CITIZENSHIP AND DEMOCRACY

AUSTRALIAN STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEFS

The IEA Civic Education Study of Fourteen Year Olds

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ACER

Civic Education
IEA
Around the World

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FOREWORD

Young Australians appreciate living in a vibrant, free, independent and democratic country, with four in five Australian students sure that they would not like to live anywhere else. The same number of young people believe it is important to be a good citizen and value helping other people. Young people also believe Australia should be proud of what it has achieved. However, while they support the notion of democracy, current students are somewhat disengaged from the more conventional forms of civic participation.

These are some of the findings of this report. *Citizenship and Democracy: Australian Students' Knowledge and Beliefs, the IEA Civic Education Study of Fourteen Year Olds* is a snapshot of how Australia's young people compare with those in the rest of the 24 countries that took part in the international study. The study took place in 1999 before the Australian Government's *Discovering Democracy* programme of civics and citizenship had been fully introduced.

The report will assist educators to foster those capabilities that will help our young people be citizens in a global society. Nelson Mandela said "To be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others." That is the challenge that we all face.

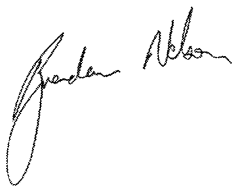
As global citizens we need to value tolerance, empathy and understanding. Liberal democracies support tolerance and the rule of law. Tolerance allows a respect for human rights; empathy allows freedom of expression; and understanding assists harmony. Such democracies also enable people to behave responsibly towards each other and to live peacefully together.

We live in a world that is becoming increasingly less tolerant, where empathy is vulnerable and there is less understanding among peoples. As our society faces more complex social challenges, an understanding of our democratic heritage cannot be left to chance.

Educators are at the forefront of helping our young people prepare for a future democracy. Through the *Discovering Democracy* programme, students in Australia are able to reflect on the nation we are, and the nation we want to become.

This report found that civic knowledge and engagement are powerful partners of social well being. Young people who are learning successfully about systems of government and civic life are also more likely to be active citizens. The challenge for educators is to ensure all students have access to good civics education so that young people are positive about change, support an open society and continue to show empathy to other global citizens.

I congratulate Suzanne Mellor, Professor Kerry Kennedy and Lisa Greenwood for their efforts and dedication over a number of years in undertaking this important study.



Dr Brendan Nelson

Commonwealth Minister for Education, Science and Training

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Australian involvement in Phase Two of the IEA Civic Education Study was supported by funding from the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, as part of its *Discovering Democracy* program. Phase Two was the data collection phase of the international study. The National Reference Group for Australia for both phases of the study was the Civics Education Group, whose members are: Dr John Hirst (Chair), Dr Ken Boston, Professor Greg Craven, Professor Stuart Macintyre and Ms Susan Pascoe. It was to this group that submissions were made as the national monitoring of the project was undertaken. The University of Canberra was commissioned to oversee the project in Australia and the Australian Council for the Educational Research conducted the research.

This Australian national report is the culmination of five years work as part of the international IEA Civic Education Study. In that time many persons have contributed to the work. The most crucial support to the conduct of the project by a individual was given by Kerry Kennedy, whose unfailing good humour and alertness to all the conceptual issues was critical. Based at the University of Canberra, he undertook his role as the National Research Co-ordinator with civic and strategic elan. The collegial relationships established with international researchers were an important outcome for all the national researchers on the project. The strategic support of Carole Hahn, Zsuzsa Matrai, Bruno Losito, David Kerr and Costantinos Papanastasiou was valuable, and the joint presentations we gave on the project at its various stages, in different locations on three continents, are the stuff of legend. The International Co-ordinators: Judith Torney–Purta and Rainer Lehmann, as the leaders of this study provided intellectual leadership; at times throwing the gauntlet down to the national representatives and welcoming their innovative contributions to the project. Being part of such high level of collaboration amongst the very diverse range of countries involved in the project has been a worthwhile experience.

A crucial, and substantial contribution of time and energy was made to the Australian project by the 352 staff and 3331students in the 142 Australian schools sampled for the study. Though they must remain anonymous, ACER extends a grateful appreciation to them for their participation. They were supported in their participation by their education systems, and we thank them for their assistance in the conduct of the project.

Much of the assistance received over the lifetime of the project was given by ACER staff. I would particularly wish to acknowledge the statistical and conceptual expertise and experience of Stephen Lamb, whose advice was invaluable for most of those five years. Julie McMillan did important analytical work on the Australian data set at a time that the shape of the Australian National report was still uncertain. Wolfram Schulz, Associate International Co-ordinator of the Study, became a local supporter once he joined the staff at ACER, and his proximity to the site of the Australian work was of assistance to the main writer during the production of this report. John Ainley could always be relied upon to act as the litmus test of what was the best practice in IEA work, and his advice was frequently sought. Lisa Greenwood was the ACER 'hands-on' person without whom this report might never have been completed. She worked on the project at several intense stages. Her specific statistical skills in relation to preparation of the national data set for the international analysis, her skills in school contact work, and her preparation of tables and other aspects of the report, always reliably completed with meticulous thoroughness, meant that extensive work could be confidently delegated to her.

This research work in the IEA Civic Education Study has been complex and comprehensive, requiring advanced skills from participants across a range of research areas. As with any IEA Study, it has been professionally demanding of all participants. However, the substance of this study created specific additional challenges of its own. The concepts associated with the area of knowledge known as civics, being contestable, represent special research

methodology and assessment challenges. These are challenges that all the participants in the study have wrestled with, and they are the very same issues which school in systems and people in societies need to address in the developing of their civic programs. Hopefully, this report, by articulating some of the underlying issues, and showing how they can be identified and addressed by schools, will make a contribution to the further development of Civic Education in Australia.

Suzanne Mellor
Project Manager: IEA Civic Education Study (Australia)
ACER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The IEA Civic Education Study

This Civic Education Study was carried out in two phases by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). In Phase 1 of the Study, national researchers conducted qualitative case studies that examined the contexts and meaning of civic education in 24 countries. The case studies were published in *Civic Education across Countries: Twenty-four National Case Studies from the IEA Civic Education Project.* The observations from the case studies were then used to develop both a test of students' civic knowledge and a survey of their civic engagement whose results were suitable for rigorous statistical analysis.

In Phase 2 of the Study, nationally representative samples of nearly 90,000 students in the usual grade for 14-year-olds in 28 countries were surveyed on topics ranging from their knowledge of fundamental democratic principles and skills in interpreting political information to their attitudes toward government and willingness to participate in civic activity. The data-gathering was carried out in 1999 by teams in each country guided by policies and technical guidelines established by IEA. The findings from the international study were published in the report, *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries: Civic Knowledge and Engagement at Age Fourteen,* in March 2001.

This Australian national report, *Citizenship and Democracy: Australian Students' Knowledge and Beliefs. The IEA Civic Education Study of Fourteen Year Olds* analyses and interprets the Australian data collected during the IEA Civic Education Study. It references the international data from the Study and the international report as it was thought illuminative to understanding the Australian picture. The analysis of the full Australian data set was beyond the resources of this project, and much analysis could still be done to more fully explicate the Australian data.

The 28 Countries Participating in Phase 2 of the IEA Civic Education Study

Australia	Finland	Poland
Belgium*	Germany	Portugal
Bulgaria	Greece	Romania
Chile	Hong Kong (SAR)**	Russian Federation
Colombia	Hungary	Slovak Republic
Cyprus	Italy	Slovenia
Czech Republic	Latvia	Sweden
Denmark	Lithuania	Switzerland
England	Norway	United States
Estonia		

* *Only the French educational system in Belgium participated*

** *Special Administrative Region of China*

The IEA Civic Education Study in Australia

A two stage stratified cluster design for sampling was employed. At the first stage, schools were sampled using a probability proportional to size. In Australia, 142 schools participated in the study, providing a school participation rate of 94%. The sample structure, ensuring representation of government, Catholic and independent schools, provides a good estimate for Australia overall, but it does not enable between-state comparisons.

At the second stage the sample consisted of one intact classroom per school from the target grade. The chosen class was not to be tracked by ability and was, where possible, to be in a civic-related subject (eg. history, social studies). The requirement to select students from a History or SOSE class was problematic in Australia because not all Year 9 students were experiencing a History/SOSE class during the testing period. Thus a range of procedures for class selection was employed. The Australian Project Manager and the IEA closely monitored the integrity of this sampling process.

Testing took place in Australia between September and November 1999, as it did in other southern hemisphere countries. The Australian cohort of Year 9 students was 3331, with a student participation rate of 92%. The Australian sample had a mean age of 14.6 years with a standard deviation of 0.5. 67% of the sample were 14 year olds, 55% of were females and 10% were not born in Australia.

The IEA Concept of Civic Knowledge and Belief

The construction of test and survey instruments was based on data from the case studies collected in Phase 1. The Student Questionnaire was designed by experts from all participating countries and by members of the IEA International Steering Committee. The proposed topics for examination were based on the three broad domains which had been established early in the project as representing the knowledge base of civic education:

- Democracy/Citizenship;
- National Identity/International Relations; and
- Social Cohesion/Diversity

Underpinning this study was a conception of civic education as a complex enterprise involving a variety of cognitive, conceptual and attitudinal strands, each of which is important and open to independent evaluation. To cater for this conception, manifested in the matrix shown in the Table, five different item types were devised:

- Knowledge of Content;
- Skills in Interpretation;
- Understanding of Concepts;
- Attitudes; and
- Expected Actions

Domains and Item Types Used in the IEA Civic Education Study

Domains	Item Types				
	1.Knowledge	2. Skills	3. Concepts	4. Attitudes	5. Actions
Domain 1 *Democracy/ Citizenship*					
Domain 11 *National Identity International Relations*					
Domain 111 *Social Cohesion/ Diversity*					

(See Table 2.6 in this report: *Map of IEA Civics Domains 1-3 and Item Types 1-5* p.24)

The domains and items types provided a matrix for test development, based on the conception of civic education developed for the Study. Items 1 -2 were the 'test' items and Items 3-5 were the 'survey' items. Part One of the Student Questionnaire consisted of thirty eight Type 1 (knowledge) and Type 2 (interpretative skills) test items. Part Two of the Student Questionnaire sought background data. Part Three consisted of fifty two Type 3 items, sixty two Type 4 items and twenty two Type 5 items. The measures used to compare students' responses to the Type 3-5 items, within and between countries, were the degree of positiveness shown in the responses to the items. These measures were based on the conceptual model of citizenship developed for the Study.

A Teacher Questionnaire and a School Questionnaire were developed and administered at each site. These were to be completed by three teachers and the Principal (or delegate). The Australian response rates were 83% and 85% respectively.

Highlights of Australian Findings

Australian Students' Civic Knowledge in an International Context

- Ten countries had Total Civic Knowledge average scores which were significantly above the international mean. Eight countries had averages which were significantly below the international mean. Ten countries, positioned in between these two groups, had means which did not vary significantly from the international mean. Australia was one of those countries. The ranking shows Australia to be in the upper part of that middle group, but this was not statistically significant.

