadays adult education generally expects and stimulates active learning – that is, an active role for learners themselves. With respect to citizenship education we see in the national reports a mistrust of governments’ public information programmes. For instance, in Slovenia the population tends to reject educational interventions from the state after the collapse of the communist régime, because education promoted by the state is seen as indoctrination. The Finnish seem to agree, expressing the view that state (formal) education in their country has historically been an instrument of successive oppressors: Sweden, Russia and Nazi Germany. The Dutch experts questioned whether the European Union’s public information campaigns are very effective and whether, in fact, providing information is a significant force in activating citizens.

The expert panels advocated various new methods of citizenship education which give a
more active role to the learners themselves:

- Forms of education where a teacher does not transfer information to the participants, but
  where participants themselves collect and analyse information. Slovenia mentioned, for
  example, workshops, project learning, problem-solving methods and research activities.

- Using the group as an educational instrument. The Dutch report describes this method, in
  which group members support each other, and discuss each others’ situations and
  problems: examples include peer learning for groups of women and of older adults. In
  this way group members learn their problems are not unique and that collective action is
  required.

- Integration of acting and learning, also called learning-by-doing, in which acting in
  everyday practice is followed by deliberate feedback, reflection and planning improved
  action. There seems to be a connection with an increasing interest in forms of individual
  coaching, sometimes called mentoring or tutoring. The United Kingdom report gives
  examples of such individual tutoring in different contexts.

A typical example of learning by doing is the fostering of voluntary work, as has been done
by the Dutch Stichting Vluchtelingenwerk\(^1\) (Refugee Council Association).

The Council is based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and works
 to protect asylum seekers and refugees. This work is mainly done by its many
 volunteer and entails personal support and the protection of refugees’ interests
during admission, reception and social participation, primarily in the
Netherlands. Volunteers and paid staff of the Council promote the interests of
refugees and asylum seekers. They provide guidance during the asylum
procedure and in the municipality. They also provide information about the
position of refugees and try to eliminate prejudice. The organisation relies on
the efforts of volunteers and paid staff throughout the country, who are at the
heart of the Council’s work. It also relies on the support from members, donors
and organisations that subscribe to the objectives of the Dutch Refugee Council.
An expert from the expert groups working in the Council explained why the
number of volunteers is declining:

In Vluchtelingenwerk about 7,000 volunteers are active, organised in 350 local
sections. The tendency in recent years has surely been that it has become more
difficult to recruit volunteers and to keep them for a long time. Sometimes
volunteer workers are affiliated to a certain refugee family and stay as long as
that particular family needs them. But there is a shift in the organisation of the
workforce from traditional volunteer workers, faithful and trustworthy for years
and years, to student trainees who stay for a year at the most. There is a shift
also from housewives to pre-pensioners and pensioners. These changes have to
do with changes in the labour market. Workers are scarce, so housewives go out
to work (often part time). Students, traditionally another source of volunteer
force for Vluchtelingenwerk, have to earn money as well as study because of the
deterioration of the grant system. So most of them no longer have much time to

\(^1\) www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl
be volunteers, although their social involvement has not been diminished, as they show in their trainee time. (Focus group, the Netherlands)

3.4.5 Information and Communications Technology

The 1970s and 1980s were a period of technological innovation that democratised the use of audio-visual equipment and led – among other innovations – to the introduction of a more diversified and decentralised broadcasting system presenting new opportunities for fostering active citizenship. For instance, when Slovenia became independent **public tribunes** were organised and transmitted by regional radio stations; these were meant to explain the nature of democracy.

*The British organisation Community Service Volunteers (CSV) has for many years run a Social Action Broadcasting project that involves local people in issues that matter to them. For about 25 years, CSV Media, in collaboration with BBC Three Counties Radio, has been giving voice to communities across the UK. This initiative helps to strengthen the community by building links between local people, business and community organisations. In 1999 CSV Media’s BBC Radio Bristol Actionline ran campaigns for over 200 local organisations, generating 6,800 calls to the Actionline. One volunteer, aged 53, says:*

The real joy of the radio we produce is the way it connects people with help. I worked on a campaign promoting therapeutic massage for visually impaired people and appealing for more volunteers. The response was amazing. Some of the stories we heard from people who benefited from the message made you realise that it is so worthwhile. I get so much back from the campaigns we run. (Focus group, UK)

In much the same way as new audio-visual media were the challenge of the 1970s and 1980s, so the Internet was the challenge of the 1990s. It will probably be another five or ten years before we can properly assess what works for citizen education and what does not. For the moment the dominant development seems to be the explosive growth of websites that deliver all sorts of information, and to a limited extent interactive services. The Finnish provide the most detail on this subject. Among other examples they mention a digital register on Finnish government projects and legal preparatory documents, a portal to public sector information and its services, and a digital **Citizens’ Guide**.

We have already encountered some initiatives to construct new political forums through the Internet, such as the ‘Catalan Forum to Rethink Society’ and the Dutch environmental forum ‘Real Prosperity?’ The Finnish city of Tampere offers on its website a simulation game that enables citizens to experiment with different alternatives to plan town districts.

*The British report mentions the possibility of internet communities, and provides an example of an Internet community of survivors of domestic violence. This Democracy Forum Discussion, initiated by the Hansard Society as part of their political education programmes, was set up to enquire into all aspects of domestic violence from the survivors themselves. Also a computer-training programme was given for 250 survivors of domestic violence to enable*

1 http://www.democracyforum.org.uk/
2 http://www.hansard-society.org.uk
them to interact with MPs on-line and give their views to an All-Party Committee on Domestic Violence. The discussions provided evidence to influence subsequent legislation. In a similar way those on tax credits have been able to give their views. Usually the targeted participants are members of excluded communities or groups. (Focus group, UK)

Most reports worry about the currently limited access to the Internet. Many initiatives to train people – particularly disadvantaged groups – in Internet use are mentioned: co-ordinated by local adult education centres, libraries, specialised training centres and in industry and union projects. Big leaps towards the information society were apparently made in Finland, with a pilot project ‘The Learning’ in Upper North Karelia\textsuperscript{1}. This was part of a process of revising the national information society strategy, under the auspices of SITRA (Finnish National Fund for Research and Development).

Upper North Karelia is a peripheral sparsely inhabited rural area in South Eastern Finland. It suffers from high unemployment with many people of working age traditionally leaving for more prosperous areas. The project fights social marginalisation by improving the information society capabilities of the people.

At the beginning of the project, 21 local unemployed people were trained to become net trainers and support people in a six month education course. They then started to teach net skills to other local residents at kiosks, in separate courses at schools, at village meetings, in a senior ‘drive-in’ and in people’s homes. All residents, associations and companies in the area can call a trainer into their home, to install software and train them in the use of the internet and local community network. All this is totally free. The basic teaching principle has been ‘learning by doing’.

Under the project all residents of the area have the opportunity to use the internet and the local community network at the cost of a local phone call, and there is a free helpdesk service for all network problems. More than 50 computer kiosks are established around the area for access to the regional community network and the internet. The kiosks are in places which people frequently visit: libraries, youth centres, houses for unemployed people, banks and shops. The use of these computers is free for all, both local residents and tourists can use them without any payment.

The main achievement of the project has been the creation of regional community networks for communication involving all residents, authorities, companies and associations in the area. Registered users can chat, send and receive e-mails, read announcements and reports, publish their home pages, sell and buy things in a ‘flea market’, etc. The local companies are advertising and marketing their products, and municipalities and authorities have conferences of their own. All key actors are local and it is thus very sensitive to the real needs and skills of people. Although local enthusiasm is important, it is also clear that the implementation of this kind of project has required a significant amount of economic support. SITRA is now funding similar learning projects for other peripheral regions in Finland. (Focus group, Finland)

\textsuperscript{1} \url{http://unk.pkky.fi/englanti.htm}
It may be over-optimistic, but perhaps one might anticipate, with such a broad range of projects, that within a few years most families will have, next to their telephone, radio and television, a computer – or all of these media combined in one appliance in their living room.

3.4.6 Europeanisation and Globalisation

Although all focus groups conducted a special session on Europeanisation and globalisation, the results were quite meagre. Generally speaking, our experts saw internationalisation as a development mainly driven by economic competition; in its slipstream political integration follows, with the forming of the European Union as a clear example. The national reports mention particular problematic side effects: environmental problems, the marginal position of immigrants, and so forth. But when it comes to education, experts are well aware of the limited effectiveness current strategies can have in stimulating an international perspective on these problems; yet they have no clear alternatives. Three current educational strategies came to the foreground in the discussions.

Firstly there is the strategy of information. The European Union, together with national governments, spends a lot of energy on providing information about its purposes, structures and regulations. Slovenia, which aspires to become a member of the European Union, offers information through formal education, non-formal workshops and – for instance – a travelling library and information service called Eurobus. The Finnish United Nations Association has developed a Challenge to Global Citizenship Maturity Test comprising four elements: a diary, in-depth studies, action and self-evaluation. Some Dutch experts wondered whether this whole information circus is very effective, and indeed whether it is possible for information and knowledge in general to play a strong role in activation.

This brings us to the second educational strategy: problematisation. This strategy is typical of social movements. A commonly mentioned example is educational activities around environmental issues. Another – related to social exclusion, another oft-mentioned theme – is the European Union’s own activity over many years in supporting local projects to combat poverty. One such project – CICERO, mentioned in the United Kingdom expert group – delivers modules exploring citizenship, democracy and the EU, and social exclusion. A study visit to Brussels is included. The British report even mentions a company, Capacity Unlimited, created in 1994 specifically to manage European funds.

Finally there is the educational strategy of exchange programmes. All reports mention examples, which are of two types. One type is exchange between countries, such as international camps and student exchange. The other type is projects or programmes fostering exchange between immigrant cultures.

3.4.7 Interventions as Education

A central theme of the ETGACE research is the varying roles of formal, non-formal and informal education within interventions for governance and active citizenship. The distinction between the three formats for education was mentioned explicitly in the first research question for the focus groups, about prime modes of intervention, but in fact the theme recurs in the answers to the other research questions. In this section we summarise our main findings for this central theme. In essence, formal education seems to play an important role in the
background, non-formal education seems often to add to formal education, but in specific interventions informal education in particular seems to dominate.

(a) Formal education

Formal education, as we have seen, plays an important background role. Participants in our expert groups in all countries emphasised the tendency for well-educated citizens in particular to respond positively to interventions for governance and active citizenship, and stressed the danger that less well-educated citizens would be excluded. All national reports therefore, advocate additional measures, mostly of non-formal education, to improve the access of less educated citizens to forms of governance and active citizenship. Examples are literacy courses, vocational courses, social skills training and computer workshops.

Discussing prime modes of intervention, experts in three of the six countries mentioned citizenship education as a specific subject within formal education. Slovenia reports a subject in compulsory education called ‘Civic Education and Ethics’, the Netherlands report a subject ‘Social Studies’ in some forms of secondary education and the United Kingdom mentions a recent government decision to introduce Citizenship as a subject in the National Curriculum for all state schools. Some reports contain passing remarks to the effect that, in a more general sense, citizenship is an element of some courses in secondary and higher education. Slovenia and the United Kingdom, against the background of recent introductions of national curricula for citizenship education at schools, worry about whether teacher education prepares future teachers adequately for this new challenge. Research was reported from two countries, the Netherlands and Finland, on the effects of citizen education courses on the knowledge and attitudes of pupils with respect to citizenship and democracy within formal education. (In both countries, the conclusion had been that there is some positive effect.)

Belgian and Spanish experts in particular were critical of traditional school education as a whole. They saw schools as teaching pupils to be good citizens but not to become active citizens. They argued – as did British experts – that more should be done beyond the formal curriculum to encourage active citizenship at schools. Two types of activities were discussed in the focus group sessions: more extra-curricular activities (clubs, mock elections, etc.) and more internal democracy in schools, involving pupils, representatives of the broader community, and parents.

(b) Non-formal Education

Turning to non-formal education, experts in three countries mentioned that schooling for the workplace is important, especially programmes helping unemployed and excluded people get back into paid employment and free them from the margins of society. In discussion of the national reports within the international ETGACE team, Spain in particular stressed this point, arguing that access to the labour market opens access to participation in other domains. Access to the labour market, for instance, is a key factor in social inclusion of such disadvantaged groups as ethnic minorities and immigrants.

All reports mention non-formal education for volunteers (in the civil society domain). Dutch experts indicated that non-formal education of volunteers was increasing as a consequence of severe cutbacks in government funding for civil organisations. Rather than being themselves
actively involved in carrying out the organisations’ work, professionals train volunteers to take over a range of essential tasks. Organisations approach volunteers more and more to be unpaid semi-professionals, starting their careers at the bottom of the organisation and only gradually climbing the ladder to qualitatively more challenging functions – supported by non-formal training.

Among the experts in the focus groups, we found a widespread ambivalence with respect to non-formal education in the state domain. Slovenians were most explicit about this. On the one hand they mentioned important issues for public information in their country – for instance, at the time of independence, information about the new political institutions; more recently information about plans to join the European Union. On the other hand they emphasised that the population has tended, since the collapse of the communist régime, to mistrust educational interventions by the state, seeing state education as indoctrination. In relation to formal education, the Finnish seem to agree, stating that state education in their country has always been an instrument of its oppressors.

(c) Informal Education

The ETGACE research results (from both life histories and focus groups) lead us to the conclusion that, by and large, formal and non-formal educational interventions alone are not enough. There is a more hidden form of education that goes hand in hand with the action itself. Effective interventions generally combine support for action with support for embedded learning processes. As a matter of definition, we refer to such education embedded in action as informal education. Examples of informal education mentioned by our experts may be arranged in several ways; for example:

- Who is the educational agent? At the one extreme, there are examples of professional support for informal education. These would include organisational development or community development professionals supporting an active group by introducing moments of skills training, or moments of assessment and reflection on the purposes of particular actions. Somewhere in the middle are standardised educational formats applied by active citizens, such as simulations of local urban planning procedures on the internet or manuals with examples of sustainable solutions for environmental problems. At the other extreme we might see experienced active citizens acting as mentors for people who have just begun to be active.

- How far is the education deliberately planned? On one extreme are sessions explicitly focussed on education, such as a group organising a reflection weekend or an afternoon of training. In the middle you see planned contributions to meetings, providing specific information or discussing strategic options. At the other extreme are spontaneous moments of reflection about unexpected feedback, or rather sudden transitions in the purposes of active citizens.

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1 As used by Coombs (1985), ‘informal education’ is virtually indistinguishable from ‘learning’. In this section, we use the term informal education where specific times, places, actions or instruments are used to support learning processes.

2 Evidence for more spontaneous moments of informal education come chiefly from the life histories, rather than the focus groups.
What are the specific elements of the group process? Slovenian experts mentioned a threelfold distinction. First, some informal education supports active citizens in solving concrete problems, in being up-to-date with current social changes and in understanding and evaluating their effects. Second, informal education may support the development of social skills, such as positive self-esteem, communication skills, taking responsibility for oneself and others and co-operation with others. Third, it may foster development of critical thinking, changing of values and breaking of stereotypes. The Slovenians added that in practice too much attention is given to the first two types of informal education, which are mainly ‘training’, and not enough to the third – supporting critical thinking – which is the really educational part.

This discovery and initial exploration of informal education in the broader framework of interventions for governance and active citizenship is one of the main findings of the ETGACE research project. Over the last decade, useful contributions have been made in relation to informal vocational education (see, e.g., Eraut et al. 2000). If we are to be able to understand and design more effective informal educational interventions for active citizenship, there is an urgent need for a more precise analysis and delineation of what they can achieve, and of the relative effectiveness of the methods and strategies available.

3.4.8 Concluding Remarks

After completing drafts of their national reports on the focus group research, the ETGACE international research team discussed the main themes of the six reports. This helped to structure the above account, but also raised several points which – on closer examination – could not be supported from the evidence available in the national reports. Two deserve mention here.

First, the division between domains of citizenship can be misleading. There are many connections at the institutional level – as the Spanish report, for instance, stresses. Less visible are connections on the individual level. In particular there is a considerable ‘spill-over’ effect: competencies learned in one domain are applied in another – the British report mentions this. This is partly because individuals tend to change their commitments over their lifetimes, but also because many citizens are active in more than one domain at the same time.¹

Second, an important finding is that training and education for active citizenship is more and more organised in temporary projects which are required to deliver precisely defined goals. The ETGACE research team agreed that an unwanted side-effect of this development is the exclusion of citizens who need longer, more intensive periods of educational support in order to become active. This applies chiefly to citizens with a lower levels of general educational attainment. The ETGACE research team also supported the conclusion – found in the Belgian and the Finnish national reports – that the effects of interventions cannot be accurately predicted, and that – rather than a ‘product approach’ which seeks to define measurable results in advance – a ‘process’ orientation is more appropriate.

¹This is, of course, one of our findings from the life history research. See §3.3.2 above.
3.5 Active Citizenship, Governance and Gender

A gender-specific dimension was included in the research. The main research question related to this was:

- How do processes of learning for citizenship and governance vary between men and women …?

In order to answer this principal question, we felt it would be helpful to explore the following subsidiary research questions:

- What values and attitudes have influenced decisions by men and women over their lifespans to undertake citizenship activity?
- Are there particular features of the present environmental and social conditions which women and men face differently?
- Are there particular ways in which women and men give meaning to their experiences and their identities?
- What are the implications for a future citizenship education agenda that incorporates a gender perspective?

3.5.1 Gender-related Values and Attitudes

Across most of the life history interviews there were similarities of educational and family expectations for women. Women’s education and career opportunities were limited; this applied especially to older women – these differences were slowly weakening, to a greater or lesser extent in each country, among younger generations. Sandra (UK), for instance, said that where she grew up, opportunities for girls were ‘much more limited.’ They ‘just married young, were pregnant young, a lot of them […] worked in shops. […] they didn’t really educate you as such.’ In Spain, particularly during the Franco era, women were given limited education and not expected to do paid work. In Slovenia the tradition had been that women were expected to work, but still to be responsible for the home. Only in Finland did the life history report not identify particular differences in educational opportunities for women. But even here, as in most countries, equal opportunities legislation emerged during the 1970s and 1980s.

In spite of these differences, one value seems to have remained constant – the deferring of women’s career ambitions to their husbands’ or partners’. For all the women, marriage resulted in either disrupted career plans or at least a change of job. The power relationships between heterosexual partners was such that women’s autonomy had less value in the public sphere than men’s. The significance of this for active citizenship perhaps lies in the status given to public and private roles. In some cases female-specific experiences – childbirth, domestic violence, care – led to female-specific activities. But these were rarely political activities and rarely engaged with men’s responsibility to women. In this respect the activities remained ‘gendered’, and values about women and family seemed to change little across generations. Only Belgian interviews found men who claimed specific family roles as part of their citizenship activity. Another exception to this rule was those women who played a
public role at work as trade union shop stewards. Of such women interviewed, however, all admitted to both gender discrimination and a struggle to prove themselves in their public role.

3.5.2 Particular Features of Environmental & Social Conditions

In Spain men and women have had different opportunities throughout history, influencing how their active citizenship developed. In Franco’s time cultural, ideological and political repression was particularly harsh on women. Women, confined to the private sphere, caring for families and households, could develop as active citizens only in that context. Men’s role was dominant in the public sphere. With industrial development, some women started to work in factories, where their labour was cheaper, and the struggle for decent working conditions was carried out by men and women through illegal unions. Leading positions in the workers’ movement were, however, occupied mainly by men.

During this period the feminist movement fought for a true equality of opportunities for men and women. Thanks to this movement women have succeeded in opening access to formerly male jobs, and to higher education, and have obtained improved legislation on social, economic and political rights. In Spain today the feminist movement is facing a new challenge: the inclusion of all women in the struggle for a more egalitarian society, to break down differences between women of different educational backgrounds. Working-class women, women lacking much formal education, are claiming a right to education and to participate in governing society. The private domain is often important in this, leading to a process of self-transformation; some men are also influenced by these perspectives. In the Spanish interviews, we also saw men fighting for more egalitarian relationships between men and women: the learning of active citizenship for both men and women can be traced across all domains.

Although equality between men and women was a formal principle in socialist Slovenia, and full employment for both sexes was a normal part of life, traditional cultural patterns remain prevalent. Compared with women, male respondents only exceptionally mentioned the private sphere as important in influencing the course of their careers. In general, the mutual support of partners in their activities is acknowledged. However, women in the older cohort had had to suppress their participation in public life because of family demands. Women seem to have been more aware of gender differences than men. This was particularly so for socially constructed images of women, and in regard to women’s activity in the state domain, where they faced adverse and discriminatory media and public attitudes.

The differences between men and women activists were not identified as so prominent in the Finnish material. Nevertheless, women tended to be more care-oriented, talking for example more about their children. This lack of difference may be more significant among activists than among people in general, though we should note that in Finland both the President and the Speaker of parliament are women.

All British respondents learned citizenship values, attitudes and skills in a variety of domains, primarily through informal discussions and activities. Factors influencing women to become active citizens often included their role in a marital relationship (or after its breakdown), and societal expectations for motherhood. Such roles were often learned in childhood, or emerged from family circumstances that women seemed unable to challenge. Interviewees tended to see the family as the woman’s concern, rather than the man’s. Men gave little or no indication
that their identity, or sense of responsibility in active citizenship, was formed or changed by such matters; whereas women often had problems reconciling private responsibilities with public life. In other words, public life for women conflicted with additional, private, demands that might not be extended to the men. There are indications, however, that further and higher learning, formal, non-formal and informal, were particularly significant for more than half the women. Here some learned to resist normative images of themselves; others just extended their identities beyond that presented through the private domain.

All Belgian female active citizens interviewed felt responsible for gender as an important social issue. In diverse ways they felt committed to improving the position and situation of women in society. From personal experience of oppression or inequality, from an identification with the situation of other women or girls, or from personal drive, they felt the urge to act politically as active citizens. At the same time they looked for more personal, less prescribed ways to be active, combining different responsibilities within their lives. As in the UK, the women indicated that (higher) education and work were important for their proper emancipation and social participation. In their work they tried to give shape to their social commitment, and looked for work roles where this was possible. Those with a partner and children expressed some feelings of being impeded from taking up active citizenship roles by their family situation, but attuned their activities to these circumstances.

However, these tendencies are tendencies only. Nowadays there are no distinct differences in the way women and men learn and take up active citizenship. This can be understood against the backdrop of the opening up of Belgian society, creating more room for alternative concepts and practices of active citizenship that appear to include rather than exclude the experiences of women and thus seem to be less gender biased. An example of this is the way gay men would take responsibility for issues that would normally be classified as private, but involved both care and social responsibility that crossed the normative divide between public and private.

In the Netherlands both men and women in more traditional relationships referred to their partner as enabling their activity. However they did so in different ways. Men pointed out that their wives took care of the household, so they could spend more time on their cause. Women pointed out that their husbands took care of the income, so they could invest time in their cause. In less traditional relationships, both men and women were concerned about their independence, each seeking their own a balance between private life, paid work and cause.

Although the Netherlands interviews revealed that women encounter more disempowering transitions than men this did not affect the degree of citizenship, that is, women did not withdraw from their activity. Women were no less ambitious or self-confident than men; neither were they afraid to enter the spotlight – but these were the successful women. More ‘female’ forms of leadership (identified with such language as ‘consulting’, ‘to the point’, ‘good atmosphere’) were beginning to be appreciated both by men and women. There are some indications, then of an emerging ethical, mutual dependence and pluralistic attitude that has been advocated in recent literature.

In all countries, men’s and women’s experiences were affected by their social class backgrounds and by national history. The degree to which care responsibilities affected women’s ability to act as independent and self-directing agents depended on their personal biographies and occasionally on their direct experience of discrimination. In most countries
younger women perceived themselves as having better chances – than older women – of equality in terms of work and family relationships. In many cases this was facilitated by more equal access to education, both popular (e.g., in Spain) and higher education.

3.5.3 How People Gave Meaning to their Experiences and Identities

Specific circumstances affected people’s decisions to become active in society. For women these often arose from family pressures: a mother’s illness, children, the experience of domestic violence, isolation as a wife without paid work. Others were motivated by a sense of injustice, closely associated with social class. Both gender-specific and domestic or private experiences influenced the kinds of routes people took into wider social roles. But the more private, family route taken by most women suggests that women’s autonomy is still defined by different boundaries – controlled geographically by the husbands’ public life and by family relationships. Usually, only when men experienced some form of oppression (sexuality or disability, for example) did they take up an active citizenship role that interfaced with their private sphere.

The gendered state of oppression is, however, complex and hegemonic. Women can collude in their own oppression – as Marlene’s story demonstrates. Subjected to abuse and violence from her husband for 25 years in order to keep her marriage together, Marlene explained how her childhood experiences led her to believe her role in society was to be a mother:

[T]here was such a lot of Catholic stuff, it came up in everything, and I don’t know if I told you about the priest that used to come in twice a week, he said ‘what is the most important job for a man?’ so we said ‘policeman, fireman, lifeboatman, a pilot’ and he said in a sanctimonious way, ‘No it is a priest’. So of course when he said ‘what is the most important job for a woman?’ we all shouted out: ‘a nun, it is a nun’ and he said ‘No, it is a mother’. (Marlene, UK)

As a dutiful wife, she ‘always stayed back.’ Her role, she thought, ‘was to support him, make sure there was clean clothes, food and the place was quiet when he comes in’. Consciousness of what is oppressive, therefore, determines whether and what action people choose to take. The implications for learning active citizenship from a gender perspective lie in how people can be enabled to develop a critical awareness of the nature of their own gender-specific influences.

The reasons why some women became active citizens, it seems, were influenced by their role within a marital relationship and inextricably tied to societal expectations for motherhood. Some of these roles were learned in childhood, others emerged from family circumstances. Even if their active citizen role moved outside a family focus, the ongoing pattern of behaviour in family relationships usually persuaded women to make decisions based around consideration for the family.

Thus caring was a central theme in active citizenship for many women interviewed. Some had experiences of needing to take a caring role for their family members or other loved ones. Beryl (UK) mentioned how the experience of caring for her son gave her a new awareness. Laura (Finland) worked with an association for people with cerebral palsy because her son had cerebral palsy. Majaana, another Finnish woman, cared for her parents and later took up responsibility for caring for the elderly.
In contrast, caring did not seem to be a motivating factor for most of the men’s active citizenship. Few, for instance, were involved in activities related to children or other caring roles. In Finland, children and young people were important for men but more as friends than as a responsibility. The male image of family responsibility was usually depersonalised, as indicated by Hannu when he described his interest in youth:

> I have a dream or vision to combine my love for sport and work for youth still in my later life. I would like to start a junior soccer team and act as a coach for it. It would be nice to have my own children along in such activity [...] There are never too many situations, where education and youngsters’ own activities were combined in a sensible way, and sport is excellent for that purpose. I have myself got a lot from sport during the years, it’s a sensible way of life. (Hannu, Finland)

Similarly in the UK, men’s perceptions of family ‘responsibilities’ rarely loomed large. Whilst male respondents might have played a family role they seldom saw it as significant to their public lives. In this respect ‘family’ did not affect what they chose to do. This sense of family disconnectedness, applicable to most men, again placed women in a family power relationship that defined them as carers, and ultimately controlled how they viewed themselves in relation to the outside world.