- Three countries in the average group achieved above-average scores on the interpretative skill sub-score. Australia was the only country which scored above average on the interpretative skills, average on the content knowledge and average on the total score.

- In a majority of countries female students scored better than the male students. Such was also the case in Australia. The data suggest, however, that civic knowledge is not gender-based, as the differences were small.

- In the large majority of countries, the more books students reported in the home the better they performed on the civic knowledge test. Australia was a classic example of this pattern although the effect size was not the strongest when compared with other countries.

Australian Students' Civic Knowledge

- Two per cent of the Australian students correctly answered every question. It is estimated that almost a quarter of Australian students demonstrated they have civic knowledge greater than what was required to correctly answer all the civic knowledge items.

- It is estimated that 10% of Australian students could not answer any of the 38 cognitive items correctly.

- Australian students showed a substantially greater facility with the Interpretative Skills items than they did with the Content Knowledge items. This appears to reflect the emphasis given in Australian schools to the close reading of, and inference from, texts.

- Only half of the Australian students have a grasp of the essential pre-conditions for a properly working democracy. It seems that Australian students are not strong in their understandings of what constitute their civil rights. The Civic Knowledge items with which Australian students had the most difficulty were those which deal with the forms and purposes of Democracy. Australian students have a strong sense of 'natural justice' and equity, but they lack clarity about the theoretical precepts of democratic models and structures. (For example: the role of criticism in a democracy, civil rights, function of periodic elections, the content (and by implication the purpose of) a constitution, legitimate media influence in a democracy and problems in a government moving from dictatorship to democracy.) 60% of Australian students successfully inferred the consequences of a large publisher buying up many of a nation's newspapers.

- Australian students do not have a strong grasp of the impact of economic issues in the functioning of a democratic system. (For example: the role of trade unions in a modern economy, the key characteristics of a market economy, a range of issues associated with multinationals and globalisation.) Nor do they have a clear sense of where the inherent tensions between democratic ideals and economic exigencies lie.

- The television news is the preferred source of information for 80% of Australian students, though about two-thirds of them also read about what is happening in this country and in other countries in the newspapers, and 62% of them also listen to the news on the radio. Australia is one of the countries where the frequency of watching news is associated with higher civic knowledge, with a greater effect than the international average.

Australian Students' Civic Engagement

The first group of the Attitudinal scales surveyed in Part Three of the Student Questionnaire was called the Civic Engagement Dimension and consisted of four scales. (Conventional Citizenship, Social Movement Citizenship, Expected Participation in Political Activities and Confidence in Participation in School)

- Australian students' scores are significantly below the International mean on three of the four scales which make up the Civic Engagement dimension. All the scales reference active participation. It appears Australian students do not endorse action by citizens. Only four of the twenty eight countries registered below international means on three of the Civic Engagement scales.

- On the Conventional Citizenship scale the Australian students only positively endorsed two of the five items. They do believe a good citizen votes and shows respect for government representatives. But they regard knowing the country's history and following political issues in the press, and, especially, engaging in political discussion as relatively unimportant. With a mean of 9.3, they register as significantly below the international mean (set at 10 for all scales) on this scale.

- For each of the items on the Social Movement Citizenship scale the Australian students' responses had the heaviest weight of opinion in the 'fairly important' response category, thus indicating a less than enthusiastic endorsement. However eighty per cent of the Australian students believe in the importance of a good citizen participating in 'activities to benefit people in the community'. Three quarters of the Australian students think taking part in the protecting the environment is important, and two thirds support the importance of promoting human rights. Only just over half of the Australian students think it important to participate in peaceful protest against a law they believe to be unjust. With a mean of 9.3, Australian students again register as significantly below the international mean on this scale.

- Australian students did not regard conventional forms of civic participation as important as did their peers from a range of other countries. Similar to the international cohort, Australian students do not intend to participate in conventional political activities, other than voting. Given that voting is compulsory in Australia, students' expectation that 86% of them will vote is less significant than for those countries where it is optional.

- The Australian mean for the Expected Participation in Political Activities scale was 9.8 per cent, and thus once again the Australian cohort was significantly below the international mean. (Examples of items: Eighty nine per cent do not expect to join a political party, 76% do not expect to write letters to newspapers about social or political concerns, and 87% do not expect to be a candidate for a local or city office. Two thirds of Australian students reported that they expect to collect money for a social cause or charity. Only 40% said they would be prepared to join a non-violent protest march.)

- Participation in a school council or parliament is positively related to civic knowledge for Australian students, indeed even more so than for the international students. However, only one third of them has participated in a

school council or parliament. Australian students appear to have a more positive view of what can be achieved by groups of students in schools than they have of what adults can achieve by active participation in the political process. Thus, on the Confidence in Participating at School scale the Australian mean, at 9.9, is lower than the international but is not significantly below that of the international group.

Australian Students' Civic Attitudes, and other Concepts

The second of the Attitudinal scales surveyed in Part Three of the Student Questionnaire consisted of seven scales. (Economy-related Government Responsibilities, Society-related Government Responsibilities, Positive Attitudes towards Immigrants, Symbolic Patriotism, Trust in Government-related Institutions, Support for Women's Political Rights and Open Climate for Classroom Discussion)

- Australian students were less likely than the international cohort to support notions of governments having Economic-related Responsibilities, with the mean being significantly less than the international. The majority of Australian students did endorse the view that it is government business to 'keep prices under control' and 'to guarantee a job for everyone who wants one'. But they showed less support for the view that it is government responsibility to develop industry, re-distribute wealth and provide decent living standards for the unemployed.

- Australian students are more confident that governments have Society-related Responsibilities. (For example: Seventy per cent of students believe governments should definitely guarantee peace and order, 68% definitely ensure equal political opportunities for men and women, and approximately two thirds believe governments definitely should provide basic health care and free education for everyone.) Their support was equal to that of their international peers.

- The attitudes of Australian students to immigrants are only moderately positive; similar to the international average. (For example: 89% of them agree that immigrants should have the right to equal educational opportunity, with only 77% agreeing immigrants should have the right to maintain their customs. Almost a quarter of the students think immigrants should not be able to continue their own customs and lifestyles.)

- In response to questions regarding Symbolic Patriotism, four in five Australian students are very sure they do not want to live anywhere else, and believe Australia should be proud of what it has achieved. The Australian flag is not important to a quarter of them. These levels of patriotism are average for the international cohort.

- Australian students showed average levels of Trust in Government related Institutions. Between two thirds and three quarters, of the Australian students trusted the police and the courts. (For example: only 6% and 7% respectively indicating they would 'never' trust them.) Two thirds of Australian students trusted local government. Similar to their international peers, the least trust was afforded political parties.

- Australian students' Support for Women's Political Rights was amongst the strongest of all countries. (For example: They reserve their greatest endorsement for 'women should get equal pay…' and 'should have the same rights as men in every way' and 90% agree.)

- More Australian students experience Open Classroom Climates than the quarter of international students who claimed they discuss in class. (For example: 34% say they are often encouraged to voice their opinion in class.) Nevertheless, similar to their international peers, a quarter of the Australian students say this rarely or never happens.

- As with the international response, only a little more than half of Australian students (55%) said they had learnt in school about the 'importance of voting in national elections'.

- There are substantial gender differences across the range of items and scales. (For example: Females students are more inclined to support Social Movement Citizenship, Confidence in Participating at School, Society-related Government Responsibilities, Positive Attitudes towards Immigrants, Support for Women's Political Rights and Open Climate for Classroom Discussion.) Males were not more positive than females on any of the two groups of Attitude Scales.

Australian Teacher and School Approaches to Civic Education

The 352 teachers who responded to this questionnaire were teachers of English, a range of SOSE subjects and were also Curriculum Co-ordinators. These teachers agreed on most issues. Some findings from the 120 Principal respondents to the School Questionnaire were also reported.

- Although only a quarter of the teachers surveyed had had initial training in Civics Education, almost three quarters of them have since undertaken professional development.

- The great majority of principals and teachers (between 70 and 90 per cent) agreed that their students learn the civic competencies of working together in groups with other students, how to act to protect the environment and understanding people who have different points of view.

- Over three quarters of the teachers thought knowledge of the society needs more attention in civics education.

- Teachers think civic-related topics rest easily in SOSE as well as other subjects.

- Teachers acknowledge weaknesses in their capacity to teach economic issues, judicial systems, international organisations, trade unions and national constitutions and state political institutions. Explicit training and curriculum materials are needed to support learning in these areas.

- The resource teachers defined as the *most important* they used was cited as being 'Media: newspapers, magazines, television', followed by 'original sources, such as constitutions, human rights declarations'.

- It appears that teachers are reluctant to have a curriculum imposed, because they have strong views about what students should learn in civics, and their preferred way of teaching civics requires an open agenda of topics, to catch the current affairs issues which develop during a course.

- The key learning outcomes for teachers of civics education are certain values. (For example: teachers most want their students to learn to develop a consciousness about the needs of the whole world, to develop honesty, as well as to fight against social injustice, to stand up for one's opinion, to ensure opportunities for minorities to express their own culture and to recognise the value of Australia as a nation.) Over ninety percent of teachers viewed each of these goals as important or very important.

- Ninety eight per cent of the teachers thought that 'teaching civic education makes a difference for students' political and civic development' and that 'it matters a great deal for our country'. A similar percentage of teachers thought that schools had a very important role in developing student attitudes and opinions.

- Significant gender differences apply to many issues and conclusions, with female teachers feeling more strongly about the importance of the preferred learning outcomes, but generally being less confident in their ability to teach them effectively.

Future Directions for Civics and Citizenship Education in Australia

For the first time, as a result of this Australian report, *Citizenship and Democracy: Students' Knowledge and Beliefs: Australian Fourteen Year Olds and the IEA Civic Education Study,* we have a complete picture of what young Australians understand, what are their skills and attitudes, and how they feel about civic issues. The data from this study will be invaluable for policy makers, teacher educators and teachers themselves in planning future directions for civics and citizenship education.

It should be noted that the survey of students and school staff was conducted late in 1999. There had not been time for the new *Discovering Democracy* initiatives to have had their full effect on student learning. There had been time for some effect on teachers however, and this is reflected in some of the study's findings in relation to professional development and related matters. As civics and citizenship education initiatives are being implemented, there has been much debate about content, pedagogy and related issues. The Australian report has been written in 2001 and the authors are conscious that they are reporting on the situation as it was eighteen months earlier. However the data and analysis identifies and provides strategies for many of the civic education issues which need addressing. Thus the report provides useful guidance for the ongoing debates and decision-making in systems and schools.

On the one hand *the report indicates* there should be some confidence that young Australians already know a good deal about their democracy. Programs of civics and citizenship education can assist them to understand in more depth what their roles might be in the future, and how they can participate in an active way. At the same time *the report demonstrates* that there is also a need to support teachers in their roles, so that civics education can be a rich and engaging experience for students.