The male Slovenian interviewees were all involved in traditional family relationships and all their wives, bar one, were employed. This was common in Slovenia, but division of labour sometimes still ran along traditional lines, where the women supported the partner’s professional occupation. Women active citizens were more diverse – half did not have traditional marriages, and two of those who did received support from their spouse. The fact that most women did not have traditional family relations suggests that if women are to be active, things must change – as the literature suggests (see §3.2.6 above). Again, as in other countries, few men mentioned the private sphere in relation to their active citizenship; for women, it was dominant.

The goal of equality has not yet been achieved, however. For instance, half the Slovenian women felt equal to men, but at a cost. Ana, one of the youngest politicians, said women must put in more effort to achieve what men can achieve just by being men. Women in Slovenia (and Spain) saw solidarity as a motif of engagement, linked to a sense of injustice and feeling of responsibility towards the community. Active citizen and professional careers were more complex and unpredictable – less linear – for women.

In the Netherlands, Merel was taken as a child to feminist events, and later became a politician focussing on women’s issues. Rita, in relation to her active citizenship, mentioned how she had to deal with typically male-dominated organisations – ‘you really must take effort to fit in, wear the right clothes – I just didn’t fit in’. In ironic contrast to this was the comment from one man in a focus group bemoaning the fact that it seemed so difficult to recruit women into his organisation: ‘There are plenty of women we would like to have on our body and we do invite them [...] but we fail’. So attitudinal differences and social behaviour both prevented and stimulated participation by women in governance systems. One person observed, for instance, that governance practices were often acted out differently by men and women. It was felt that women’s personalities were pragmatic and co-operative, while men were more wordy and stubborn.
The Spanish interviews indicated the private domain was becoming more political and a space from which public campaigns for equality were being realised as women’s critical awareness grew. The Belgian women also revealed a need to fight for the position of women in society. All felt connected with gender issues, such as injustice, rights, oppression. The women all had paid work, except for one who could not. The older ones, however, had found difficulties at work. Generally women felt they had to work much harder than men to be respected equally. The personal was more political for women than men. Nowadays, as in other countries, it was felt that the opening up of Belgian society presented more room for alternative concepts and practices which included the experience of women.

In spite of these more egalitarian tendencies, there were some examples of women’s public roles being given diminished status by male colleagues. In the UK, Catherine, for instance, described how her gender, rather than her abilities as a police officer, meant she was ‘pushed around’ in the police force. Most police officers were men. Men were allowed to see assignments through to their completion, but Catherine was often called away because someone else wanted a woman to contribute to their task:

I would get sent on these specialist things like [...] murder inquiries [...] and then I’d get called back [...] because they hadn’t got a female and so everyone else would stay on a murder inquiry for six months and I would be on there for a week and a half [...] and then I’d go back and something else would happen [...] and I’d go on that for a week [...] I would never see anything through and it became a standing joke [...] I just got pushed around. (Catherine, UK)

This eventually affected Catherine’s career. Whilst she chose to leave rather than complain, the incident demonstrates how gender, rather than citizen skills, can be defined by men, and ultimately defines women’s public role. In this sense, the power to define the form and content of women’s active citizenship lies with men.

Where do men and women learn about citizenship? A premise of the research was that people learn mostly through informal means. This was true to a significant extent. Even in the state domain much of the learning was informal. There was, however, a particular learning issue for women’s acquisition of active citizen skills. The analysis suggested, for instance, that women’s experience of the state domain (formal and non-formal education, though chiefly after leaving school) can be a significant resource for developing critical awareness of the attributes and skills for active citizenship. Although this was not their only source of learning, it is possible that traditional societal values and structures put pressure on women to conform to particular gender roles. Society-oriented attitudes and values learned within the private domain may reinforce gender divisions. Similarly self-oriented attributes and values can be gender-specific, emphasising for women the learning of caring. The critical context of adult, popular, further or higher education allows women to question their socially-induced status more deeply. In Belgium, the UK and Spain, women cited examples of using their own new awareness gained in such education to raise other women’s confidence and political awareness, as well as build up personal skills to help them negotiate their way through male-dominated worlds such as unions.
3.5.4 Implications for a Future Agenda for Citizenship Education

If these understandings of gender are applied to an analysis of how educational interventions address citizenship and governance, three questions emerge:

- Are there educational interventions that ignore the perspectives associated with women and thus make women invisible in learning programmes?
- Are there interventions that specifically address marginalised women’s needs so as to empower women to strive for an equal stake in citizenship and governance?
- Are there educational interventions that raise the profile of activities done mostly by women so that their behaviour and contribution to society is made more visible?

In the Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain and Belgium there were similar comments. Women are often perceived as active in different domains and positions, but men usually have higher level roles politically and economically. Women would be more likely to engage in voluntary work involving children, care and other low-status roles. Men’s active involvement in civil society might be more associated with, for example, sporting clubs (the Netherlands). Levels of education were becoming more equal, but the character of education was still differentiated. Where people segregate private and public time, men are defined by career, women by their role as housewife and mother. The Netherlands data indicated that women might have different motives for joining something, such as an interest in the activity content, its goals or social contacts; whereas men were more calculating, saying: ‘It will it look good on my c.v.’ Women were seen as less confident, more cautious in their general outlook, needing deeper knowledge before taking action, and more aware of children. Men were seen as more inclined to tunnel vision, more willing to take action and risk their knowledge in public. Men were more likely to take up others’ opinions and make use of them themselves. Images of the women as emotional and caring and men as rational, logical and theoretical were linked to – and reinforced – the continuing socialisation of boys and girls into different role expectations.

Slovenia emphasised that despite a different historical tradition from the Socialist period, women are not well represented in the state or work domains. There was a sense that education should sensitise men about women and women about their potential. In Spain women were less represented at work than in other countries, but this situation was changing, except at the decision making level. In Spain it was argued women have developed their own forms of participation, based on solidarity as a key principle. This usually started in the private sphere but was beginning to extend to the public sphere. Such women were seen as paving the way for others. There was some sense generally that society was opening up to allow for more alternative forms of active citizenship. In Finland it was recognised that women still struggle in a patriarchal society; men get higher positions, are paid more, and take less responsibility for the home – which has a negative impact on women’s space and career.

Suggestions for bringing about equality included providing crèche facilities and attention to time constraints influenced by the family. There was also a feeling in Spain, the Netherlands and Slovenia that competencies and management styles often associated with women should be promoted. This was interpreted as transferring private competencies to the public sphere, creating space for women’s dialogue, providing affirmative action to create spaces for
women and raise the profile of women’s issues. In the UK suggestions included the need for women-only learning programmes, addressing confidence and similar themes. There was also a concern that men tended to associate authority with men, with implications for how women are seen in the public sphere. Women need to become aware of how to access power.
4. CONCLUSIONS & POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

4.1.1 Societal Developments

The first concern of the ETGACE research was to explore the changes occurring in the nature of active citizenship and governance today, and how these are articulated in different spheres (‘domains’) of society. From the outset, we sought to situate and understand developments in citizenship and learning in the context of key social transformations or our times. There are, of course, many ways of looking at these: we drew attention to globalisation and individualisation, which together can be linked to the shift from ‘modern’ to the ‘late-’ or ‘post-modern’; and, given the location and focus of our study, to the related phenomenon of ‘Europeanisation’. At first sight, globalisation seems to be about size and scale: the increasing inter-connectedness or integration of economic, cultural and even political systems across the globe. However, recent literature has emphasised the multifaceted nature of this phenomenon: as Robertson (1992) argues, movements, institutions and individuals are not only implicated in the process of globalisation, but frequently also in resistance to it. Globalisation, he suggests, should be seen as a ‘two-fold process involving the universalization of particularism and the particularization of universalism’ (p. 102).

Many of the citizens we interviewed, and the educators who joined our focus groups, were sharply aware of the increasingly global backdrop to their activities – the way Rok’s professional contacts with western Europe brought home the need to prepare Slovenia for the information society is a case in point. This increasing scale was, however, only part of the reality – again, we can see this in Rok’s response: to change his own country’s attitudes and strategies, through forming a national professional association. Our interviewees and experts experienced not merely the need to do business with local and national government, but sometimes with the European Union; they engaged with local employers, but knew that even if these were not controlled by transnational corporations, they operated in a global economic environment; some of the voluntary organisations they joined were local, some were national or global – some, as with Alkuvoima in Finland, worked at all levels.

All sectors of society have had to respond to this increasing scale. The ambit of state activity has expanded; many corporations have a ‘global presence’; social movements – including, ironically, anti-globalisation movements – operate on an international scale. But in parallel, the problems of operating on a large scale have become more pronounced, particularly in the state and business sectors. Governments have lost confidence in their ability to design policies, but even more to carry them through effectively – witness waves of decentralisation, privatisation and ‘partnerships’ between government and other organisations. Government

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1 Our first and second research questions refer.
now sets strategy; others carry it out (cf Griffin 1999). In business, enterprises are restructured, downsized, made more flexible and adaptable, given flatter structures, seek strategic alliances. Two main types of argument are made in favour of these trends. On the one hand lies effectiveness: that governments deliver better when they operate in partnership with voluntary organisations, for example, or that flatter business structures are less rigid and adapt better to changing conditions. On the other hand lie normative arguments – that such arrangements are more democratic, more responsive to popular opinion, address a growing democratic deficit, and so forth. It is these arguments – for example, the Spanish experts’ call for ‘egalitarian dialogue’ and ‘democratising democracy’ through deliberative processes to encourage all organisations to participate in community decision-making – which are to the fore in the ETGACE evidence. Not surprisingly, we have found examples of this trend within the state domain, and in the relations between the state, the private sector, and civil society.

The tendency to decentralised and networked approaches to governance may be more efficient and democratic, but paradoxically they achieve these ends only by engaging citizens more actively. They require more involvement of people at the ‘grass roots’. It was partly for this reason, no doubt, that we encountered governmental attempts at what we have termed ‘remoralisation’ of citizens (cf ETGACE 2000). This finding lends support to Rose’s (1999a, 1999b) argument that forms of governance represent ‘a twin process of autonomization plus responsibilization – opening free space for the choices of actors whilst enwrapping these autonomized actors within new forms of control’ (Rose 1999b, p. xxiii). As we wrote in an earlier report, such attempts can be explained rationally: engaging the energies of the independent, free, active citizen is considerably less risky if the active citizen wishes to express that activity in responsible, reliable, non-threatening ways. A nation of entrepreneurs, enthusiastically chasing market opportunities, is one thing; a nation of energetic, free-thinking protesters, expecting more of their governments, is quite another. Mechanisms for creating, or shaping, this new moral citizen vary, but in several countries – the Netherlands and the UK, for example – an important element is the reshaping of the welfare state, embedding within it systems which reward ‘enterprise’ and stigmatise indolence. The active citizen is very much the citizen, for instance, who actively seeks work. (ETGACE 2000, p. 202)

New forms of decentralised governance do not only require people’s involvement; they are also supposed to facilitate it. We have indeed seen (§3.4 above) citizens engaged in new forms of direct or decentralised democracy in the state domain, and in new forms of decentralised work organisation – learning organisations, teams, and so forth. We have found citizens involved in various forms of community development – projects to revitalise and reconstruct communities. Many of these projects were established or encouraged by government at various levels.

However, the active citizens we encountered were not active only in these forms of governance – they engaged with the state, and with state strategies, but they did so on their own terms. We consider this something of a corrective to the impression given by Rose (1999a, 1999b): technologies of governing are neither all-embracing nor universally successful. The state may attempt ‘to govern ... through the micro-management of the self-steering practices of its citizens’ (Rose 1999a, p. 193), but active citizens are autonomous
human beings, and we suggest that states’ capacity to achieve this project has limits. Citizens do not become active only in the projects established or endorsed by the state. Many of the citizens we interviewed had developed their own projects, their own perspectives, and pursued these – though by no means always successfully – through complex biographical trajectories. Despite the weakening hold of the ideological allegiances which characterised the twentieth century, we were struck by citizens’ pursuit of goals – across different projects and domains – which they considered consistent and ‘authentic’.

Moreover, even when citizens do engage with state-sponsored initiatives, they often do so with their own agendas. Active citizens we interviewed sought to engage in areas, or using methods, which were compatible with their ideals or principles. The two principal areas of involvement were solidarity with the disadvantaged and preservation of the natural and cultural heritage; in terms of methods, we found an emphasis on teamwork and mutual trust. Of course, there are many occasions when citizens’ own – authentic – agendas co-incide with the priorities of government; but they do not always do so. We know, of course, that many citizens decline to participate ‘actively’, especially in traditional forms such as political parties, but we also found that resistance to engagement in the harsh climate of the state domain extended to a number of citizens enthusiastically active in other areas. Conversely, we also found evidence of active citizens becoming engaged in forms of governance which did not initially attract them, because it enabled them to pursue a strong concern of commitment. In short, it is possible to engage active citizens in new forms of ‘governance’, but they do so to pursue agendas they consider important.

The active citizens whom we interviewed were typically active in more than one domain – and even within each domain, in more than one particular setting. In some cases, they were active in different domains at the same time; in other cases, they moved from one area of citizenship activity over a period of years. This finding, not in itself surprising, becomes significant in relation to the learning of citizenship.

4.1.2 Learning Active Citizenship and Governance

In these changing conditions, how are active citizens learning about citizenship and governance?1 We attempted to make sense of this using a model which distinguished three dimensions of citizenship learning: effectivity, responsibility and identity. In Chapter 3 above (§3.3) we explained the rationale for reconceptualising these as capacity, challenge and connection respectively. However, as that discussion also emphasised, the mutual articulation of these concepts occurs in specific socio-historical contexts, and these contexts proved to be particularly influential in how the dimensions of citizenship learning were articulated.

This finding lends support to authors who have emphasised the role of social context in learning (e.g., Eraut et al. 2000; Illeris 2002; Jarvis 1987). Lave and Wenger argue that knowing is ‘inherent in ... the social organization and political economy of communities of practice’, which have ‘histories and development cycles’ (1991, p. 122). We found evidence that the learning of active citizenship is indeed shaped by socio-historical factors, at various levels. First of all, we believe national histories shape the learning of active citizenship.