Perhaps the most significant of all findings identified by the Study is that students need to be convinced that conventional forms of democratic engagement are worthwhile. Our elected representatives have much to contribute to this process. The future of Australian democracy belongs to, and with, our young people. We need them to be engaged in Australian democracy. As a result of the IEA Civic Education Study we now have the foundation on which to build programs that will not only enhance individual understanding and commitment, but also support practices of social inclusion and the development of a real sense of community. This is the challenge for the future.

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CHAPTER 1
THE IEA CIVIC EDUCATION STUDY: CONTEXTS AND ISSUES

International Background

In 1994 the General Assembly of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) agreed to support a Civic Education Study. It is often tempting to cast such studies as yet another 'cognitive olympics' (Husén, 1973), yet this would not do justice to some of the significant issues that the civic education study attempted to address.

Prior to the study, significant changes in the international political context were identified as having a potential impact on the way schools and students viewed themselves and their political identity at the end of the twentieth century:

> Many countries experiencing an emergence of new constitutional regimes and attempts to move towards democratisation, rapid evolution of supra-national structures, women playing an increasing role in politics and new issues on the political agenda, in particular environmental issues. (Torney-Purta, 1996a, p.4).

Social changes were also identified that would seem to impact directly on the way young people might construct themselves as future citizens:

> Absence of a sense of social cohesion or a sense of belonging to a civic culture in many societies, resurgent authoritarianism, xenophobia and racism and alienation among youth from both the economic and political systems. (Torney-Purta, 1996a, p.5).

In recent times, the process of schooling itself had undergone significant changes that may well have influenced the way young people saw themselves within the broader society:

> Recognition of the implicit or hidden curriculum, wariness concerning discussions of civic and political issues in schools, sometimes connected to relations between families and schools and the power of the mass media relative to schools in shaping attitudes (Torney-Purta, 1996a, p.5).

It was in 1971 that the IEA had conducted its first cross national study of civic education. (Torney, Oppenheim and Faren, 1975). The social and political changes referred to above suggested that young people's conceptions of citizenship more than two decades later might now be influenced in different ways from the early 1970s. There were a number of significant issues to address:

- How were schools and students coping with these changes at the end of the twentieth century?
- How did schools and education systems respond to these changes?
- What lessons can be learnt from an international comparative study of these issues?

Put another way:

> The goal of the IEA Civic Education Study is to identify and examine in a comparative framework the ways in which young people are prepared to undertake their roles as citizens in a democracies (Torney-Purta, J., Lehmann, R., Oswald, H. & Schultz, W. (2001, p.13).

All member countries of the IEA were invited to participate in the study and in the end twenty eight countries did so. Those countries are listed in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Countries Participating in the IEA Civic Education Study[1]

- Australia
- Belgium*
- Bulgaria
- Chile
- Colombia
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- England
- Estonia
- Finland
- Germany
- Greece
- Hong Kong (SAR)**
- Hungary
- Italy
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Norway
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Russian Federation
- Slovak republic
- Slovenia
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- United States

*Only the French educational system in Belgium participated
** Special Administrative Region of China

An International Steering Committee was selected for the Project (See Appendix A for membership. Each participating country in the Study appointed a National Research Coordinator (NRC) to take responsibility for coordinating the national level studies and for liaising with the International Steering Committee. In Australia, a Project Manager was appointed to manage Phase 2 of the study. In general, NRCs, and Project Managers where appointed, usually worked with a group of experts to plan and execute the national studies. This national level work was at the heart of the IEA Civic Education Study and it was carried out under the strict guidelines that have come to be associated with IEA studies. In most countries, the work was overseen by a National Advisory Committee.

NRCs and Project Managers also worked as a team alongside experts and the International Steering Committee to shape the Study and influence its direction. Five international meetings were held at key stages in the Study's development. This allowed for exchange of views and ideas about the Study's progress, contributed towards the development of the instruments used in the Study and provided a common base on which to plan further national work.

[1] Based on Torney-Purta, J., Lehmann, R., Oswald, H. & Schultz, W. (2001). *Citizenship Education in Twenty-eight Countries – Civic Knowledge and Engagement at Age Fourteen.* Amsterdam: The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement.

National contexts in which the IEA Civic Education Study was conducted varied considerably. The report of the international results of the IEA Civic Education Study, *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries* (Torney-Purta, J., Lehmann, R., Oswald, H. & Schultz, W. (2001, pp.17-19, and hereafter referred to by its title) outlined the demographic characteristics, educational characteristics and political characteristics of the participating countries. The next section of this chapter will deal specifically with the Australian context in which the IEA Civic Education Study was conducted.

The Australian Context

Australia's participation in the IEA Civic Education Study was to a large extent a reflection of a very recent interest by Australian government in civics and citizenship education. It was an interest that appears to have been bipartisan in a political sense and for which there was a good deal of community support.

It had only been in mid -1994 that the then Prime Minister, the Hon. Paul Keating, had commissioned a Civics Expert Group to provide his government with advice about the role of civics education in the school curriculum. That report, *Whereas the People...* (Civic Expert Group, 1994) was released in November 1994 for consultation and by June 1995, the Prime Minister had accepted its recommendations, including the provision of funding in the next financial year (Keating, 1995). Yet by March 1996 the Keating government had been replaced and it was not clear what the incoming government's view would be of a civics education initiative.

That view was made known in May 1997 when the then Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training, the Hon. Dr David Kemp, launched the new government's civics and citizenship education initiative, *Discovering Democracy* (Kemp, 1997). It represented, among other things, a commitment over a three year period to develop articulated civics and citizenship curriculum materials for upper primary and lower secondary students.

What accounted for this interest by successive Australian governments? Were the general trends identified as influencing the IEA Civic Education Study also evident in Australia?

An important point to note is that in a formal sense Australian schools had been without civics education since the early 1960s (Thomas, 1994). This is not to say that there was no informal civics education taking place in schools, but in terms of State mandated curriculum, civics education, where it had been retained as a component of the school curriculum, had for the most part been absorbed into Social Studies curriculum offerings. This is in contrast to the period from the turn of the century to the late 1940s which saw some quite striking developments in civics education, often linked to the teaching of History (Kennedy, 1997). The events of the 1990s, therefore, need to be seen as a revival of civics education after a period of some neglect.

Attempting to discern the reasons for the support given by governments to any policy initiative is a complex process. In the case of recent Australian governments' support for civics and citizenship education, the task is no easier. While support has been bipartisan, it has been generated for different reasons.

Kennedy and Howard (2000) have shown that Keating's support for civics education was an adjunct of the 'big picture' politics the Prime Minister pursued after the 1993 election. Issues such as the creation of an Australian republic, reconciliation with indigenous Australians, multiculturalism and engagement with Asia all required a citizenry that could appreciate and understand the need for the kind of changes he was proposing. As Keating put it, 'If we can't imagine, we can't determine our future, we can't act, we can't change' (Ryan 1995, p. 55). There was thus a need for a:

> .... a well informed citizenry to endorse the modernizing actions taken by the state on our behalf (Morris 1992:76).

This need was confirmed with specific reference to Australian constitutional issues in the report of the Republican Advisory Committee established by Keating in 1993:

> The view is often expressed that Australians generally do not know enough about the Australian Constitution, its history and our system of government. The Committee would like to think that its work and the surrounding debate has contributed to a higher level of understanding of, and interest in, constitutional issues. Nevertheless, much more needs to be done. The Committee found a common view among the community and its leaders, regardless of particular views held on the republican debate, that Australians should have more opportunity to understand the basic principles of Australian government (Republic Advisory Committee 1993, p. 20).

The Committee subsequently recommended that school authorities in Australia should consider 'the introduction or extension of appropriate courses in the fields of civics and government' (Republic Advisory Committee 1993, p. 20).

Thus civics and citizenship education for the Keating government was linked to a notion of 'civic deficit' that needed to be corrected if Australians were confidently to embrace the changes that were seen to be necessary for the future. As Keating said at the time he announced the government's response to *Whereas the People...* (Civics Expert Group, 1994):

> The Commonwealth's proposed civics and citizenship education program will ensure that Australians have the opportunity to become informed about our system of government, our Constitution, and other civics and citizenship issues...the program will aim to improve our understanding of what citizenship means in a modern society, and thereby encourage practical participation in our nation's civic life... (Keating, 1995,p.iii)

It was natural for an incoming government to review the civics education initiative of the previous government. The new Minister responsible for Schools, Vocational Education and Training, the Hon Dr David Kemp, seemed a likely champion of any new initiative, given that he was formerly a Professor of Politics at Monash University. Yet more than this, he had thought deeply about issues of Australian national identity and heritage. For Kemp it was liberalism rather than trade unions or the Labor Party that had been responsible for Australian development since Federation and this tradition, he argued, was best expressed in the Liberal Party. He confronted Keating directly on issues such as the Australian flag, the Constitution and perhaps most importantly Keating's direct attack on the 'British core of its (i.e. Australia's) historical achievement' (Kemp, 1994, p.56). He accused the former Prime Minister of promoting disunity at the expense of national cohesion. In the end,

Kemp believed that it was the Liberal Party rather than Keating's Labor Party that could act as the party of national cohesion:

> There is a strong cultural element to Liberalism. In a broad sense Liberalism aims to develop the civic culture which underpins a democratic society and fosters the attitudes of trust, tolerance, reciprocity, fairness and restraint, on which democratic political and market institutions depend (Kemp 1994, p. 61).

Given that Kemp was writing several years prior to the election of the Liberal National Party Coalition, his broad vision as it relates to civics and citizenship education is an important one. In the end he saw that the task for a re-elected Liberal Party was one of 'reshaping the grand vision of our founders, an equal democratic state without parallel in the world' (Kemp 1994, p. 62).

It was such views that were to inform his approach to *Discovering Democracy*, the new government's civic and citizenship education initiative. It was an initiative that acknowledged the problem of the civic deficit amongst young people, the need for the teaching of Australian history, recognition of the European roots of Australian democracy and the need for national cohesion. It set in place the impetus for widespread reform and thinking about the role of civics and citizenship education in the school curriculum. The Commonwealth Government is funding *Discovering Democracy* with $32m over seven years (1997-2004) for curriculum resources for all schools, teacher professional development and national activities to support the programme. All Australian Ministers for Education have endorsed the *National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century*, which state that students, when they leave school, should "be active and informed citizens with an understanding and appreciation of Australia's system of government and civic life". The development of performance indicators for civics and citizenship education to measure student learning outcomes is underway.

Australia was perhaps fortunate to have had two successive governments in the 1990s with a common commitment to civics and citizenship education. There have been two main outcomes from this commitment. Schools, teachers and students have been provided with much needed and high quality teaching and learning resources for civics education. At the same time, there has been a heightening of the debate about civic issues in the community, the role of citizens, and particularly young people, in addressing those issues and the ways in which schools and the community can contribute to the education of an intelligent and sensitive citizenry.

There is little doubt that the impetus for the revival of civics and citizenship education in Australia came from policies pursued by successive Australian governments. Yet prior to action by government, important contributions to thinking about civics and citizenship issues had been made by teachers, parents, schools, government agencies, researchers and the Australian Senate itself. These took place at a time when there were no formal curriculum structures for civic and citizenship education.