Although our interviewees did not form representative samples in each country – and we

1 This section refers to the third and fifth research question.
cannot therefore assert this with absolute confidence – our impression is that the nationally diverse histories of citizenship shaped the nature of their active citizens’ learning. Our view is in the scholarly mainstream on this point (cf recently, Preuss et al. 2003; Siim 2000). This pattern was particularly evident in contrasting the ‘new’ democracies of Spain and Slovenia with the ‘old’ democracies in, for example, Britain and the Netherlands: to simplify, active citizens in the former are concerned with building and extending democracy; in the latter, democracy tends to be taken for granted, and active citizens show more concern with the authenticity of citizenship activity. Further research is needed to explore, and establish beyond doubt, the influence of national histories on citizenship learning.

National histories matter, but they are not the only factors which shape the learning context. We distinguished four categories of context or domain: work, the state, civil society and the private domain. This typology proved of some value. It enabled us to identify clear trends which seem to be widespread within each domain, such as the trend to flatter organisation in the work domain. We found some evidence of differences between domains in what and how people learned: for example, the work and state domains tended to privilege harsher, more competitive values and attitudes; in contrast, we found a greater emphasis on teamwork and caring values in the civil society and private domains. In terms of perspectives on the social nature of learning, however, this would tend to support the view that ‘the growth and transformation of identities’ (Lave & Wenger 1991, p. 122) is central to learning. Our attempt to achieve broad coverage of domains did, however, mean that we did not achieve – indeed, were unable to attempt – in-depth study of specific learning contexts or ‘communities of practice’ (to adopt Lave’s and Wenger’s term).

Our research emphasised strongly the biographical embeddedness of active citizenship and how people learn it. We have suggested (§3.3 above) that in an important sense each person learns not a common citizenship, but his or her own citizenship. This can be overstated, but the trajectories we discerned in the active citizens we interviewed were individually unique – albeit that we could point to common biographical patterns overall, in particular the ‘smooth’ and ‘jagged’. The unique character of citizenship learning and citizens’ trajectories seems to contrast with traditions in developmental psychology which emphasise regularity, sequence and ordered transitions over the lifespan (cf Erikson 1950; Sugarman 2001).

Within these varying contexts, however, active citizens are active learners. We investigated their learning in terms of connection, capacity and challenge. In recent years, the role of identity in learning has been stressed – knowing ‘is inherent in the growth and transformation of identities and is located in relations among practitioners’ (Lave & Wenger 1991, p. 122; cf Rees et al. 2000; Wenger 1998). Our conclusions parallel these. Citizens’ identities are formed and reformed – negotiated, transformed – in relationships with other citizens; it was to emphasise this point that we came to prefer the term connection. The nature of the transformations of individuals’ identities – of their perceptions of themselves in relation to others – plays a key role in creating their citizenship. Active citizens appear periodically to reconstruct their identities to build a new position in a changing society; they do so, of course, on the basis of their existing resources, social and cultural. Many of our interviewees, for instance, referred to their networks of co-workers, colleagues, acquaintances, friends, family: connection can be expressed in terms of organisations and principles too, but the emphasis on other people stands out in the civil society and private domains. Thus we have
examples of identity expressed in relation to particular forms of organisation (Luisa’s anti-
hierarchichal views and identification with the grassroots, several in relation to trade unions
(§3.3)), modes of action (Antoine’s attitude to his employees), and so forth. All of these are
clearly expressions of identity, articulated through a sense of connection with others.

A sense of responsibility for one’s fellow citizens must be at the core of active citizenship –
Machiavellian political skills alone may make an effective political operator, but hardly an
active citizen. Citizenship has a strong normative dimension. We wished to understand how
such a sense of responsibility is developed, and suggest that the key to understanding this is
the notion of challenge. We were struck by the importance of challenges in our active
citizens’ life-histories: we have speculated above that the range of challenges people face in
their life-times is increasing. But the essence is not so much the challenge, as the citizen’s
response. Confronted with the misery of ‘problem’ young people and their families, Peter
(Belgium) saw injustice. Making sense of her life and violent marriage, Marlene responded
with a desire to help other women. Gilligan (1988, p. 4) argues that ‘two moral
predispositions [toward justice and care respectively] ... inhere in the structure of the human
lifecycle’, while Lister (1997) suggests that a synthesis of these is needed as the basis for a
reformulated citizenship. Our evidence lends support to this view.

We suggest, moreover, that active citizens today – or some of them, at least – have
established an ‘authentic’ sense of responsibility which then forms the basis for their
engagement in a series of citizenship encounters. These people act from a relatively coherent
‘grand narrative’. In some cases, this appeared to be established early in life, by a strong
sense of identity and responsibility formed in the private domain, in early socialisation.
Again, this suggests greater attention should be given to the private domain in discussions of
how active citizenship is learned.

In all our interviews, and indeed in our focus groups too, a key finding was the importance of
informal learning in the development of active citizenship. In a world of rapid social change,
active citizens are typically learning not some established form of routine endeavour, but – in
their learning – creating new forms of citizenship knowledge and activity. As citizenship
groupings are formed and reformed, they do so less by integrating people into established
‘communities of practice’, than through processes whereby people themselves create or
radically reshape these communities, and the knowledge they sustain. In this respect, our
findings have some similarities with those of Eraut et al. (2000) in relation to learning at
work: ‘a high proportion of work contexts were in a process of rapid change, and the people
in them ... came and went quite frequently’ (p. 254). The difference may be that, in contrast
to workgroups, citizenship contexts or communities are typically less subject to formal or
planned structuring.

4.1.3 Interventions for Citizenship & Governance Education

The ETGACE research was concerned both with existing and innovative methods of
intervention to encourage learning of active citizenship and governance. We examined
several levels; the chief method for securing evidence was through our focus groups.

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1 Our sixth, seventh and eighth research questions refer.
Recent years have seen a marked emphasis by governments – which goes beyond the merely rhetorical – on the importance of ‘lifelong learning’ in the ‘learning society’. At the school level, we have seen quite widespread attempts to develop education for citizenship – both through methods which develop learner autonomy and, in some cases, through new civic curricula. Within the business sector, the growth of training and development programmes around issues of teamwork, leadership, and strengthening workers’ creativity, has been marked. But in relation to adult learning, education for governance and active citizenship in civil society and the political domains remains much weaker.

In response to the demands of ‘Europeanisation’, the principal established methods of education which had affected the experts in our focus groups were public information and exchange programmes. European Union funding in this area had clearly generated a substantial range of activity, and educational experts at least were conscious of the opportunities which existed. Some experts recounted good experience with exchange programmes, though some scepticism was also expressed as to whether international understanding alone can be a strong activating factor.1 Similar doubts were mentioned about information programmes, and in general our experts took the view that public information programmes were marginally effective at best, and not infrequently deeply mistrusted by the public.

However, we found considerable evidence that social movements – such as the environmental and anti-globalisation movements – have been successful in problematising the issues with which they are concerned, and generating new forms of learning and knowledge about citizenship and governance. This learning has not only concerned the local and national levels, generating understanding of how local systems work, but also produced the ability to interact, and occasionally even to mobilise, at an international level. Despite a growing volume of research on social movements, which includes literature exploring the learning or cognitive dimensions of social movements (Eyerman & Jamison 1991; Holford 1995; Holst 2002), the importance of social movements as learning sites has been underestimated by governmental policy and professional practice in the field of adult education.

Apart from interventions at the European level, we found examples of a significant range of interventions designed to develop citizenship learning from the perspective of governments – i.e., on a ‘top down’ basis. Traditional approaches included government-sponsored public information programmes (in the state domain), educational courses for trade union representatives and members of workers’ councils (work domain), and educational support for community development and the voluntary sector (civil society). We examined the relative prominence and importance of formal, non-formal and informal approaches; the evidence is that formal education plays an important background role, while non-formal approaches seem to provide a range of specific and more or less targeted supplements to the formal system. However – in keeping with our findings about learning – we concluded that informal interventions were of primary importance. Effective informal interventions generally combine support for action with support for embedded learning processes.

1 In some cases, international understanding did seem to have led to activation, but this seemed to relate to exchanges with the ‘third world’.
We found attempts to use new information and communications technologies for informal education about citizenship and governance, together with non-formal methods to support ‘active learning’.

Generally, we were struck by the contrast between the heavy investment by corporations in the training and development of their staff, not least in relation to issues such as teamwork skills and corporate mission, and the much more limited support for learning of governance in the state and civil society domains. In this area, our experts commented critically on the tendency to provide funding on a short-term, project-specific basis, and increasingly with tightly-specified objectives and targets. This tends to limit the extent to which communities can be genuine ‘partners’, to limit how far education can evolve organically in pursuit of needs identified by learners, and to generate understandings of the relationship between citizen and government (or funding body) in which power clearly resides with the latter, and the autonomy of the former is severely constrained. This problem tends to have its greatest impact on citizens with relatively poor prior educational qualifications. We have argued in an earlier report (ETGACE 2001b), particularly in the context of Belgium and Finland (though we believe it has more general application), that it is difficult to predict accurately the precise impact of informal interventions in the area of citizenship and governance, and this puts a premium on a process – rather than product – orientation. This replicates long-standing tensions in community education (cf, e.g., Holford 1988; Whitehead 1997). We suggest there is too little sustained analysis of interventions related to the learning, especially in informal contexts, of citizenship and governance.

Overall, however, we conclude that the field continues to struggle with the creation of effective ways to support informal and independent learning processes for active citizens. While literature on informal learning in relation to work is extensive and growing (cf Eraut et al. 2000; Lundvall & Borras 1999; Marsick & Watkins 1990; Senge 1990; Watkins & Marsick 1993; Wenger 1998; Wenger, McDermott & Snyder 2002), the literature in relation to informal citizenship learning remains meagre in comparison; the focus group discussions pointed to a similar conclusion.

4.1.4 Differentiation, Inclusion & Exclusion

The ETGACE research sought to investigate how learning differed in relation to two categories: across two age cohorts, and as between men and women. In part, our interest in these stemmed from common concerns about differentiation; in part, each related to distinct theoretical issues.

Our concern with two age cohorts originated not from concerns about age as such, but with an hypothesis about the nature of contemporary society, and the impact of late twentieth century changes on active citizenship and its learning. These originated in debates about the transition from modernity to late- or post-modernity, but were given greater clarity by Inglehart’s discussion of materialist and post-materialist values (Ingelhart 1977, 1990). The intention was to uncover whether the nature of learning by active citizens had changed as between those who went through their primary and secondary socialisation before about 1965, and those who become adult from the late 1970s onward. Putnam’s argument, that

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1 Our fourth research question refers.
there has been a marked change in the civic activity of Americans over the twentieth century (Putnam 1995, 2000) is also relevant. He argues that members of the ‘long civic generation’ (born 1910-1940) are ‘substantially more engaged in community affairs and more trusting’ than those born later – specifically, he compared this generation with ‘generation X’ born between 1965 and 1980 (Putnam 2000, p. 254).

Turning to the ETGACE research, some methodological factors limited our capacity to provide wholly convincing evidence on these points. In particular, our decision to interview active citizens, albeit some of them not ‘traditional’ active citizens, meant that by definition they were active, and that they were capable of remaining active, or becoming active, in the conditions of the late twentieth century. Put simply, if there were citizens active in the ‘modern’, ‘materialist’, ‘civic’ generation who were unable to adjust to early twenty-first century ‘post-materialist’ or ‘post-modern’ conditions, we would not have selected them. Those we interviewed had found avenues for active citizenship. We can, therefore, state that some people have been able to make the transition, and we can say something about them, but we can say nothing of those – if they exist – who could, or did, not.

Our conclusions in this area are, therefore, relatively tentative. We were impressed by the capacity of the active citizens interviewed to make adjustments in their citizenship over time, and to make transitions between citizenship contexts – and between commitments – over their lifetimes. Our older cohort had made adjustments. In short, we were struck less by the differences between generations of active citizens than by the similarities. We interpret this in terms of the need to learn and relearn.

From the literature and the experiences of our women interviewees, we can see that the concept of active citizenship is subjectively defined at any particular time according to political or normative values. Women and men – and different ethnic and other groups – learn to play certain roles which may or may not be understood formally, in public documents and the like, as active citizenship. Their rights and responsibilities will be learned, at least in part, according to how they are positioned in society. The social structures of society will either facilitate or hinder their access to political decision making. Some progress towards equality is being made, but there is still some way to go.

In order to move towards the pluralistic, inclusive notion of citizenship suggested above (§3.2), citizens need to understand how the very systems of which they are part contribute to hegemonic practices or enable new possibilities for agency. The concept of being a woman (interfaced with race and class) has the potential to displace women’s potential public role in society because their perceived gender status is made more visible than their personal qualities. Women’s relationships to men are defined by their gender and family positions. In order for women to be on a ‘level playing field’, policy must address how women are socially constructed and how their visibility is given a shared power relationship with men. Learning to be an active citizen depends, in part, then, on how people learn to be regarded in society. From there they will learn which skills are valued, and which are not. It is up to us, as members of society, to publicly value the interconnectedness of work, family, the state and civil society in creating tomorrow’s active citizens.

Whilst it may be true that most societies position women as a whole in ways that give them less power and status than men, the picture is more complex than this. The life history interviews revealed that disability, race, social class, skin colour, sexuality are all given
different levels of social value. These values intersect with experiences of being male or female and with personal life histories. Any educational intervention that specifically addresses gender alone, therefore may be in danger of minimising, or making invisible, other important areas of discrimination, or of stereotyping women and men. Whilst these cautionary reminders must always be borne in mind we are specifically looking at how ‘gender’ plays a part in perpetuating imbalances between men and women in both opportunity and activity.

Educational intervention can be formal, informal or non-formal. It can be deliberate or accidental. The relationships that occur within such interventions can have subtle influences on the way citizenship is perceived and acted out by the individuals involved. Individuals all bring their personal life histories into a learning situation, and their life histories influence what kind of learning scenarios and what kind of subsequent identities are formed. There is also some doubt as to whether ‘gender-neutral’ activities, such as basic skills, are really so. Do illustrations in learning materials portray stereotypical roles, for instance? Does language inadvertently make certain sectors of the population invisible or offer a hierarchy of social values to certain types of skill that are often gender specific? Another more subtle form of gendered value at work is to allocate only to certain employee roles the opportunity of learning new skills, taking leadership training courses, learning decision making processes, and so forth.

For the ETGACE research it was also important to see who had access to European networks and to what extent women or minorities were getting an equal or fair share of the positive features of globalisation (such as information technology, wider international social, political and professional networks, and knowledge of global contexts). The implications of successful intervention strategies should influence which features of women’s or minority groups’ citizenship activity are recognised and followed through at national, parliamentary or European level. This means finding a way of integrating global activity with local citizenship initiatives and looking beyond educational interventions so that media messages value and give voice to marginalised sectors of society. The gendered nature of citizenship and governance, therefore, operates on several layers. The expert symposia (focus groups) could only provide tentative indications about many of the above issues regarding gender.

In summary the following observations can be made about possible ways forward for a more gender equitable approach to learning active citizenship:

- Formal education needs to engender a critical dimension, enabling people to challenge and question normative assumptions about who are active citizens, and how they learned to be so. Higher education, for instance, can be a way of empowering people to think differently about what they may have learned elsewhere.

- Solidarity as a dimension of action and participation can strengthen marginalised individuals to challenge issues of discrimination.

- There are many societal structures and norms which mask the complexity not only of the definition of citizenship, but also of how it prevents social groups from being recognised as active citizens and having a voice in governance and policy making. Addressing those structures requires an openness to change and questioning of people’s own legitimised worldviews and belief systems.
Active citizens are those who are ‘willing, able and equipped to have an influence in public life’, and have ‘the critical capacities to weigh evidence before speaking and acting’ (Crick 2000, pp. 2-3). Research on active citizenship demonstrates a close connection between being an active citizen and a high level of education. Moreover, apart from formal education, citizenship requires lifelong learning of skills either in the political domain or in other domains such as work (Verba et al. 1995). Active citizenship is therefore a contradictory concept. It fits easily with the competencies of a new ‘creative class’ in society (Florida 2002) which uses governance options to influence policy, but at the same time excludes the new majority of citizens for whom these challenges are ‘over their heads’.
4.2 Further Research

We have identified a number of areas where the need for further research is apparent.

(a) New Governance Practices

A key contextual feature of our research, and central to its rationale, was the new trend toward ‘governance’. We investigated this at the level of its interactions with active citizens, but we noticed a need to describe and map governance practices at the institutional level. What is the nature of the new emerging networks in which governments, agencies, business and community organisations, and social movements interact? In what new ways are community organisations having to connect with government, professional and corporate ‘partners’? How can we describe these partnerships, and what are their internal dynamics? At several points in our research we have sensed that the distribution of power within such networks may have an impact on the nature of the citizenship skills and attitudes which those engaged in the networks learn. (An example is the question of temporary or project-specific funding regimes.) This is an issue which requires further, in-depth, investigation, through detailed studies of the internal dynamics of governance networks and their interaction with learners.

(b) History and Political Economy of Learning Contexts

We have suggested, following Lave and Wenger (1991), that the contexts in which people learn citizenship have their own histories and political economies, and that these will have a strong impact on the nature of individual citizens’ learning. We have explored the histories of individuals’ learning, and we have seen – from an individual perspective – some of the ways in which context shapes learning of citizenship. What is required, however, is in-depth investigation of the nature of learning environments from a collective or organisational perspective. This might involve comparative ethnographic studies of the institutional environments of citizenship learning, within different domains, how they evolve, and how they shape, and are shaped by, the citizens who participate in them. For example, we can see a need for investigation – as citizenship learning environments – of specific corporations, workplaces, social movements, voluntary organisations, and so forth. There is also a need for deeper understanding of the impact of national histories and cultures on citizenship learning.

(c) Comparative Role of Different Factors in Citizenship Learning

Through life history research, we have been able to indicate a number of critical factors in citizenship learning. These include the role of family, school education, work and skills of various kinds, and transitions during the life course in patterns of responsibility and identity. Our research has, however, been qualitative in nature. We have not been able to expose – other than in an indicative way – the relative significance of the various factors, nor have we been able to measure how the importance of the various factors varies across cultures and national boundaries. We suggest that a more quantitatively based investigation, based on larger data sets, and involving the construction and comparison of causal models, would be helpful to this end. The work of Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995), and of Putnam (2000),
in the USA, though directed to somewhat different ends, and drawing on rather different theoretical traditions, is impressive, and illustrates the value of such approaches.

(d) Evaluation of Technologies of Citizenship Learning

In our investigation of the effectiveness of educational interventions for citizenship and governance learning, we were able to provide illuminating examples of ‘good practice’. However, neither the literature nor our focus groups delivered much by way of systematic evaluation of their effectiveness. Despite many decades of recurrent initiatives in education for citizenship, and in related areas such as community development, we have noted that practitioners continue to be uncertain about the relative appropriateness and effectiveness of various intervention techniques. If planners are to be able to fine-tune their support for citizenship and governance learning, there is an urgent need for evaluation of the different technologies of citizenship learning. This should take into account the range of potential locations for such learning, and a range of distinct intervention methodologies. It should seek to employ rigorous evaluation methods across the various domains, and is likely to involve networks of researchers and practitioners.

(e) Informal Learning

A central message of the ETGACE project has been the importance of informal learning – or, to use the stricter term we have preferred in this report, informal education – for citizenship. However, it is truisms that institutional arrangements for supporting informal learning are poorly developed, and we would add that they are poorly understood. If policy-makers are to intervene effectively to encourage informal learning, they need to be able to deploy techniques which are not limited to the repertoire of strategies associated with formal and non-formal education. There is apparent good practice to adopt, but research needs not only to explore the effectiveness of techniques, but also experiment with the development of new techniques, or with the extension of techniques which have provenance in one area into new areas. For example, in the workplace arrangements for counselling and mentoring employees are now quite widespread; less so in the political domain, or civil society. Such experiments should be reported and evaluated.

(f) Responsibility and Identity in the Formation of Active Citizens

We have sought to separate out three dimensions of learning in relation to active citizenship: effectivity or effectiveness, responsibility and identity. It became clear to us that while active citizenship requires the first, it comes equally to naught in the absence of the others. Citizenship is irredeemably about the ethical nature of our relations with others. We can speak of transferable skills in relation to effectiveness, and research in other areas can therefore be helpful – many work-related skills are relevant, for instance. Knowledge of citizenship learning in relation to responsibility or identity is much more hazy. We have suggested that these might usefully be reconfigured in terms of challenge and connection, but in doing so we are pointing to the importance of further research in this area.
4.3 Policy Implications

4.3.1 General Observations

We have pointed to two overlapping but theoretically distinct approaches to understanding ‘citizenship’: as derived from a person’s relationship to the state; and as a description or expression of people’s activity in their wider communities. Active citizenship, we have argued, refers chiefly to the latter. It emphasises the active, creative, dimensions of citizenship. However, we have also argued that active citizenship is irredeemably about expressing citizens’ responsibility to others: it is more than mere activity – it has an essentially ethical character.

Active citizenship may be manifested in participation in formal political activity in democratic institutions – political parties, elected bodies, and so forth. However, there are many other ways in which people engage in active citizenship in their communities. Examining activity across four domains – in politics as traditionally conceived, at work, in civil society, and in the private domain – we have pointed to the wide range of contexts in which people are active citizens.

Though we argue that the distinction between two approaches to citizenship (see above) is important – not least because it implies that citizenship has an existence beyond what is legally or officially sanctioned, and is constantly being reshaped by citizens themselves – they are overlapping categories. Many of the practices which we describe as active citizenship are also likely to be officially described and sanctioned as legitimate forms of citizenship, and relate to the rights and responsibilities prescribed for citizens of the state.

We have shown that active citizenship is learned, through a variety of processes and in a range of contexts, and that informal processes, rather than formal or non-formal education, are of pre-eminent importance. In other words, forms of active citizenship – whether of officially-encouraged forms or otherwise – are not principally developed in ways which can be closely prescribed or planned. Learning takes place organically, largely in settings which exist willy-nilly. Some of the settings are, of course, the product of state action, or otherwise officially sanctioned; some are independently created by citizens themselves, or by institutions or organisations relatively independent of the state. Some are both.

The research has also demonstrated that citizenship learning spreads: what people learn in one setting, or through one type of activity, is often transferable in some way to other settings. The importance of this is that people’s learning in settings created autonomously by active citizens (that is, not directly sanctioned by the state as part of a citizen’s rights and duties) is also important in relation to their learning of formally-endorsed forms of citizenship. But we insist that learning of active citizenship is not simply a matter of transferable skills or competencies: it is also, and indeed more importantly, a matter of learning responsibility and identity. These are transferable, but not in an ethically neutral way. In other words, active citizens’ learning constrains and shapes not only the technical skills they can deploy, but also such questions as what they think are important issues to be tackled, how this should be done, and the people to whom they relate – as allies or adversaries – in doing so.
The emergence in recent years of new attempts by states to make their activities more legitimate and responsive to citizens’ needs and demands, particularly through introducing new forms of ‘governance’, is particularly salient here. The forms of participation encouraged by these forms of governance are intended to ‘fit’ more closely with patterns of activity which are, so to say, native to today’s citizens. To the extent they do so, we believe citizens will be able to transfer their learning more readily into the practices involved with these new forms of governance. (The converse view is also possible: that new forms of governance will channel citizenship activity and learning – an argument implicit in Rose (1999a, 1999b).)

The clear implication of this is that national and local governments, and the European Union, should create vehicles for citizens’ participation which recognise and value the concerns and practices of active citizens. To the extent they do so, they are likely to lead to wider and more sustained popular participation. If they fail to do so, active citizens’ learning will be discounted, and their alienation from state-sponsored forms of governance is likely to grow.

4.3.2 State Domain

(a) Formal Education

Knowledge and Skills. We found that, in some countries, there are courses in formal education which attempt to transfer knowledge about the political domain. We believe this is probably worth doing, but we found no evidence that it has a significant impact. We recommend, with respect to active citizenship skills, that European governments and educational institutions should examine experience in the USA of service learning in both high schools and higher education, and of courses in citizenship (cf, e.g., Kenny 2002).

Many higher education students in Europe are involved in international exchange programmes. We found evidence that such programmes had been influential. We recommend to the European Union and to national governments that much more could be undertaken in this area, including extending the practice learning element in European exchange programmes (such as Socrates, Erasmus, Lingua).

Attitudes and Values. We found that, within formal education, extra-curricular activities and opportunities to participate in school decision-making are important in developing attitudes of active citizenship. This parallels findings in the USA, that a child’s involvement in school government, and in school clubs and extra-curricular activities, are much stronger predictors of civic participation and political activity in later life than how far the school encouraged political debate or permitted complaints (Verba et al. 1995, pp. 422-426). (But ‘athletic participation [at school] is negatively related to subsequent political involvement’ (Verba, Schlozman & Brady 1995, p. 426.) Extra-curricular participation adds to knowledge, but we suggest it is the learning of attitudes and values which make it especially important. We recommend that educational institutions within the formal sector, particularly schools, should be encouraged, and adequately resourced, to strengthen their range of extra-curricular activities. We also recommend that the legal framework within which educational institutions operate should provide opportunities for students to partake meaningfully in their governance.
We found evidence in the literature, reported in an earlier report (ETGACE 2000, esp. p. 204), that there has been a shift in secondary education toward active learning or ‘creative’ methods – group work, individual assignments, and so forth. This seems to sit well with the conclusions from our focus groups (ETGACE 2001b, p. 212) that adult education generally stimulates active learning. This tendency seems a positive one. We recommend that consideration be given to strengthening the active learning element in school, and higher education, curricula.

(b) Non-formal Education

Knowledge and Skills. We found evidence that the provision of public information by the European Union is often not very effective (e.g., in Finland, Slovenia and the Netherlands), and that it is sometimes even mistrusted (e.g., in Slovenia, where there is a long tradition of state manipulation of information). We recommend that the EU, and its member states, particularly those in the former Soviet bloc, should review their approaches to public information. We also recommend that the EU should collaborate more closely with NGOs to make better use of active learning methods in its information strategies. We are aware of good practice in health education and Netherlands agricultural extension. (Röling, Kuiper & Janmaat 1994; see also ETGACE 2000, ch. 5)

Attitudes and Values. We found that traditional fora for public debate, linked to traditional parties and institutions with an ideological background, are losing legitimacy and effectiveness. There is a need for new, more open, formats for public debate organised by independent institutions. We recommend further experimentation with new and innovative methods of open political debate. One example is experimentation in the use of the internet for public debate.

(c) Informal Education

Knowledge and Skills. We found that, in the political domain, active citizens must commit themselves to long political careers, typically starting in small committees, and moving slowly to elected positions at local, and perhaps national, level. They must develop sophisticated knowledge and skills in order to succeed. We recommend consideration be given to introducing mentorship schemes for talented people at all levels within political parties and related groups. However, we acknowledge that there may be serious issues and tensions relating to patronage, and regard must be given both to these and to issues of equity and social exclusion.