Early post-war attempts at research relating to civics and citizenship sought to highlight ways in which social studies could become the vehicle for civics education (Rayner, 1951). Even then, surveys revealed that young people did not understand basic political terms like 'prime minister' and that the main learning requirement was 'a knowledge of the factual details of early English history' (Rayner, 1951, p.68). The

conclusion of the study was that 'pupils continue to leave school without a knowledge of the social terms essential for civic competence' (Rayner, 1951, p.69).

Yet the post war period in Australia witnessed concerted efforts to use social studies and associated subjects such as History as vehicles for civics and citizenship education. At the same time, there was also the view that civic competence and citizenship were much broader than any single subject in the curriculum could handle. This was a view that came very much from social studies thinkers in the United States and it influenced Australian thinking through the regular exchanges of educators that characterised the post-war period. One of those educators was Les Gordon, a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at Stanford University. On return to Australia he took up an influential position in the New South Wales Department of Education. His doctoral dissertation, *Improving the Program of Citizenship Education through the Social Studies in New South Wales Schools* (Gordon, 1958), can be seen almost as a blue print for social studies reforms in New South Wales in the 1960s and 1970s.

Another perspective on civic and citizenship education came from those who argued 'the primacy of pedagogy as the focus for the development of democratic citizenship' (Mellor and Elliott, 1996). As an argument, it has a long history in Australia going back to the earliest civics education debates. Its importance as an argument is that it places teachers at the centre of the citizenship formation process in a way that emphasising specific content does not. The way learning experiences are constructed, the climate that is created in schools and classrooms, the activities in which students engage: these were seen as the contexts in which citizenship is experienced and constructed for young people.

Yet very early in the post war period, Rayner (1951) noted the problems of civic literacy. Such problems seemed to recur in every survey that has tried to investigate what young people know about politics or political institutions. Perhaps of greater significance, however, was the research that has shown the lack of interest by young people in politics (Beresford and Phillips, 1997) and their perceived lack of efficacy in influencing political processes and politicians (Mellor, 1998). The results of such studies suggested, overall, a disengagement by young people in democratic processes. These were major issues taken up by two parliamentary committees (Senate Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training, 1989, 1991).

Thus while for most part the post war period witnessed the disintegration of formal programs of civics education, there remained considerable interest in the processes of citizenship formation. Some of this interest was curriculum based, some was classroom based and some of it was focussed on young people's knowledge and attitudes towards politics and the democratic system of government. It was a solid foundation on which to build an initiative in civics and citizenship education.

Yet the initiative itself also generated a spirited debate relating to civics and citizenship education in the mid-1990s. Kennedy (1996) captured some of it in a publication in which a number of writers provided considerable insight into the theoretical issues surrounding civics education (Lepani, 1996; Macintyre, 1996; Woods, 1996; Brennan, 1996 and Hogan et. al. 1996). The next section of this chapter will draw together the main issues that were identified as Australians began to rethink what it meant to reintroduce civics and citizenship education into the

curriculum of Australian schools. A good deal of what these writers had to say focused on future visions for Australia as a nation at the end of the twentieth century.

Hogan et. al, (1996) alluded to the idea that there are competing worldviews in which to embed civics education and whichever one was chosen would determine the function of the new civics. Woods (1996) and Macintyre (1996), in particular, shared a common world view - one which is based on a society that is more tolerant, more just and more open.

Woods wrote from the perspective of an Aboriginal person. She saw some glimmer of hope in the reconciliation process, a process with the potential to build 'bridges between Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders and the wider community' (p.2). Yet she did not underestimate the difficulties that lie ahead, 'overcoming individual and institutional racism is one of the biggest challenges of the reconciliation process' (p.2). Neither would she give up her identity to be subsumed under a common citizenship that does not recognise difference and diversity as positive rather than negative attributes. From this perspective, citizenship in the future needed to be inclusive of all rather than a few. It would value the identity of individuals and the contribution they are able to make to the common good.

Macintyre took up a similar theme when he identified multiculturalism, reconciliation and republicanism as the issues that currently excited debate about the basis of Australian national life. He had some confidence that young people would be able to deal with these issues in a more sophisticated way than people of his own generation because they have a 'comfortable familiarity with difference' (p.15). Yet he was left in no doubt from his experience as Chair of the Civics Expert Group what was needed in the future:

> It is not that all Australians enjoy civic equality, as submissions to the Civics Expert Group from the Australian and Torres Strait Islander Commission and the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Council of Australia, among others made clear. Rather, these organisations seek the affirmation of a citizenship that is inclusive of their members' specific identities and interests. (Civics Expert Group, 1994, p.15).

Each of these authors raised the central issue of values and their relationship to civics education. This is bound to be an issue of central concern at all levels. The Civics Expert Group settled for defining some core values: civility and the respect for the rule of law, concern for the welfare, rights and dignity of others and acceptance of diversity. This was a good starting point for it signalled that civics education must deal centrally with values. Good citizens cannot remain value neutral. Which values to promote in a pluralistic society will always raise debate, but it is a debate that must be encouraged. It is for this reason that Woods urged us 'to consider how we as a pluralistic society where difference and diversity are encouraged to draw strength from our differences rather than seeing our differences as divisive to any attempts to define common values'. (p.7) This was a significant challenge for the new civics.

Brennan also focused on some significant social transformations that are currently affecting schools in Australia. In her view, these transformations have led to an excessive concern with managerialism, centralisation and homogenisation of the

school curriculum. In this context, she suggested that schools themselves can be sites of resistance that can demonstrate citizenship in action. This is a very positive view of schools and the constructive role they can play in the broader society. If civics education can be such a view it will provide schools with an important role in shaping and developing the kind of values that can underpin a democratic society.

While the views of Woods, Macintyre and Brennan underlined the social transformations that were taking place in Australian society, Lepani highlighted the economic transformations. She posed a curious tension between the apparent ruthlessness of the new 'knowledge economy, with its global impetus for relentless organisational and product innovation to both gain international market share and defend domestic share' (p.17) and a new metaphysics that seeks to provide meaning in an increasingly disparate and fragmented world. Better and more efficient ways of doing things is an economic imperative and it can only be achieved through more and more learning. Yet the kind of learning needed is not the traditional kind of analytical learning but rather a deeper learning on a higher plane 'where one experiences a profound sense of union with all phenomena and whose natural quality is loving compassion' (p.19). For Lepani, citizens of the future would not only be caught up in profound economic change, but in spiritual change as well and she saw an important connection between the two.

It is of interest to speculate about the relationship between the vision of the future proposed by Macintyre and Woods on the one hand and Lepani on the other. It seems likely that the social transformations described by the first set of authors will go hand in hand with the economic transformation described by the latter author. In this sense, what were being described were complementary scenarios that suggested the life of future citizens would be characterised by profound changes, changes at the core of people's existence rather than changes on the periphery. This would seem to call for citizens who are active rather than passive, committed rather than disaffected and knowledge-rich rather than knowledge-poor. Participation in all of society's processes would be essential for future citizens, otherwise they will run the risk of being marginalised and treated like automatons rather than people. Underpinning the process of citizenship would be common values that provide meaning and purposefulness in this ever changing environment. The challenge for civics education, as seen by this particular set of writers, is to prepare young people who can not only survive in such a world but who can constantly transform it so that it is personally meaningful and socially beneficial.

The views expressed by these writers were not uncontested. Yet they give a flavour and sense of the thinking that was abroad as civics and citizenship education was being put on the policy agenda in Australia. They signal too how significant government actions can be in placing items on the policy agenda in as much as debate can be generated and new directions can be developed.

The IEA Civic Education Study, therefore, came at a time when Australian governments and academics had commenced a debate of some substance about the future. Civics and citizenship education was seen to be one way that young people could be prepared to contribute to that future in a positive way.

Whereas the People..., the report of the Civics Expert Group (1994), first canvassed Australian participation in the IEA Civic Education Study. An Australian

representative attended the first international meeting of the Study, but Australian participation did not eventuate till late 1997. At that time the initiative was taken by the Commonwealth Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training who agreed to Australia's involvement in Phase 1 of the Study. In early 1998 he agreed to participation in Phase 2 of the Study. The expected outcomes of Australian participation were:

- increased availability and effectiveness of educational research and development related to the international comparison of student learning outcomes on civic education;

- opportunities for national collaboration and contribution by key education stakeholders on civics and citizenship education learning outcomes.

While each country participating in the IEA Civic Education Study did so for distinctive reasons related to their particular national issues and concerns, they also shared a number of common concerns. Among these was a set of general policy issues that were relevant across national jurisdictions. Out of these concerns came a number of policy relevant questions. These questions have been reproduced in Table 1.1 which is based on *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries*, pp. 22-25:

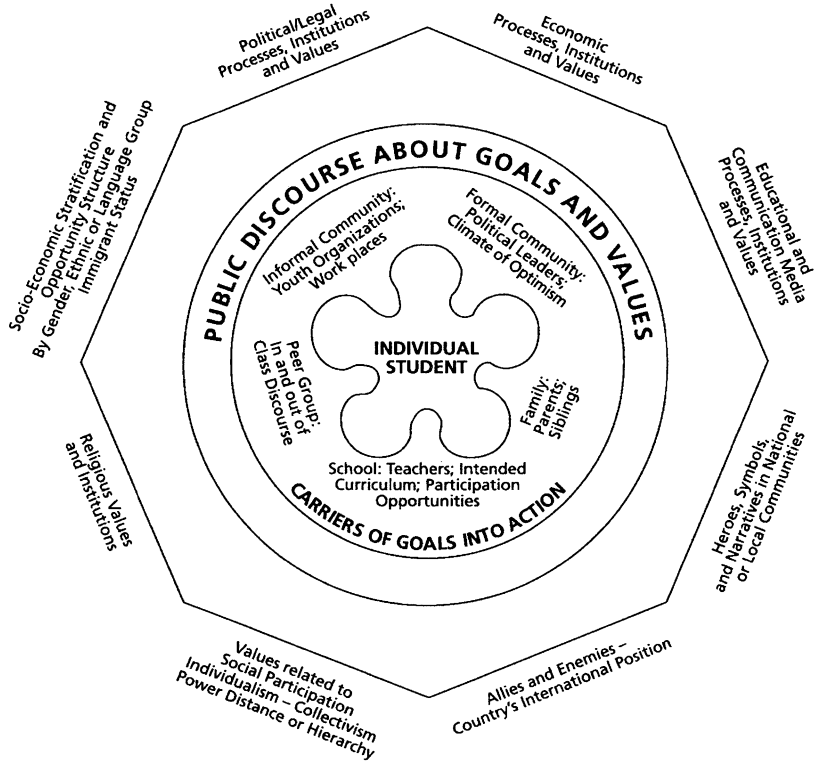
Table 1.1: Key Policy Questions for the IEA Civic Education Study

Policy Areas	Questions
ORGANISATION OF PROGRAMS	1. What is the status of citizenship as an explicit goal for schools?
	2. To what extent is there agreement among nations about priorities within formal civic education?
	3. Around what principles and through what courses are formal courses of civic education organised?
	4. To what extent does formal education deal with civic identity development in students
	5. To what extent is civic education intended to contribute to the resolution of inter-group conflicts and tensions?
STUDENTS	6. How do students define and understand the concept of citizenship and related issues?
	7. For what rights and responsibilities of participation are students being prepared in their own political system or society?
	8. Do male and female students develop different conceptions of citizenship and do they develop different roles in the political process?
	9. Are there socio economic differences in students' understanding of or attitudes to civic-related topics or in the way their civic education is structured?
TEACHERS AND TEACHING AND SCHOOLS	10. How do teachers deal with civic education in their teaching, and what is the influence of different types of classroom practices ?
	11. How well does the education of teachers prepare them to deal with the different facets of civic education?
	12. How does the way in which schools are organised influence students' civic education?