Attitudes and Values. We found that political parties can seem to have a highly competitive culture. Several of our active citizens, having to be active in political parties, shied away because of this. We recommend that parties should consider how they can strengthen their internal cultures to motivate, stimulate and support new and inexperienced members, and for members who relocate from one locality to another. The growing literature on motivating volunteers, and the organisation of voluntary organisation, is instructive (e.g., Ellis 1996; Elsdon, Reynolds & Stewart 1995; Fischer & Cole 1993). The experience of mentorship schemes in others sectors may be helpful.
4.3.3 Work Domain

(a) Formal Education

Knowledge and Skills. We found that formal education was very often the key to a career as an active citizen. This worked through three main mechanisms. Highly-educated parents tend to provide a strong political and civic socialisation for their children. Good education provides better opportunities in the labour market; higher level jobs provide a resource base (financial and time) which permits active citizenship outside the workplace. Those who hold high-level jobs also tend to develop transferable skills relevant to active citizenship. This finding parallels that of Verba et al. (1995, ch. 15). We believe that strong formal educational systems are important contributors to active citizenship. The work domain therefore functions as a key mechanism reinforcing the impact of schooling. We recommend that governments should continue to strengthen formal education systems, and work to the elimination of inequalities in educational opportunity.

Attitudes and Values. We should have expected that schools would now be offering stronger preparation for the labour market, developing entrepreneurial attitudes, and so forth. We did not find evidence for this. In the life histories of active citizens, some active citizens trained members of disadvantaged groups to develop these attitudes. We are aware of attempts within formal education to develop employment-related attitudes and values in higher education, including competencies typically developed through extra-curricular activities (cf Dunne, Bennett & Carré 2000). As part of a balanced curriculum, we would encourage such further developments along these lines.

(b) Non-formal Education

Knowledge and Skills. Many of our interviewees reported relevant work-related training opportunities, such as trade union and management education. These provided a range of negotiation, computing and related skills, knowledge of financial procedures, and so forth. We see this as a positive development. We recommend that enhanced support should be available to support such training opportunities. We would encourage governments and employers to provide adequate funds and time for citizenship-related workplace education, and we would encourage governments and employers to strengthen provision of work- and non-work-related paid educational leave.

Attitudes and Values. In the literature, we found many references to learning in relation to ‘spirituality’ (yoga, ‘neuro-linguistic programming’ (NLP), etc.); in our empirical research, however – to our surprise – we found no such examples. Does this imply that ‘active citizens’ differ in significant ways from those people interested in ‘spirituality’? Dutch research suggests that some citizens care about society, but these are different from those who focus on either their family or their personal advancement (Hortulanus, Liem & Sprinkhuizen 1993, pp. 90-92, 210-212).

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1 This may be because our sample was based on two cohorts. We planned to have no respondents under the age of 25, and even within the younger cohort the interviewees were spread widely across the 25-40 year-old range.
(c) **Informal Education**

**Knowledge and Skills.** We have found that trade union and similar activity contributes to the development of knowledge and skills related to active citizenship. Unions provide not only the motive to learn, but also mechanisms (union newspapers, handbooks, etc.) which support informal learning. We expected to find evidence that changing structures at the workplace – requiring greater autonomy and responsibility – had led people to develop citizenship-related knowledge and skills. However, there were rather few cases of this in our sample. We suggest, therefore, that everyday learning may be stronger in settings where there are informal structures and motivations to support learning (trade unions, workers’ councils, and perhaps some teams). Although this would be a less optimistic view than taken in some of the business-oriented literature (e.g., Senge 1990, Wenger, McDermott & Snyder 2002), there is support for it in the literature on union education (Schuller & Roberston 1983). We recommend, therefore, that support be given to strengthening the organisation of trade unions and related institutions within the workplace, and to educational support related to this.

**Attitudes and Values.** We also found strong evidence that trade union activity supports learning of attitudes and values related to active citizenship. We also found some evidence that managerial approaches which embrace or foster a ‘learning organisation’ have the effect of developing community and creative attitudes. It is possible, of course, to view such developments as a new form of oppression or control – rather than genuine empowerment (cf Rose 1999a, esp. ch. 4; 1999b, esp. ch. 10). However, we believe that a bigger problem may lie not in the articulation of forms of responsible autonomy as technologies of control, but in the exclusion of people from this. Many of our interviewees did not find work a domain in which they had developed attitudes or values related to citizenship, and we believe this constitutes a real danger of exclusion. We have noticed, in relation to this, the finding that between 1986 and 1997 there was no increase in the ‘autonomy enjoyed by the average British worker’ – if anything they were ‘more constrained’ – and that ‘the much-heralded post-Fordist worker, with supposedly greater flexibility in the workplace, does not appear to be exercising any greater autonomy through that flexibility’ (Ashton, Felsted & Green 2000, p. 208). We recommend, therefore, that support be given to strengthening the organisation of trade unions and related institutions within the workplace.

4.3.4 **Civil Society Domain**

(a) **Formal Education**

**Knowledge and Skills.** We found that formal education is strongly associated with knowledge and skills in the civil society domain, but probably less than in the political and work domains. Civil society activities provide opportunities for people with poorer educational attainment to begin to build an active citizenship ‘career’. We found, for example, several examples of active citizens for whom breaking into civil society activity became a route back into formal education. This was especially, but not only, true for women.

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1 In our data, interviewees in the political domain tended to be highly educated; those in the civil society domain rather less well. This may, of course, be accident of the sample.
People who were able to advance to higher education through civil society activities seemed to possess exceptional energy. Higher education opportunities were often closed, in practice if not in theory, to citizens who wished to study further in later life. For instance, student loans in the Netherlands are closed to students over 30 years of age. We recommend that education systems should provide much enhanced frameworks for progression into higher education for less well-educated men and women in mid-career. This could include, inter alia, universities’ strengthening their links with civil society organisations.

**Attitudes and Values.** Despite a good deal of literature, we did not find strong evidence in our research that formal education plays a large role in developing attitudes and values relating to active citizenship in civil society. We suggest that the applicability of the US experience of ‘service learning’ should be critically examined (cf §4.3.2(a) above).

(b) **Non-formal Education**

**Knowledge and Skills.** We found evidence of demand for skills training in the civil society domain, and some evidence of systems for this. Several youth work organisations (e.g., 4H, scouting) provided training in leadership. In the health and ageing-related sectors, where volunteers were quite widespread, training often seemed to be good. We also had reports of training for volunteers on various other programmes and projects. However, even in best cases, provision of training for volunteers in the civil society domain was nothing like as strong as we found in the work domain. Financial constraints may be a significant factor in this. We recommend that non-formal education in the civil society domain should be adequately resourced.

**Attitudes and Values.** We found that discussion groups and study circles are important in generating values of co-operation and mobilisation. We found examples in women’s, environmental, and third world movements. But our evidence for this comes more from discussion with educators and organisers of these groups than through individuals’ life stories. We recommend that non-formal education in the civil society domain should be adequately resourced, and should establish facilitative and supportive links with civil society organisations, while respecting the autonomy of the organisations themselves.

(c) **Informal Education**

**Knowledge and Skills.** We found, outside established civil society organisations, examples of active citizens who were successful in initiating and developing new organisations, with little support. In the process, they developed skills and knowledge which they were able to use to help other people, such as through teaching or advising other volunteers. We recommend that funding should be available to support the early development of civil society organisations, and that mechanisms should be strengthened to enable sharing of good practice between volunteers and other civil society experts.

There was some evidence that information technology can be used effectively to support informal learning in the civil society sector.

**Attitudes and Values.** We found the early development of civic attitudes, for example through early education and the church, is very significant. Financial support for the church, where this is constitutionally acceptable, can play an important part in strengthening civil society.
5. DISSEMINATION

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of the ETGACE project was principally a scientific one, designed to contribute to knowledge about learning of active citizenship and governance. However, it was appreciated from the outset that this would be most effectively undertaken if the project were embedded in the activities and professional practice of citizenship educators and active citizens. To this end, the project dissemination strategy had two overlapping dimensions:

- first, to ensure that the research itself was linked as closely as feasible to practice, in its design and conduct; and

- second, to ensure that its outcomes and findings were made available – in as user-friendly a form as possible – to educators and related professionals, as well as to scholars.

5.2 Relevance to Users

In the first three months of the project, all partners undertook a preliminary ‘audit’ of existing networks relating to citizenship and governance education in their country. This spanned the three domains (work, state, civil society). It performed several functions: it alerted a range of citizenship educators in each country to the existence of the ETGACE project; it provided ‘intelligence’ which played a part in the identification and selection of Advisory Panel members; it set the context for identifying interviewees for the life history research; and it enabled teams to develop links with educators who might take part later in the focus group research. Teams periodically updated the information they had obtained about networks throughout the project.

In the same period, Advisory Panels were formed in each country. These were composed along the lines set out in Table 3.1 above. As anticipated, membership varied slightly with national conditions and individual expertise. A broadly equal gender balance was achieved in all countries; certain other features of importance were also taken into account (e.g., in Spain, a gypsy woman was included). Except in Slovenia, the advisory panels met on at least five occasions in each country.1

Panels members in all countries were largely experts, with busy agendas, and some difficulty was experienced with attendance. (In Belgium a somewhat different approach was taken: the panel comprised 28 members in all, spread across the specified categories; an average attendance of ten was achieved in each meeting.)

1 The number of meetings held were: Finland (7), the Netherlands (6), Spain, Belgium and the UK (5 each), Slovenia (4).
5.3 Dissemination Outputs

The project outputs were of two kinds: those of a ‘scientific’ nature, and more practice-related outputs directed toward professional and citizenship educator communities. These categories did, of course, to some extent overlap.

5.3.1 Scientific Outputs

(a) Reports to European Commission

The scientific findings of the project were reported formally to the European Commission (DG Research) in four major reports (in addition to the present one):


The ten chapters of this report covered the literature on citizenship, governance and citizenship education and learning in each of the UK, Finland, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain and Belgium. There were also chapters on ‘European level’ literature (chiefly the EU itself), and on a gender perspective on the literature, together with an introduction and conclusion.


This provided report and analysis of evidence of the biographical research. There are chapters on each of the UK, Finland, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain and Belgium, together with an introduction and conclusion. Chapters follow a consistent format: context, why people become active citizens, how they shape active citizenship, where and how they learn, the role of gender and comparison of generations are covered. Brief profiles of all interviewees in each country are given. An executive summary is also provided.


This provided report and analysis, on a country basis, of the focus group research. There are chapters on each of the UK, Finland, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain and Belgium, together with an introduction and conclusion. The six country-based chapters follow a consistent format: prime modes of intention, new approaches, gender, and socio-economic and political trends. There is an executive summary.


This provided the text of a book, to be submitted for publication, of contributions based on the empirical research. After an Introduction, the chapters covered: Citizenship, Civil Society and Lifelong Learning; What is Activity in Active Citizenship?; Diversity of Active Citizens and their Biographies; Challenge, Capacity and Connection; Discourses of Activism;

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1 As it was anticipated this would be submitted for publication, it was requested that this report be treated as confidential by the Commission; this was agreed.
Contexts of Learning Active Citizenship; Facilitating Governance and Active Citizenship; Social Challenge of Learning Active Citizenship and the Reconstruction of Governance.

(b) Scientific Workshops and Conferences

One conference and three scientific workshops were planned and held, as follows.

- Workshop: Participatory Research & Active Citizenship: Challenges for Europe (Slovene Institute for Adult Education, Ljubljana, Slovenia: 7-8 July 2002). Speakers included: John Holford (University of Surrey), Danny Wildemeersch & Veerle Stroobants (Leuven), Ruud van der Veen & Nicoleta Chioncel (Nijmegen).

See §7.4 below for further details of these events

(c) Other Scientific Outputs

In addition, members of the project team have written and/or presented a range of papers and similar outputs. These have been submitted to, and published in, range of academic and professional journals and books, and at scientific conferences.

5.3.2 Practice-related Outputs

(a) Website

A website was established at an early stage of the project (month 3). Although initially quite rudimentary, it was enhanced progressively as the project advanced, with a range of reports, presentations and other publications and materials being available. By the later stages of the project the website also incorporated links to each of the participating project partners, and through them to a range of links within each country.

The website is at: http://www.surrey.ac.uk/Education/ETGACE/.

(b) Guides and Materials

The project issued several items designed to make the findings of the project available in a user-friendly way to citizenship educators and policy-makers and citizenship. These were:

The chief aim of this publication was ‘to support professionals and policy-makers in various branches of citizenship learning to reflect on – and improve – their practice in the field’ (p. ii). Making extensive use of life history evidence, this comprised an introduction, five chapters, and other material. The chapters covered: What is Active Citizenship?; Who are Active Citizens?; What forms of Active Citizenship are Inclusive and Democratic?; How do People Learn Active Citizenship?; What Styles of Intervention are There?


This ‘brief guide to findings’ was issued in a number of formats. Apart from material explaining the project in general, including contact information, the text was identical to the Executive Summary included in the Life History report (ETGACE 2001a, pp. ii-iv).


This ‘brief guide to findings’ was issued in a number of formats. Apart from material explaining the project in general, including contact information, the text was identical to the Executive Summary included in the Focus Group report (ETGACE 2001b, pp. 3-5).


This on-line learning package, available on the ETGACE website, explores issues and perspectives about active citizenship and governance at local, national, European, and global levels. The aim is to provide a framework to help citizenship educators reflect on their practice, and to introduce them to ETGACE perspectives. It is designed for citizenship educators (e.g., community developers, community workers, community leaders, tutors in adult and further education institutions, youth workers, trade union tutors, and activists concerned with issues such as the environment, gender, etc.); some aspects are of value to schoolteachers.

There are five themes: What is Active Citizenship and Governance?; Who is an Active Citizen?; What forms of Active Citizenship are recognised/not recognised?; How do people learn Active Citizenship and Governance?; How can we Facilitate Learning Active Citizenship and Governance? Each theme is explored using excerpts from ETGACE life history interviews and/or good practice from ETGACE focus groups. For each theme there are activities, overview commentaries, suggestions for further reading and a discussion forum.

(c) Workshops for Citizenship Educators

The project proposal envisaged a series of workshops (one in each country) for citizenship educators, to be held between months 24 and 28. These were held as planned. Participants included educators, national and local policy-makers, social movement educators and citizenship activists, trade union and political party trainers, management consultants. The organisation and precise arrangements for the workshops were handled by the national project teams, and varied from country to country, but included discussion of project findings, and mechanisms to ensure ETGACE learning resources were available to students.
6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & REFERENCES

6.1 References


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6.2 Acknowledgements

6.2.1 Project Team
The ETGACE project team comprised the following:

(a) School of Educational Studies, University of Surrey, United Kingdom
Palitha Edirisingha, Penny Everson, John Holford (Co-ordinator), Peter Jarvis, Stephen McNair, Linda Merricks, Julia Preece, Marjolein Senden.

(b) Department of Education, University of Helsinki, Finland

(c) Department of Social Pedagogy, Catholic University, Nijmegen, the Netherlands
Floor Basten, Nicoleta Chioncel, Ivo Hartman, Theo Jansen, Susan Maas, Ruud Van der Veen (Co-ordinator), Joël van Raak, Marjolein Senden.

(d) Slovene Institute of Adult Education, Ljubljana, Slovenia
Angelca Ivancic, Janez Justin, Darka Podmenik, Darijan Novak, Vida Mohorcic Spolar (Co-ordinator), Urban Vehovar, Metka Zargi, Barica Marentic Pozarnik.

(e) Centre for Social & Educational Research, University of Barcelona, Spain
Ana Ayuste, Ramón Flecha (Co-ordinator), Jesus Gomez, Esther Oliver, Lídia Puigvert, Montse Sanchez, Albino Santos, Marta Soler Gallart, Marie-Angeles Cabeza, Rosa Valls.

(f) Unit of Social Pedagogy, Catholic University, Leuven, Belgium
Rebekka Celis, Carmen Mathijssen, Anne Snick, Veerle Stroobants, Danny Wildemeersch (Co-ordinator).

6.2.2 General
The project team would like to thank:

- the members of the Advisory Panels in each country, who made an invaluable contribution to our work;
- all our interviewees, for so willingly agreeing to be ‘subjects of science’;
- the members of our expert groups;
- participants in ETGACE workshops and conferences, for offering their views and critiques.

John Holford, Project Director, wishes to thank all the colleagues who contributed as members of the national project teams (see §6.2.1 above). Their commitment to the project has often gone well beyond the call of duty.
7. ANNEXES

7.1 List of Publications, Presentations & Other Output

7.1.1 University of Surrey

(a) Publications


(b) Conference Presentations


(c) Other Output

Preece, J. (2001) Seminar presentation on the ETGACE project and its outcomes to date, with a focus on the gender dimension. University of Botswana, Department of Adult Education.
Preece, J. (2002) Research proposal accepted in University of Botswana for a Botswana dimension to Citizenship research, based partly on outcomes from the ETGACE project.

(d) Forthcoming


Preece, J & Mosweunyane, D. ‘The meaning of active citizenship in a colonised country whose first language is Setswana’ at conference ‘Speaking in Tongues: languages of lifelong learning’, SCUTREA (Standing Conference on University Teaching and Research in the Education of Adults).

7.1.2 University of Helsinki

(a) Publications


(b) Conference Presentations
Laitinen, M. and Nurmi, K.E. (2002) ‘Active Citizenship and Implications for Education and Policy Development’ was given together with Professor Paul Ilsley (University of Northern Illinois, USA) at the Kasvatustieteen paivat (annual meeting of the Finnish Association of Educational Research) Conference, November, Rovaniemi.


(c) Other outputs
The Finnish Advisory Panel established a website to encourage further discussion. The address is www.metodix.com/alku.htm.

A summer school was held at the University of Lapland, July 2000, at which the ETGACE project and its methods were introduced.

Nurmi, K.E. & Laitinen, M. gave a presentation in December 2001 introducing the project and its results so far in ‘Finland (MIF)’.  

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Nurmi, K.E. has given lectures related to ETGACE on many occasions such as: ‘VSOP- ohjelma (education and development programme for free or liberal education in Finland); ‘lecture series’ of Kemin tyovaenopisto (adult education centre, Kemi).

A National Seminar ‘Aktiivinen kansalaisuus ja hyva hallinto’ (Active citizenship and good governance) was held, January 2003, in Helsinki.

(d) Forthcoming


7.1.3 University of Nijmegen

(a) Publications


(b) Other outputs

The ETGACE research project was presented at the Politeia conference on ‘Citizenship participation in Europe’ which was held in the Netherlands in November 2000.

University of Nijmegen led the development of, and successfully submitted, a EU FP5 funded accompanying measure to the ETGACE project ‘Reviewing Education and Training for Governance and Active Citizenship in Europe – A central and Eastern European Perspective’ (RE-ETGACE). This project is now in progress, with partners from Slovenia, Hungary and Romania.

(c) Forthcoming Events

A conference for the RE-ETGACE project will be held in November 2003.
7.1.4 Slovene Institute of Adult Education

(a) Publications


(b) Conference Presentations


(c) Other output

Ivancic, A. & Mohorcic Spolar, V. (May 2001) introduced the project and some of its findings to national co-ordinators of the project EBIS (Erwachsenenbildung in Suedosten Europa – Adult Education in South Eastern Europe) sponsored by the Institute fuer Internazionale Zusammenarbeit des Deutchen Volkshochschul – Verbandes e. V.

Mohorcic Spolar, V. (2002) Presentation of the project to EAEA (European Association for the Education of Adults) General Assembly, Sofia, Bulgaria, November 9th.

(d) Forthcoming


Mohorcic Spolar, V. ‘Activity and Active Citizenship’ to be published in Japanese Adult and Continuing Education Journal.

7.1.5 University of Barcelona

(a) Publications


adultes, 26 September. AEPA (Asociación para la Educación de Personas Adultas. Barcelona).


(b) Conference Presentations


‘Voices, dialogue and citizenship’. As published in the ETGACE web site.

7.1.6 Catholic University, Leuven

(a) Publications


(b) Conference Presentation


(c) Other Outputs
Stroobants, V. (2002) participated in a discussion meeting of the research centre Kind en Samenleving, introducing the ETGACE project’s work on learning for active citizenship in relation to children’s learning processes (January).


(d) Forthcoming Events


Wildemeersch, D. & Stroobants, V. are organising a Conference ‘Connection: Active Citizenship and Multiple Identities’, to be held in Leuven in September 2003.
### 7.3 List of Agreed Deliverables

All agreed deliverables were completed to the agreed schedule, as specified in Table 7.1 below.

#### Table 7.1 Agreed Deliverables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Deliverable Title/Description</th>
<th>Public or Restricted</th>
<th>Month due</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Design and installation of project Website</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Report: Citizenship &amp; Governance Education in Europe: A critical review of the literature</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Progress Report (six-monthly)</td>
<td>Restricted</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Annual Progress Report &amp; Cost Statements</td>
<td>Restricted</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Workshop: Learning Citizenship &amp; Governance</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Progress Report (six-monthly)</td>
<td>Restricted</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Completed</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Workshop: Educational Intervention Strategies for Active Citizenship &amp; Governance</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Scientific Monograph: Learning Active Citizenship &amp; Governance in Europe</td>
<td>Restricted</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Upgraded On-line Project Resource Website with national links</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Self-Access Learning Package: Active Citizenship &amp; Governance</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Six country Workshops for Citizenship Educators</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Workshop: Active Citizenship &amp; Governance Education: Participative Research &amp; Dialogue as Scientific Method</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Final Report</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### 7.5 Programmes of ETGACE Conferences & Workshops

#### 7.5.1 Workshop: ‘Learning Active Citizenship & Governance’
**Held at University of Westminster, London, December 13th 2001**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0930-0945</td>
<td>Arrival, Welcome, Introduction and Plans for the Day</td>
<td>John Holford, University of Surrey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0945-1015</td>
<td>Learning Active Citizenship and Governance in Europe: Presentation of research findings</td>
<td>Danny Wildemeersch, University of Leuven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1015-1030</td>
<td>Questions and discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1030-1045</td>
<td>Coffee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1045-1145</td>
<td>Cases from the ETGACE research:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transitional Changes in Slovenia &amp; Learning Active Citizenship &amp; Governance</td>
<td>Vida Mohorcic Spolar, Slovene Institute for Adult Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Context and the Egalitarian Dialogue in Active Citizenship Learning</td>
<td>Lidia Puigvert, CREA, University of Barcelona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A Gender perspective on Learning Active Citizenship &amp; Governance</td>
<td>Julia Preece, University of Surrey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1145-1230</td>
<td>Review and discussion</td>
<td>Chair: Linda Merricks, University of Surrey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1230-1400</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 7.5.2 Workshop: ‘Adult Educational Interventions for Active Citizenship & Governance’
**Held at University of Westminster, London, December 13th 2001**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1400-1430</td>
<td>Strategies for Developing Active Citizenship: Education and Governance</td>
<td>Ruud van der Veen, University of Nijmegen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1430-1445</td>
<td>Questions and discussion</td>
<td>Chair: Linda Merricks, University of Surrey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1445-1545</td>
<td>Presentations from research teams:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bottom up processes uncovered</td>
<td>Veerle Stroobants &amp; Carmen Mathijssen, University of Leuven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>From Training towards Facilitation</td>
<td>Joel van Raak, University of Nijmegen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cybercitizenship for the real world</td>
<td>Kari Nurmi &amp; Matti Laitinen, University of Helsinki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1545-1600</td>
<td>Tea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600-1630</td>
<td>Keynote Presentation: Reflections on Citizenship</td>
<td>Gerard Delanty, University of Liverpool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1630-1650</td>
<td>Questions and discussion</td>
<td>Chair: John Holford, University of Surrey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1650-1700</td>
<td>Chair’s Concluding Remarks and Departure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Conference: ‘Active Citizens – Active Learning’

Held at Amazone Centre, Brussels, March 15th-16th 2002

## Day 1: March 15, 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Speaker/Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13.00-13.30</td>
<td>Arrival, buffet lunch available</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.30-13.45</td>
<td>Welcome and introduction</td>
<td>Danny Wildemeersch, University of Leuven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.45-14.45</td>
<td>Keynote Speech: Lifelong Learning and Active Citizenship</td>
<td>Peter Jarvis, University of Surrey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.45-15.15</td>
<td>Tea/coffee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.15-16.45</td>
<td>An introduction to the ETGACE project and its findings:</td>
<td>John Holford, University of Surrey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Active Citizenship</td>
<td>Vida Mohoric Spolar, Slovenian Institute for Adult Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Context, Capacity, Connection, Challenge</td>
<td>Veerle Stroobants, University of Leuven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The Diversity of Active Citizens &amp; their biographies</td>
<td>Kari Nurmi, Matti Laitinen, University of Helsinki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Citizenship &amp; Discourses of Activism</td>
<td>Floor Basten, University of Nijmegen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Learning from Transition and Continuity</td>
<td>Lidia Puigvert, University of Barcelona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.45-17.00</td>
<td>Short break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.00-18.00</td>
<td>Discussion with ETGACE forum Members of ETGACE team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.00-18.15</td>
<td>Closing by Conference Chairperson</td>
<td>Danny Wildemeersch, University of Leuven</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Day 2: March 16, 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Speaker/Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09.30-09.40</td>
<td>Introduction and Plans for the Day</td>
<td>Danny Wildemeersch, University of Leuven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09.45-11.15</td>
<td>Parallel papers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>A1: Young People &amp; Citizenship:</strong></td>
<td><strong>B1: Biography &amp; Citizenship Learning:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education for Citizenship by Participation in NGOs</td>
<td>From Life Strategies to Citizenship: a relational approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frane Adam, University of Ljubljana</td>
<td>Prue Chamberlayne, Open University, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human Values – the Hallmark of an Active Citizen</td>
<td>Education &amp; Civic Participation in the UK: Results from Biographical Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Challenge of Education for Active Citizenship</td>
<td>Citizenship in Transition Life Histories in a Changing Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Potter, previously Director, CSV Education (UK):</td>
<td>Darka Podmenik &amp; Darjani Novak, Slovenian Institute for Adult Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.15-11.35</td>
<td>Tea/Coffee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Session</td>
<td>Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 11.35-12.40  | Parallel papers          | A2: Young People & Citizenship: Citizenship & Childhood in late modernity; complementary or incoherent concepts  
Marek Jans: Research & Development Centre 'Childhood and Society', Belgium  
B2: Active Citizenship & Lifelong Learning: Active Citizenship, Service Learning and Lifelong Learning  
John Annette: University of Middlesex (UK)  
Investing in Children: creating opportunities for the political participation of children and young people  
Liam Cairns: Durham County Council, Durham & Darlington Health Authority (UK) |
| 12.40-13.10  | Description of the Competencies Related to Active Citizenship | Marianne Horsdal, University of Southern Denmark |
| 13.10-14.10  | Lunch (provided)         |                                                                          |
| 14.10-15.40  | Parallel papers          | A3: Active Citizenship & Exclusion: Accrediting Active Citizenship  
Helen Papworth: North Wales Open College Network (UK)  
Active Citizenship in Health Care; Managing a Multiplicity of Needs  
Fiona Brooks, University of Luton (UK); Helen Lomax, Celia Davis, Open University (UK);  
Psycho-social Dimensions of Active Welfare Citizenship and the Recovery of Narrative  
Lynn Froggett, University of Central Lancashire (UK)  
B3: Active Citizenship & Participation: Women and Active Citizenship in Central East European (CEE) countries  
Milica Antic: University of Ljubljana (Slovenia)  
Active Citizenship in CEE Countries: the Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion  
Vlasta Jalusic: Peace Institute – Institute for Contemporary Social & Political Studies, Ljubljana, Slovenia  
Learning to Participate in Neighbourhood Services  
Carmen Mathijsen, University of Leuven (Belgium) |
| 15.40-16.00  | Tea/Coffee               |                                                                          |
| 16.00-17.10  | Parallel papers          | A4: Active Citizenship & Exclusion: Active Citizenship – an integrated person in a global age  
Muna Golmohamad, Institute of Education University of London (UK)  
The recognition of new ways of participation for cultural minorities: the Gypsy community case  
M. Angeles Cabeza, Lidia Puigvert, Marta Soler: CREA, University of Barcelona, Spain  
B4: Active Citizenship & Participation: Learning for Active Electoral Participation  
Janet Youngblood, Columbia University, USA  
The construction of the Active Citizen in Romania. Realities and Perspectives  
Nicoleta Chioncel: University of Oradea, Romania & University of Nijmegen, Netherlands |
| 17.10-17.40  | Concluding address by International Director, ETGACE project | John Holford, University of Surrey |
| 17.40-17.50  | Closing by Conference Chairperson | Ruud Van der Veen, University of Nijmegen |
## 7.5.4 Workshop: ‘Active Citizenship: Challenges for Europe’