If these questions were to be addressed, there needed to be an underlying theoretical rationale relating to the acquisition of civic understandings, skills and values. Such a rationale had to perform multiple purposes 'guide the design and data analysis for the study and at the same time be rooted in the research literature of the various disciplines represented and be sensitive to the concrete needs of policy makers' (Torney-Purta, 1996a, p.10). It is the theoretical underpinning of the project that best reveals the images of civic education that were inherent in the project. The following section will focus on the way theory has constructed a particular view of civics education as the basis of the IEA Civic Education Study.

For the IEA Civic Education Study, civic education is embedded in the 'the public discourse and practices of the society' *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries* p.20. Drawing on ecological developmental psychology (Bronfenbrenner, 1988) and situated cognition (Lave and Wegner, 1991), the project constructed a model of the civic context in which the student is at the centre, influenced by both micro and macro systems:

Figure 1.2: IEA Civic Education Model



Influence at the micro level is exerted by 'carriers' or 'agents' with whom individuals come into contact - family, school, peers, neighbours but also by elements in the broader society such as media. The IEA study was primarily interested in two 'carriers' - school and peers. At the macro level (represented by the outer part of the octagon), are the institutional influences - the symbols, stories and values of national and local importance, including the international position of the country. There is a

significant interaction between the carriers and these outer dimensions of the octagon - carriers both participate in but also help to construct the public discourse around these dimensions. They then become significant mediators of the discourse for individual students.

How, then do students learn civics? This is a significant question because the model, as outlined above, might seem to suggest that individual students are simply subject to a range of environmental influences. For this reason, the project has relied on the work of Lave (1991), Greeno, Collins and Resnick (1996) and Lave and Wegner (1991) for whom:

> The external context is not viewed as a set of distinct stimuli or reinforcements but a set of social practices and interactions with other individuals who provide an ongoing stream of collaborative constructions of meaning and of responses to individual behaviour. Knowledge consists of the ability to participate in a community's practices, in using tools of material culture and in its processes of discourse. These communities of discourse and practice provide the situation for young people's development and progressively more complex use of concepts and practices. (Torney-Purta, 1996a, p.12)

Within this theoretical framework, students are seen to be active constructors of civic knowledge within a broader community consisting of teachers, peers and parents. They take part in and construct for themselves different discourses of citizenship and out of this participation emerges their own particular view of themselves as citizen.

The assumption underlying this view is that:

> Socialisation does not consist of adults explicitly teaching the young about topics such as rights and duties. The political community itself (and its everyday practices of discourse and communication) surrounds and provides a situation or context for the developing cognitions and identity of the young person. (Torney-Purta, 1996, p.12)

In this context, the process of becoming a citizen is not simply associated with the acquisition of certain knowledge and the practice of certain formal responsibilities such as voting. Students may well come into contact with such knowledge and will certainly need to be acquainted with their rights. As the model indicates, students will come into contact with much more than this. What is more, in different countries the context will differ - and thus the rationale for the international study. Do students construct citizenship differently in different contexts, and what accounts for this?

The theoretical foundations of the study are neither new nor original but nevertheless important because they communicate a particular image of civics. The IEA Study challenged the notion that civics education consisted of a static body of knowledge to be transferred to students. If that were the case, test design and construction would have been very easy - it would have consisted of questions about a particular body of knowledge and students would have got them either right or wrong. A constructivist approach to civics education, however, demands a test design that itself represents the fluidity inherent in constructivism.

The Study attempted to come up with such a design. Table 1.2 represents the data collection processes planned for the study:

Table 1.2: Data Collection Scheme, Type of Data by Data Source

Type of Data	Phase 1	Questionnaire		
		School	Teacher	Student
Context (Octagon)	x	x	x	X
Carriers (Circle)	x	x	x	x
Student capacities and Practices			x	x

(Torney-Purta, 1996a, p.15)

The important point to note here is that the influences on students were recognised as multiple. While the student remains at the centre of the study, and indeed is recognised as the unit of analysis for the study, she/he is embedded in contexts represented by the circle and the octagonal in Figure 1.2. These contexts are assumed to have had a 'cumulative influence' (Torney-Purta, 1996a, p.14) on students in ways unknown and unspecified.

What kinds of questions would be able to elicit student responses capable of indicating the growth of civic knowledge and attitudes? This, of course, was the central question for the IEA Study. The task, of course, was a considerable one - how can complexities associated with growth in civic learning be reduced to a number of questions on a test paper? The questions themselves aimed to get at some fundamental issues in our society. In the initial project brief these questions were outlined:

- student capacities to identify and describe defining characteristics of concepts, institutions and practices that currently exist in the domain of civics, political life, civil society and democracy;
- student capacities to identify, and skill in comparing and evaluating positions taken by others;
- students' conceptual networks associated with democracy and citizenship;
- attitudes with respect to aspects of democracy and civil society and its institutions, their nation, other nations, and social cohesion and diversity within their society;
- capacities, skill, interest in undertaking actions or practices which relate them to the political and civic process. (Torney-Purta, 1996a, p.19)

Research Design for the IEA Civic Education Study

There were two Phases of the IEA Civic Education Study:

Phase 1: Consisted of qualitative case studies of civics education as it was practiced in the participating countries. The results of Phase 1 have already been made available (Torney-Purta, J., Schwille, J. & Amadeo, J. (1999). The data in the case studies provided 'the material from which the testing framework was developed. This framework is similar to the intended curriculum on which tests in other IEA studies have been based' (*Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries*, p.28).

Phase 2: Consisted of the administration and analysis of a three part Student Questionnaire made up of a test and survey of civics education items, as well as the collection of background demographics. The administration took place across twenty-eight national jurisdictions and involved almost 90,000 14 year old students, including 3,331 Australian students.

Test construction was based on data from the case studies collected in Phase 1, examination of proposed topics by National Research Coordinators and Project Managers, the defining of types of items for inclusion in the instrument and examination of items that had been included in the 1971 IEA Civic Study. This activity led to the construction of a matrix of Item Types and Domains as shown in Table 1.3:

Table 1.3: Domains and Item Types Used in the IEA Civic Education Study

Domains	Item Types				
	1.Knowledge	2. Skills	3. Concepts	4. Attitudes	5. Actions
Domain 1 *Democracy/ Citizenship*					
Domain 11 *National Identity International Relations*					
Domain 111 *Social Cohesion/ Diversity*					

In the final test, there were 38 Type 1 and 2 items. The survey consisted of 52 Type 3 items, 62 Type 4 items and 22 Type five items. (*Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries*, p.32).

Benefit of International Studies

The opportunity to participate in an international study is an important one because it exposes both Australian curricula and Australian students to the scrutiny of a larger audience and a diverse set of assumptions and understandings. At the same time, the rigor imposed by IEA studies means that there can be confidence in the results and in the processes associated with the study.

While international studies have the potential to demonstrate the diversity of curriculum, they can also show up curriculum commonalities across countries. While cultures differ and the priorities of governments are often unpredictable, the discovery of what national jurisdictions have in common can be an important finding, especially in the age of international competitiveness.

IEA studies over the years have been centrally concerned with student achievement and its variation across countries. This remains an important issue for investigation and it can only be addressed in an international study. Aligning curriculum, school structures, teacher characteristics and student achievement remains a key policy objective that the results of international studies can contribute to in a quite significant way.

Structure of the Australian Report

Subsequent chapters of this report will provide detailed information on the psychometric properties of the test items, the sample Australian populations, and test and survey administration procedures. The substantive nature of the items and scales is described and analysed, and this analysis is conducted with a view to the Australian curriculum context. The performance of Australian students on all aspects of the student instrument will be analysed and described, and will be compared to the international performance. There is a chapter on the teacher and school context of the provision of civic education. Finally there is a discussion of the major findings, with some consideration of implications of the IEA Civic Education Study for Australian policy makers and practitioners.

CHAPTER 2
ADMINISTRATION OF THE STUDY IN AUSTRALIA

Scope of the Study

Phases 1 and 2 of the IEA Civics Education Project in Australia

The Phase 1 report: *Civics Education Across Countries: Twenty-four National Case Studies from the IEA Civic Education Project* speaks of the reasons for having a two-phase study in the following terms:

> The first and overarching goal of the study is to identify and examine in a comparative framework the ways in which young people are prepared to undertake their role as citizens in democracies and societies aspiring to democracy... We wish to obtain a picture of how young people are initiated into the various levels and types of political community in which they are likely to become members. (1999, p15)

The traditional IEA strategy of an explication of intended curricula and curriculum documentation was recognised as inadequate for civic education, where pedagogy and context so condition the learning. It was regarded as an especially incomplete process when the broader political and civic cultures are under-going change. It was recognised as important that both of these contexts be understood. So the two phase approach of case-study and survey was adopted, an innovation for the IEA.

Phase 1, the Case Study phase of the Civic Education Study, incorporated an examination of the array of social-political factors that potentially affect student learning in civic education through the conduct of qualitative national case studies. The national case studies varied greatly between countries both in style and in scale. Generally a literature review and summary of curricula delivery were achieved. Also the 15 policy questions, developed by the ICC with input from the NRCs, were used to focus the case studies and the consideration of the appropriateness of certain issues to the items being developed for the survey instruments for Phase 2 of the study. Phase 2 was the Survey period of the Study.

Development of the International Instruments, with National Variations

Three instruments were developed and used with three distinct samples: Students, Teachers and Schools (administrators). In an iterative process, the initial bank of items considered appropriate was examined and discussed by the NRCs and other experts from the participating countries in a series of review and refinement meetings, between 1997 and 1999. All item development referenced the Conceptual Model and the Domains which had been identified and adopted in Phase 1. (See Table 1.3)

Pre-piloting of 80 cognitive items for the Student Questionnaire occurred in convenience samples of students in most participating countries in late 1997. After review of the analyses of the student responses to these pre-piloted items, a number sufficient for two trial forms of cognitive and attitudinal items was selected for trialing in most countries during mid-1998. After due analysis and review of the trialed items, sufficient were selected (with a view to the conceptual mapping) to make a single international student instrument. The 38 cognitive items which

resulted from the 68 trialed items all exceeded the IEA minimum criteria for psychometric quality. These 38 items, the test items, constituted Part 1 of the Student Questionnaire. Part 2 contained student background questions. Part 3, the survey section of the instrument, consisted of 146 questions on Civic Concepts, Attitudes and Actions.

The selected questions for all three parts of the Student Questionnaire were incorporated in national instruments (some national items were added in some cases), and translated where appropriate. Translation of the instruments into our national language was not necessary as they had been developed in English. However a substantial cultural translation was undertaken, to ensure that the wording of the items matched the Australian situation and the understandings of the target populations in Australia.

The Student, Teacher and School Questionnaires (limited trialing of the second instrument also occurred) were administered during 1999 by national teams in the 28 participating countries. The national data were cleaned at ACER and sent to the IEA International Coordinating Centre (ICC) for analysis. Results of the analyses were then sent by the IEA to NRCs and project managers, who met in June 2000 to talk through the national and international analyses, the scales proposed by the IEA, and the structure of the international report. A more detailed description of the administrative and framework methodology of Phase 2 is available in chapter 2 of the international report. (*Citizenship and Education In Twenty-eight Countries*)

Target Populations in Phase 2

The Australian Sample of Schools and Students

The internationally desired population was defined as:

> The population includes all students enrolled on a full time basis in that grade in which most students aged 14:00 to 14:11 are found at the time of testing. Time of testing is the first week of the 8th month of the school year. (*Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries*)

Grade 9 was chosen (in 1997) as the target grade in Australia, as 72 per cent of the students in year 9 in July 1996 were 14 years. In Australia testing took place between September and November 1999, as it did in other southern hemisphere countries.

Selecting the sample of students for the Civic Education Study had two stages. Firstly, schools were selected, then classes within the schools were selected. At the first stage, schools were sampled using a probability proportional to size. This method of sampling ensured appropriate representation of government, Catholic and independent schools. The IEA required the Australia sample be of 150 schools. The sample structure gives a good estimate for Australia overall, but it does not enable between-state comparisons.

Table 2.1 shows the participating Australian school sample by system. Of the 150 schools initially sampled 119 agreed to participate, though five of them did not, in the event, return the materials. Thus 115 schools from the original sample participated. The 27 replacement schools were drawn from within the sampling frame in accordance with the stratified cluster design. The sample met IEA requirements.

There were many reasons for this less-than-enthusiastic response to the invitation to participate in the study. For schools there was a considerable variation in the congruence between participation in the study and their engagement in civics education in both the classrooms and administrative school structures.

Table 2.1: Australian Achieved School Sample

School Systems	Participating schools from original sample	Participating replacement schools	Total Participating Schools
State	79	17	96
Catholic	23	3	26
Independent	18	2	20
TOTAL	120	22	142

Civics and citizenship education is not part of the core curriculum in Australia. Indeed it did not have, at the time of survey, an agreed formal space in all Australian schools' curricula. Consequently, the status afforded civics and citizenship curriculum in the Australian education systems is variable between States, systems and individual schools, and it is frequently quite low. This situation was reported in Phase 1 of the IEA Civic Education Study[1]. Some schools, in mid-1999, had not introduced any specific civics curriculum associated with the federal government's *Discovering Democracy* program and were concerned their students would therefore not be fairly prepared for the Civics Study. Some found the time commitment required was greater than they could justify in a climate of structural change in schools in some states.

Table 2.2: Australian Achieved Student Sample

School Systems	Students from schools in original sample	Students from replacement schools	Total students	Total students as a % of total cohort
State	1778	390	2168	65
Catholic	509	151	660	20
Independent	401	102	503	15
TOTAL	2688	643	3331	100%

The second stage of the process was selection of the within-school sample. IEA required that the sample was to consist of one intact classroom randomly selected from the full range of the Year 9 classes. The class chosen was not to be tracked by ability and was, where possible, to be in a civic-related subject (e.g., history, social studies). Australia experienced a number of difficulties with these requirements.

All schools had difficulty with the requirement that all Year 9 students be equally eligible, that is that any class could be selected. In Australia, most schools at Year 9 offer an elective curriculum for subjects other than English and Maths, which are universally core curriculum. Generally there are prescriptive curriculum

[1] Torney-Purta, J., Schwille, J. and Amadeo, J. (1999). *Civic Education Across Countries: Twenty-four National Case Studies from the IEA Civic Education Project*. Amsterdam and Washington: IEA and National Council for the Social Studies.

requirements for the year level, but not for the whole of the year. Thus students at Year 9 must experience at least a semester of each of the Key Learning Areas (KLA), but in some systems and schools there is no requirement that they attend classes in all KLAs for the *whole* of the school year. Thus, in many of the schools contacted for participation in the study, many Year 9 students were not *currently* having classes in Studies in Society and the Environment (SOSE), which is the most appropriate curriculum locus for Civics. Thus to have randomly selected the sample from SOSE classes would not have had all students eligible for selection. However they were all attending English classes, which is a compulsory curriculum for all years of schooling in Australia. Much informal civics and citizenship curriculum occurs in English classes, especially in discussion of issues.

For these reasons the decision was taken to initially randomly select from the whole Year 9 student cohort in the school, via the English classes. In schools where all Year 9 students were currently studying SOSE, these classes were used as the basis of the selection. Some schools linked their participation in the study to particular teachers and they then selected their class, generally one of the SOSE classes currently running at Year 9. The integrity of the class sampling process was closely monitored by the Project Manager at ACER and the IEA, but it was not a straight forward process.

Those schools which were actively engaged in teaching citizenship values within the school, either through specific curriculum or other participatory processes, were more interested in the study and more readily able to become engaged in the outcomes the study's instrument measured. These teachers and schools could envisage positive professional developmental outcomes of participation in the study, for staff and the school, and thus for students too. For these schools there was a considerable congruence between participation in the study and their engagement in civics education in both the classrooms and administrative school structures. They were more likely to agree to join the study.

Table 2.3: Classes in Australian Cohort

School Systems	Co-educational Classes	Male Classes	Female Classes	Total Classes
State	91	1	4	96
Catholic	16	3	7	26
Independent	15	1	4	20
TOTAL	122	5	15	142

The distribution of female and male students within the sample was an issue over which the study had little control. As is evident from Table 2.3 and Table 2.4, the cohort revealed a gender bias towards female students, both in classes and in total numbers. Weighting was used to ensure that different sub-groups (including gender) that constitute the sample are properly and proportionally represented

Table 2.4: Gender Distribution of Students in Australian Cohort by System

Students	State School	Catholic School	Independent School	Total School	% of total cohort
Female	1142	370	303	1815	54
Male	1026	290	200	1516	46
TOTAL	2168	660	503	3331	100%

Administration of Instruments in Schools

Arrangements with School Co-ordinators

Once selection of classes of students and of teachers had been negotiated and made within the schools, the survey materials and manual containing the procedural instructions for administration of testing, were delivered. Upon the delivery of this very substantial package, the teacher who had been appointed as School Co-ordinator for the study sometimes quailed at the scale of the task he or she had been given. Some just never returned the materials, despite the urgings and assistance offered by the project manager. Many needed support to deal with the expectations contained in the documentation, and to have the other sampled teachers in their school complete and return the Teacher and School Questionnaires.

This combination of selection criteria of classes of students had ramifications when identifying teachers to complete the Teacher Questionnaires for the survey. The initial selection was an English teacher (often of the first sampled class), a SOSE teacher, (sometimes of the whole selected class, or of a large number of the students in the selected class), and the Curriculum Co-ordinator. Many of the respondents had difficulties with the structure and some of the questions on the Teacher and School Questionnaires, because the assumptions regarding the nature of the civic curriculum provision were inappropriate to their situation.

The time commitment for completing the Teacher and School Questionnaires was considerable and the direct benefit to teachers and schools of the engagement in such research was not obvious. It feels far removed from the world of classroom teachers. Indeed it is distant, given the lack of congruence experienced by many individuals and disciplines for the ideas contained within the survey.

The response goal was 3 completed copies of the Teacher Questionnaire per school, and one copy of the School Questionnaire per school, to be completed by the school principal of a delegate. Table 2.5 shows the response rate teachers and schools made to the questionnaires sent to them. The Australian response rates met the benchmark established by IEA as that which maintains the validity of the data.

Table 2.5: Australian School and Teacher Questionnaire Returns

School Systems	Schools in System Cohorts	Completed School Questionnaires	Completed Teacher Questionnaires
State	96	79	231
Catholic	26	23	68
Independent	20	18	53
TOTAL	142	120	352

At all points in Australia in this study there was constant contact by letter, fax and especially phone, between the Project Manager and school personnel. This communication process was essential to ensure schools joined and remained in the study. Much coaxing was required, at all decision points along the road of participation. To personalise the communication process was the best way to keep individuals (and schools) engaged in the study. The Voucher, (for $100 worth of educational product) offered by ACER to participating schools, was not seen by teachers to assist greatly, though it may well have encouraged the principals to agree to allow their school to participate.

Timing of the Student Questionnaire.

Completing the whole of the Student Questionnaire was expected to require two average periods of class time (approximately 80 minutes). Thirty five minutes was allocated (in all countries) for answering the questions in Part One of the questionnaire. Part Two was expected to take only 5 minutes. The time allocated for students to respond to Part Three of the Student Questionnaire was 40 minutes. A break of at least 5 minutes was taken by students between completing Parts 2 and commencing to answer Part 3. No concerns were expressed by Australian School Co-ordinators with regard to there being insufficient time for students to complete the questionnaires in the time allocated. Chapter 3 presents the results of Australian students' responses to the background items.

Analysis and Scaling Used

Each country submitted their data to the IEA Data Processing Centre (DPC). Data underwent rigorous cleaning procedures to ensure the creation of the international database was of the highest quality. Weights were assigned to the data, in order to make an appropriate estimation of population characteristics based on the Civics sample. Item statistics were computed for all test and survey items.

The IEA Civic Education Study has used item response theory (IRT) methods to create a scale for reporting the cognitive items and a scale for the survey items, for use in describing the students' results. The advantage of IRT is that it allows measures of both item difficulty and student ability to be projected at the same time. The scores permit comparisons between countries' means and the international mean, as well as between one country's mean and that of another.

A one-parameter model was used to scale the 38 cognitive items, generating the civic knowledge scale. Internationally the mean of the scale was set at 100, with a standard deviation of 20. For the survey items the partial credit model was applied. Internationally the mean of the scale was set at 10, with a standard deviation of 2.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis was undertaken to investigate the theoretically expected dimensions and scales produced from the survey items of the Civic Education Study.

Structure of Instruments and Content Coverage

Student Questionnaire: Items Defined by Domain and Type

The NRCs were consulted in deciding on the core international domains, and in the decision that the greatest emphasis in the survey of student knowledge should be on Domain 1: Democracy. (See Table 1.3) An additional to the content framework was the identification of 5 types of item. Examples of each type were to be included for surveying in the Student Questionnaire, and were to map across each of the three Domains. In Appendix B a listing of the short title of each item enables the reader of this report to ascertain its content, and thus the domain it inhabits, as well as its type. (See Tables B5.1-B5.6 *Achievement in Civic Knowledge in Australia*)

Type 1 and 2 Items

Type 1 items assess student knowledge of content and constituted the Content Knowledge Sub-Scale. Type 2 items assess skills in interpretation of material with civic or political content and constituted the Interpretative Skills Sub-Scale (including extrapolating from short text passages and interpreting cartoons). These cognitive items had keyed correct answers. Together the two sub-scales formed the Civic Knowledge Scale. Part 1 contained these 38 items of Types 1 and 2 and they formed the test section of the Student Questionnaire. Chapter 4 of this report provides an analysis of the internationally comparative findings on the two cognitive sub-scales, and Total Civic Knowledge. (Figure 4.1) Chapter 5 presents a detailed analysis of the results of Australian students' responses to the cognitive items.