Held at Slovene Institute of Adult Education, Ljubljana, Slovenia

### Day 1: July 7, 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Speaker(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1230-1330</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1345-1400</td>
<td>Welcome from Workshop Chair</td>
<td>Vida Mohorčič Spolar (Slovene Institute for Adult Education)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1400-1420</td>
<td>Introduction: Challenges for Participatory Research &amp; Active Citizenship in Europe</td>
<td>John Holford (University of Surrey)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1420-1505</td>
<td>Participatory Research: Reflections on the ETGACE Life History Methodology</td>
<td>Danny Wildemeersch &amp; Veerle Stroobants (University of Leuven)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1505-1550</td>
<td>Participatory Research: Reflections on the ETGACE Expert/Focus Group Methodology</td>
<td>Ruud van der Veen (University of Nijmegen) &amp; Nicoleta Chioncel (University of Oradea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1550-1615</td>
<td>Tea/Coffee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1615-1645</td>
<td>Participatory Research: Reflections on the involvement of practitioners through advisory panels, workshops for experts, etc.</td>
<td>Panel from the ETGACE project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1645-1715</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1715-1730</td>
<td>Closing comments</td>
<td>Conference Chair</td>
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### Day 2: July 8, 2002

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<th>Event</th>
<th>Speaker(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0900-1015</td>
<td>Some Political-Cultural Conditions of Learning to be an Active Citizen</td>
<td>Bogomir Novak (Slovenia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Policy and Activating Research</td>
<td>Rob Lammerts (Verwey-Jonker Institute, the Netherlands)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communicative Methodology: Egalitarian Dialogue as a Scientific Method</td>
<td>Jesus Gómez (University of Barcelona)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1015-1035</td>
<td>Tea/Coffee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1035-1150</td>
<td>An Orientation towards the Problem Area: The Interaction between Social Intervention Research, Practice and Policy</td>
<td>Maria Bouwerne-De Bie, Griet Verschelden (Ghent University)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'Dual track': Regeneration and Community Development through the Back Door</td>
<td>Jane Watts (National Association of Councils for Voluntary Service (UK))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dialogic Research on Immigration and Labour Market</td>
<td>Marta Soler, (University of Barcelona)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1150-1245</td>
<td>Reflections on Participatory Research in Europe</td>
<td>Discussion with Panel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1245-1300</td>
<td>Closing Remarks</td>
<td>Vida Mohorčič Spolar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1300</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.6 Reports on National Workshops

In order to build on the participation of educators and policy makers within the project, the final phase of the ETGACE project incorporated work with experts in citizenship education, as well as active citizens and community organisers in various sectors, through feedback and training workshops in each participating country. This section provides brief reports of these.

7.6.1 United Kingdom

The aim of the workshop was to take stock of the current position and state of knowledge in relation to learning citizenship, to explore issues and areas where research is required, to discuss connecting policy, practice and research in this area; and to discuss agendas for moving forward in policy and research. The workshop was held on June 18th 2002. The 26 participants represented a range of expertise, experience and perspectives, with backgrounds in both research and practice. A ‘round-table’ format was adopted, with brief presentations and discussion.

Brief presentations were given as follows: ‘Building a citizenship culture’ (John Potter, CSV); ‘Active Citizenship & Volunteering’ (Sue Jackson, Birkbeck College, University of London), ‘The reality of practical active citizenship at the grassroots community level’ (Maria Kraithman, Community Sector Coalition), ‘Citizenship & Self-Help’ (Colin Roberts, Surrey Police), ‘Neighbourhood Renewal & Learning for Active Citizenship’ (John Annette, Middlesex University), ‘The People’s College & Political Literacy’ (Jane Jones and Catherine Macrae, Population Education Forum for Scotland), ‘Corporate Citizenship’ (Chris Hutton), ‘Inspiring change: learning for a better world’ (Titus Alexander), ‘Adult Education and Citizenship; ‘Changing Role for Changing Norms’ (Rennie Johnston, Southampton and Barbara Merrill, Warwick University), ‘Learning Citizenship, Some Ifs and Buts’ (Ian Martin, University of Edinburgh), ‘Learning Citizenship: Developing the research agenda’ (Martin Bacon, Civic Trust), ‘Citizenship in an International Context’ (Peter Luff, Live Consulting), ‘Living global narratives: between privilege and deprivation’ (Rosemary Preston, University of Warwick), ‘Is global a dirty word?’ (John Lipscomb), ‘The role of Experience and Experiential Learning’ (Juliet Merrifield, Friends’ Centre, Brighton).

7.6.2 Finland

The aims of the national workshop were to study active citizenship, to discuss means of promoting active citizenship and good governance in Finland and Europe, to explore future challenges related to active citizenship and good governance from the viewpoint of education, especially adult education. The workshop was held on Friday 24th of May 2002. There were 15 participants.

Presentations were given as follows: ‘Learning to become active citizen in Finland and in Europe from the viewpoint of the ETGACE project’ (Kari E. Nurmi, University of Lapland and Matti Laitinen, University of Helsinki), ‘Active citizenship in the light of The Report of the Parliamentary Adult Education and Training Committee’ (Eeva-Ikeri Sirelius, The Finnish Association of Adult Education Centres KToL), ‘Social capital, active citizenship and adult education up to 2010’ (Seppo Niemelä, Finnish Adult Education Association FAEA), ‘Active citizenship and education programmes of the Finnish Broadcasting Company’ (Seppo
Heikkinen, Finnish Broadcasting Company FBC), ‘The present state of vocational adult education from the viewpoint of active citizenship’ (Tapio Varmola, Seinäjoki Polytechnic). Discussion covered strategies and means to promote active citizenship and good governance. After the workshop a 26-page memorandum (based on the minutes and available in Finnish only) was written and circulated to participants and to members of the Finnish Advisory Panel.

7.6.3 Slovenia

The aims of the workshop were to present ETGACE findings to a broader professional public, to exchange with some other related projects and activities and to strengthen co-operation, and to continue to build a network of citizenship educators and researchers. The team felt that all the aims were realised and especially valued the contribution of presenters from other projects. Other researchers (e.g., Educational Research Institute, Peace Institute) and some policy makers from the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport were also present. The workshop was held on 7 June 2002 and 26 people attended.

Presentations were given as follows: ‘Introduction to the ETGACE findings and their implications for practice’ (Angelca Ivancic, Darijan Novak, Darka Podmenik, SIAE), ‘Introduction to the Council of Europe project “Education for democratic citizenship”’ (Mitja Sardoc), ‘An introduction of the results of the project “Political culture of the Slovenians”’ (Janez Kolenc, Bogomir Novak, Institute for Educational Research), ‘An introduction to the projects “Multiculturality”, “Right to learn”, “Citizenship education”’ (Maja Radinovic Hajdic, Folks High School, Jesenice), ‘An introduction to the project “Consumer education for adults”’ (Breda Kutin, International Institute for Consumer Protection). Most participants were eager to contribute to discussion.

The second part of the day was based around a series of questions prepared in advance:

- Active citizenship is often limited to the micro – local community – level. What kind of interventions could stimulate extension to other levels (regional, national, international) with a bottom-up approach?

- The erosion of participation in traditional organisations is evident in nearly all democracies. What structural changes could attract people to be more willing to participate?

- How can the Internet contribute to the enhancement of active citizenship? What are the tasks of each actor, and possible entrapments?

- Active citizens put an emphasis on learning by doing and experts emphasise the change from teaching to facilitating. What changes does this imply for the development of policy making and for educators?

- What does individualisation mean in education and learning for active citizenship?

- What should be done in changing public space to make it more accessible for women’s active citizenship? How can equality be attained in the private domain?

- What are the chances of the findings of the ETGACE project being used in policy making and also in practice?
7.6.4 Spain

The ETGACE workshop took place on 13 April 2002 at the Faculty of Pedagogy, University of Barcelona. Entitled *Voices, citizenship and dialogue*, it focused on learning active citizenship and the different ways of including all voices in participatory spaces. Attendance was 48. The seminar asked all participants whether there can be active citizenship without the inclusion of all voices. It prompted proposals for future action related to people’s participation.

Participants were invited from three main domains (civil society, state and work), such as neighbourhood associations, unions, local administrations, NGOs, and adult education associations.

Presentations were given as follows: The ETGACE project: Active Citizenship and Governance (Esther Oliver, CREA). Round table presentation were given by the following: Diosdado Rebollo, Neighbourhood Association of Trinitat Nova; Ernesto Morales, FAVIBC, Federation of Neighbourhood Associations and Social Housing of Catalonia; Elías Nazareno, Professor of History from the University of Brasilia. Member of the Labor Party in Brazil; Luisa Roldán, Association of Torre Llobeta; Abderrahman el Harrás, Multicultural group of FACEPA (Federció d’Associacions Culturals i Educatives de Persones Adultes. *Federation of Cultural and Educational Associations for Adults*) and member of the Association AFPACA; Merly Núñez. Multicultural group of FACEPA and member of the Association AFPACA (Associació per l'Animació i Formació perment d'adults Casc Antic. *Association for the Animation and Lifelong learning for Adult of the Casc Antic*).

Issue which arose in discussion included the specification of active citizenship, aiming for consensus with all social agents (politicians, associations, citizens), fulfilling commitments so that everyone can provide ideas in the decision making process, participation is learned and constructed on three levels (administration, services and neighborhood), and promoting the voice of women and immigrants. Some of the conclusions reached during the day were:

- To facilitate democratic values, people should have a voice on what affects them. This should not be left to administrators. Institutional channels that promote democratic participation must be established.
- Immigrants can participate actively in today’s society, and must be informed about the where they can do so. Dialogue and solidarity form the basis of civic coexistence between cultures.
- To overcome barriers to participation, people must know their rights and demand they be upheld; and administrations must listen to these demands.
- Education helps people participate. Learning about citizenship often occurs in educational contexts, whether formal or informal.
- Association is the best way of answering the needs of the neighbourhood; it is important to create this type of space.
- Equality between men and women is essential. Women should participate in decision-making and their contributions should be taken into account. Those who have not had the opportunity to participate throughout their lives should be heard and valued.
• Associations are best organised in assembly form, which guarantee everyone has an active role in decision making. Objectives should promote the implementation of participatory initiatives.

7.6.5 Belgium
Two national workshops were held, in November and December 2001. The first took place in Ghent and highlighted how neighbourhood services contribute to greater participation in the democratic process by the deprived sector of the population. European institutions consider neighbourhood services to be a driving force for creating employment and a stimulus for more social cohesion. Launching local services that create new jobs actually promotes economic and social cohesion.

The speakers were: Marie-Rose Clinet, Flora Network for Training and Job creation for Women, Belgium; Kai Leichsering, European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, Austria; Danny Wildemeersch, ETGACE project; Anna Csongor, Autonomia Foundation, Hungary; Lieve Meersschaert, Moinho da Juventude, Portugal.

The second workshop, held in December 2001 in Brussels, was a colloquium organised by Contrasten CSV, a social-cultural organisation in Brussels. The meeting was intended for practitioners from civil society from all over Belgium and was as a result of the campaign ‘Extreme Right, no thanks!’ Danny Wildemeersch (ETGACE team) gave a presentation on ‘Active Citizenship and anti-racism’ and examined how the three conditions for learning active citizenship (challenge, capacity and connection) can be stimulated by taking part in a campaign against the far right.

7.6.6 The Netherlands
A symposium was announced for May 24, 2002, aimed at officials and professionals from the field of education and training for citizenship. However, but registration was disappointing and a small workshop was held instead on June 28, 2002. The purpose was to have an in-depth discussion of the results of the research and examine possible follow-up activities.

One of the participating experts came from the domain of work, the others had expert knowledge of training and education in both the political domain and civil society. None was involved in formal education for citizenship, most had hands-on experience with non-formal education and only one had never worked as a practitioner. Five experts took part in the discussion.

The main themes of the discussion were as follows:

• The discussion started with an analysis of the life histories of active citizens in the framework of existentialist social philosophy, in particular how active citizenship can help to solve the existential crisis that life seems meaningless.

• This triggered a discussion on the growing importance of “identity” (compared to “responsibility”) in the public discourse since the 1970s, which has enormous consequences for the self-image of active citizens now in their midlife.
• Although all acknowledged this new domination of concepts of individualisation and identity in public discourse, some wondered whether differences in social-economic class have really become less useful for understanding active citizenship.

• Which brought the group to a typical Dutch theme at that time: the social factors underlying the growth of the new populist party of Pim Fortuyn and the consequences of Fortuyn’s murder (just before the elections) by an ‘active citizen’.

• After a short break the group discussed interventions. The first theme of this discussion was how new forms of individual guidance for active citizens (mentoring, counselling) could support informal learning better.

• The second theme was how to find forms of interactive decision-making which balance the state’s need for governance with lobbying from the side of interest groups.

Discussions also covered translation and publication of ETGACE learning materials, and the use of ETGACE research instruments in further applied research.