Both the Type 1 and 2 items appear predominantly in Domain 1, as had been deemed appropriate by NRCs in Phase 1 of the study. In the case of the Type 1 items, of which there were 25, each item fitted into one of the three domains and was an item which tested 'knowledge of content'. Figure 2.1 is an example of a Type 1 item which is also a Domain 1 item. It shows the common structure of most items on Part 1 of the Student Questionnaire. The figure displays the question or proposition to be considered followed by the four alternative responses from which students choose one as their answer.

Figure 2.1: Example of a Type 1 Item

Which of the following is most likely to cause a government to be called non- democratic?

A. ☐ People are not allowed to criticise the government.

B. ☐ The political parties criticise each other often.

C. ☐ People must pay very high taxes.

D. ☐ Every citizen has the right to a job.

The correct answer for this item is A: 'People are not allowed to criticise the government'. The parameters of international student responses by country were 38 to 73 per cent correct. The international mean was 53 per cent, and the Australian percentage correct was 51 per cent. To select the correct response demonstrated that students had knowledge of the basic properties of democratic governments, and were able to apply it to the proposition by selecting the criteria most likely to create an undemocratic process of governance. It was a relatively difficult item. For a more detailed analysis of this item see Chapter 5: *The Sample Items*.

The 13 Type 2 items tested 'skills in interpretation', across all domains. Figure 2.2 is an example of a Type 2 item which is a Domain 3 item.

Figure 2.2: Example of a Type 2 Item

Two people work at the same job but one is paid less than the other. The principle of equality would be violated if the person is paid less because of ...

A. ☐ fewer educational qualifications.

B. ☐ less work experience.

C. ☐ working for fewer hours.

D. ☐ gender.

The correct answer for this item is D: 'gender'. The parameters of international student responses by country were 29 to 76 per cent. The international mean was 50 per cent, and the Australian mean was 66 per cent. Domain 3 encompasses social cohesion and discrimination, and this item deals with the issue of pay equity / discrimination (as opposed to other difficulties) in employment. This item is a Type 2 item because it seeks to have students know what is discrimination and then apply it to a particular situation. It was a relatively slightly more difficult item than the previous item had proved to be. For a more detailed analysis of this item see Chapter 5: *The Sample Items*. Relativities across the eight sample items from Part 1 of the test are also discussed at greater depth in Chapter 5.

Types 3, 4 and 5 Items

Three other item types were developed to represent other understandings students might have. These items were nested in Columns 3-5 of the Domain Map (Table 1.3 and 2.6). Items of Type 3 assess how students understand concepts such as democracy and citizenship (i.e. Concepts). Items of Type 4 assess students' attitudes such as feelings of trust about the government (i.e. Attitudes). Items of Type 5 assess students' own expected participatory actions relating to politics (i.e. Actions). The measures used to compare students' responses, within and between countries, were the degree of positiveness shown in the responses. All measures in the study were based on the model of citizenship embedded in Figure 1.2.

Items of types 3, 4, and 5 formed the Survey section; Part 3 of the Student Questionnaire. These items did not have correct answers. Rather they became known as the attitudinal items as they were phrased in a way to ascertain students' opinions on propositions contained in the items. Figure 2.3 is an example of a Domain One, Type Three item. It begins with a proposition.

Figure 2.3: Example Domain 1- Type 3 Item

When many different organisations/associations are available/exist for people who wish to belong to them that is _____

In response to the proposition, the students could choose one of the following alternatives to register their opinion

'very good for democracy', 'fairly good for democracy', 'fairly bad for democracy', 'very bad for democracy' or 'Don't know/ does not apply'

This formulation allowed the inclusion of threats to democracy (for eg. political corruption) as well as other positive factors.

Students are able to answer such items much more quickly than test items which have correct and incorrect answers. Part Three of the Student Questionnaire contained 52 items of Type 3, 70 items of Type 4, and 24 items of Type 5. Part Three of the instrument asked about students' perceptions of the issues listed under Concepts, Attitudes and Actions in Table 2.6. Chapter 6 presents the results of Australian students' responses to the three types of attitudinal items

These five types of items, can be mapped onto the Domains, resulting in a matrix of the Study's central foci referred to in Chapter 1. (See Table 1.3) The map of IEA Civics Domains 1-3 and Item Types 1-5 (See Table 2.6) incorporates the international Domain matrix, and also the identification numbers and letters of all the Columns 1-5 items, by Domain. This table will be frequently referenced through the rest of this national report.

Table 2.6: Map of IEA Civics Domains 1-3 and Item Types 1-5

	Type 1: Content Knowledge	Type 2: Skills in Interpretation	Type 3: Conceptual	Type 4: Attitudes	Type 5: Actions
Domain 1 Democracy	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 27, 28, 29, 30	14, 23, 24, 25, 33, 34, 35, 38	Democracy, Citizenship, A, B, C, D	Tolerance, Political Efficacy, Pol Interest Trust in Institutions, Opportunity Structures H, I, L, M	Trust, in Media, Pol Actions D, L
Domain 2 Sense of National Identity	16, 21	31, 32, 36	Citizenship B, D, E	Nationalism Trust, Attitudes to Nation C, E	Actions Pol Comm'n, Pol Particp'n, Freedom of opinion
Domain 3 Social Cohesion/ Diversity	5	26, 37	Democracy, Citizenship, Scope (i.e. success of cohesion) Government Responsibilities B, C	Opportunity Structures, Minority and Women's Rights, Immigrants F, G, H	Actions, Learning in Schools, School Ethos J, K, N

Notes:

- Columns 1 and 2 items have been mapped to the 3 Domains, on Knowledge and Skills. (listed by item number)
- Column 3-5 items have been mapped to the 3 Domains, on Conceptual, Attitudes and Actions. (listed by item section letter indicator)

Appendix B of this report contains a series of tables showing the details of the 38 cognitive items identified by number and short title, by Domain (including the subsets of each) and Type, with Australian and international means, and the international item parameters. (See Tables B5.1-B5.6)

Part Two of the Student Questionnaire sought background information about the students. (age, gender, place of birth, information about family, especially parents' education, the student's educational aspirations and membership and engagement in social and 'political' activities.) This data was analysed, nationally and internationally. Chapter 3 of this report displays the background information about the Australian students. The data analysis was utilised to provide insights and

explanations of the student knowledge and attitudinal findings. Some of these analyses are reported in Chapters 5 and 6 of this report.

A short period at the end of the second testing session was reserved for countries to administer nationally developed items. There were no national items for the Australian students, as trialing had not resulted in satisfactory items.

Teacher Questionnaire

Part 1 of the Teacher Questionnaire asked for information about the civic-related subjects currently being taught, the years of teaching experience, academic and professional training, in what disciplines, and the professional development which had been undertaken in civic-related areas. In Part 2, their views on civic education, its value to students, the role of the school in providing it, and what students needed to learn to become 'good citizens' were sought. Part 3 dealt with 'The Teaching of Civic Education Related Subjects, Activities and Lessons'. Teachers' opinions were requested as to the importance they attached to 20 civics topics, the confidence they felt in dealing with each topic, and their judgement on the opportunity their students had had up to Year 9 to learn each topic. Part 4 asked various questions about instruction and assessment methods the teachers used, and also how civic education could best be improved in their school. Part 5 asked about 'Learning Goals': values, skills and knowledge. Teachers' views on 'Students' Participation in School Life' were sought in Part 6. The Teacher Questionnaire was trialed in a range of the participating countries, and changes were made to accommodate the difficulties experienced.

It can be seen from this set of questions the difficulty some of the teachers who had been selected as respondents would have had. The tension, previously explained in this chapter, is evident here. In attempting to fulfil the IEA requirements of a random class sample (that is first selecting English classes, and only subsequently Social Education classes) resulted in many of the English teachers not being able to respond to Part 3 or Part 4 (unless they happened also to be a SOSE teacher). The third selection group of teachers was Curriculum Co-ordinators, and they also may have had difficulty responding to Parts 3 and 4 (unless they were teaching SOSE subjects).

Researchers have always had difficulties with developing questionnaires to be administered across education systems, and the added dimension of cross national application makes for a most demanding task. Complexities associated with analysing were considerable. In the event, 352 teachers responded and 251 of these were teachers of the tested class. In the report, *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries*, the latter formed the total cohort for analysis. The Australian analysis uses a larger number of the responses than this number. The findings in relation to the Australian teacher data are presented in Chapter 7 of this report.

School Questionnaire

The School Questionnaire was designed to be answered by the School Principal. Questions about the Principal's experience, and the number of teachers of civic-related subjects in the school. There were questions about the civics education curriculum currently delivered in the school, and the organisations available to students to join, within and outside the school, (including community and school

governance groups). The Principal's views about best way to deliver civic education in the school and the importance of certain values and knowledge were sought. Information about the levels of parent involvement in student learning, and the frequency of the occurrence of certain anti-social problems in the school was sought. A characterisation as to the quality of relationships between the students, staff and parents and their attitudes to the school was also requested.

The questions in this instrument should not have presented any difficulties for Principal or their administrative officers, but it was demanding of considerable time and effort. Given the low profile of civics education as a subject in the current curriculum options available to students in Australian schools, it is to the credit of the participating schools that such a high rate of response was achieved. Such was not the case in a range of the other participating countries.

The School Questionnaire was not trialed, data collection was not consistently achieved across countries and cross-country analysis of the data was fraught with problems. The result of these difficulties was that no reporting from the School Questionnaire data occurred in the report, *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries.* Preliminary analysis of the Australian data was conducted, but it was decided to not include all the findings in this report, because it was believed more detailed analysis is required to make effective use of the data. However some analysis of the Australian school data is reported in Chapter 7, in conjunction with the reporting of teacher data. Together these data convey a comprehensive picture of the context of civic education in Australian schools in 1999. Many of the findings are ones which are still relevant today.

CHAPTER 3
THE AUSTRALIAN STUDENTS

Introduction

This chapter provides a profile of the Australian student sample, focusing on the data that were collected in Part 2 of the Student Questionnaire. The majority of questions asked students to mark the response category appropriate to them. Some of the questions required a 'yes/no' response. The chapter reports on the age and gender distribution of the sample, the socioeconomic background and other family-related characteristics of the students, their educational aspirations, and some of the activities engaged in outside school hours. Preliminary analysis included identification of gender and socioeconomic status as a fertile source of secondary analysis. However, the relationship of socioeconomic status and these other indicators to civics education in Australia will be the subject of future analysis by the national research committee and secondary data analysts.

The data analysis in the text, tables and figures in this chapter are based upon the percentage of survey respondents who answered the relevant question. Missing data ranged from approximately two to 22 per cent and included the students who did not complete this section. Specific reference to missing data will be made when it is regarded as significant.

Personal Characteristics

Age

The international population for Phase 2 of the IEA Civics study is defined as

> all students enrolled on a full time basis in that grade in which most students aged 14 years to 14 years 11 months are found in the time of testing. Time of testing is the first week of the 8th month of the school year (*Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries*, p. 33).

In Australia, Year 9 students were sampled. Depending upon the Australian state or territory in which the student resides, Year 9 represents the second or third year of secondary schooling. Testing was conducted in September to November 1999. The distribution of students' ages at the time of testing is reported in Table 3.1. Nearly 65 per cent students were 14 years of age. The average age at time of testing, in years and months, was 14 years and 9 months.

Table 3.1: Age at time of testing, September – November 1999

Age (years)	13 & under	14	15	16 & over
Per cent	8	66	26	1

Gender

Females are slightly over-represented in the Australian sample. Females comprised 51 per cent[1] of the Australian Year 9 population in 1999, compared with 54 per cent of the study sample. This over-representation is a reflection of the types of schools included in the sample. Among the co-educational schools in the sample, approximately equal numbers of males and females participated in the study. More female schools than male schools agreed to participate in the study, and this is reflected in the gender breakdown of single sex school students who participated in the study. Of the students from single sex schools included in the sample, 76 per cent were female and 24 per cent were male. (These percentages are unweighted data.)

Due to the gender imbalance in the sample, all analyses for this report were conducted for the total sample, and separately for males and females. Where significant gender differences were found, the results are presented separately for males and females. Where males and females perform similarly, only the results for the total sample are presented.

Cultural Background

Ethnicity

Overall, 90 per cent of students indicated they were born in Australia, of whom a fifth had one or more parent who was an immigrant. Slightly less than four per cent of students indicated they were of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin.

Approximately a tenth of the students were born overseas – four per cent from Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States, two per cent from a South-east Asian country and one per cent from an Eastern or Western European country. Two per cent of students were born overseas, in other countries.

The average age of students born overseas, on arrival in Australia, was 6.6 years and ranged from one to 15 years old. Four per cent of the total cohort had arrived in Australia by five years old and a further three per cent of the students by their tenth birthday.

Table 3.2: Country of Birth of Students and Parents

Country of Birth	Per cent
Australian born	69
Australian born, with one or more parents being an immigrant to Australia	21
Born overseas (Canada, Ireland, NZ, South Africa, UK, and USA	4
Born overseas (South east Asian country)	2
Born overseas (Eastern or Western Europe)	1
Born overseas: Other	2

[1] Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Schools Australia 1999*. Australian Government Printer.

Language Spoken in the Home

The large majority (92 per cent) of the Australian students reported they always or almost always spoke English at home. Six per cent of students spoke English sometimes and two per cent of students never spoke English at home. Table 3.3 shows the language spoken by the country of birth of the students and their parents.

Table 3.3: Country of Birth of Student and Parents by Language Spoken at Home

	Speaks English at home ...		
Country of birth of student and parents	Always or almost always	Sometimes	Never
Australian born	97	2	1
Australian born, with one or more parents being an immigrant to Australia	89	10	1
Born overseas (Canada, Ireland, NZ, South Africa, UK, and USA)	90	7	3
Born overseas (South east Asian country)	51	38	11
Born overseas (Eastern or Western Europe)	49	36	15
Born overseas: Other	42	42	16

Of the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students, 9 per cent reported never speaking English at home, 5 per cent reported sometimes speaking English at home, and 86 per cent reported always or almost always speaking English at home.

Home background

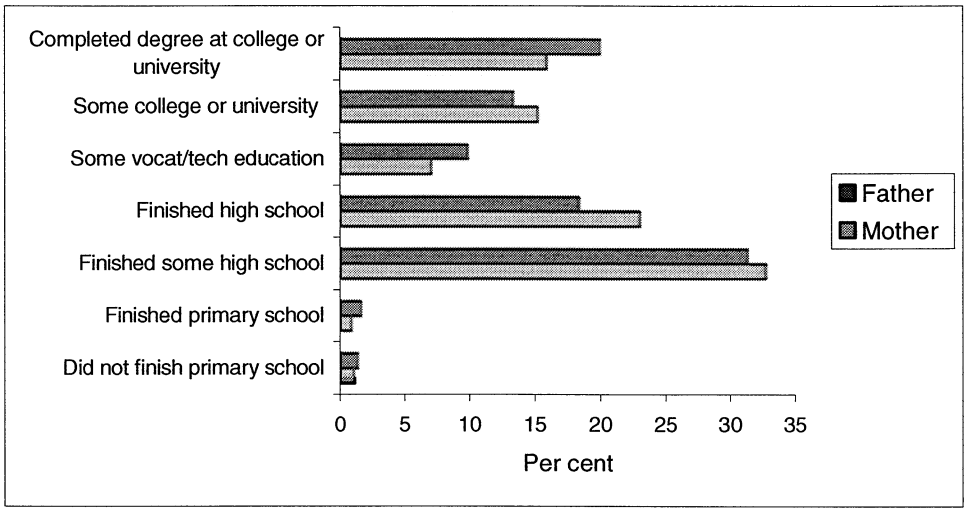
The data collected relating to home background included educational background of parents, numbers of books, number of newspapers and living arrangements. In the past, IEA studies have used some of these constructs as indicators of family socio-educational environment.

Parents' Education Levels

Students indicated, from a list provided, the highest level of education reached by their mother and father. The levels ranged from 'did not complete primary school' to 'completed a bachelor's degree at a college or university'. The percentages of their responses are shown in Figure 3.1. Students in all participating countries had difficulty answering this question, with missing data of up to 30 per cent. Approximately 20 per cent of Australian students did not complete this question. The findings showed that approximately a third of the mothers and fathers had not completed secondary schooling.

There were more fathers (43 per cent) than mothers (38 per cent) who undertook education after secondary school and, even though five per cent more mothers than fathers actually completed secondary school, fewer of them went on to complete either a vocational or tertiary qualification.

Figure 3.1: Educational Levels Obtained by Mother and Father



Household Composition

Eighty three per cent of the students lived with both parents (this could have included a step-parent or guardian). Ten per cent of students lived primarily with their mother, stepmother or a female guardian and two per cent of students lived primarily with their father, stepfather or male guardian. Four per cent of students did not live with either of their parents or a guardian. Table 3.4 shows the details.

Table 3.4: Parents/guardians Who Live With the Student Most or All of the Time

Parent/Guardian	Per cent
Both parents	83
Mother (or stepmother or female guardian)	10
Father (or stepfather or male guardian)	2
Neither parent	5

The average number of people living in the home was 4.6. Six per cent of students lived with more than six people.

Reading Materials in the Home

The number of books in the home can be interpreted as a proxy for the emphasis placed on education, the resources available to acquire and support literacy, and, more generally speaking, for the academic support a student finds in his or her family. Students were asked for an estimate of how many books there were in their home, excluding magazines. Five categories, ranging from 'up to ten' to 'more than 200 books' were provided for students to identify the number of books in their home, excluding magazines, newspapers or books for schools.

Thirty nine per cent of the Australian students indicated they had more than 200 books in their home. Almost a quarter of the students had between 101 and 200 books. A fifth of the students had between 51 and 100 books, fifteen per cent of students had between 11 and 50 books and only four per cent of students indicated

they had fewer than ten books in the home. On average there were more books in the homes of students who were born in Australia, compared to students born overseas. This variable was used in the path analysis discussed in Chapter 8 of this report.

An additional question asked students if they received a newspaper daily at home. Fifty per cent of Australian students indicated their household received a newspaper daily.

Table 3.5: Resources in the Home

Number of books	Per cent
None	1
1-10	2
11-50	14
51-100	20
101-200	23
More than 200	39

Daily newspaper	Per cent
Yes	55
No	45

An analysis of the resources in the home, in terms of the home composition was conducted. The following table shows the details.

Table 3.6: Resources in the Home by Number of Parents in the Home

Resources	Parents in household			
	Both parents	Mother only	Father only	Neither
Daily newspaper				
Yes	57	42	36	53
No	43	58	64	47
Number of books				
None	1	1	1	6
1-10	2	4	8	2
11-50	13	16	22	12
51-100	20	21	24	15
101-200	22	27	8	22
More than 200	41	31	37	43

Students Participating in Clubs or Organisations

The majority of Australian students indicated they were involved in a club or organisation. The most common organisations students were involved in were a sports organisation or team (84 per cent), an art, music or drama organisation (48 per cent) and a charity collecting money for a social cause (47 per cent). About the same percentage of students (approximately thirty per cent) participated in a student council/school parliament, a group conducting voluntary activities to help the community and Scouts or Girl Guides. There was between twenty three and thirteen per cent of students involved in organisations sponsored by a religious group, environmental organisations, groups which prepare a school newspaper and a student exchange or school partnership program.

The least common organisations students chose to participate in were computer clubs, cultural associations with membership based on ethnicity, human rights organisations, youth organisations affiliated with a political party or union and a United Nations or UNESCO Club.

Table 3.7 shows the distributions of the student cohort, listed from the largest to the smallest percentages, as well as by gender, participating in various organisations.

Table 3.7: Students Involved in Various Organisations by Gender*

Organisation	Females	Males
	(per cent)	
A sports organisation or team	82	87
An art, music or drama organisation	61	32
A charity collecting money for a social cause	55	37
A student council/school parliament	35	32
A group conducting voluntary activities to help the community	38	26
Boy or Girl Scouts/Guides	31	26
An organisation sponsored by a religious group	26	20
An environmental organisation	22	14
A group which prepares a school newspaper	20	12
A student exchange or school partnership program	16	10
A computer club	4	12
A cultural association with membership based on ethnicity	6	5
A human rights organisation	5	4
A youth organisation affiliated with a political party or union	3	5
A United Nations or UNESCO Club	1	3

* Organisations have been listed in order from the highest to the lowest student percentages of participation.

The largest gender differences, in the direction of females, was found in art, music or drama organisations, charities collecting money for a social cause and groups conducting voluntary activities to help the community. There were slightly more males than females involved in sports activities, computer clubs, youth organisations affiliated with a political party or union and a United Nations or UNESCO Club.

Five per cent of students were not involved in any of the listed organisations. Eighteen, seventeen and sixteen per cent of students were involved in 1, 2 and 3 organisations respectively. Thirteen per cent of students participated in four different organisations and a fifth of students were associated with at least six organisations.

Thirteen per cent of students attended meeting or activities 'almost every day (4 or more days a week)', and almost half the students attended 'several days (1 to 3 days a week)'. A quarter of the students participated in their chosen organisations only a few times each month and seventeen per cent indicated they never or almost never engaged in meeting or activities.

Out-of-School Activities

Students provided information about some of their recreational out-of-school activities – spending time with friends after school, going out with friends at night during the week and the time they spend watching television or videos on school days.

Spending Time with Friends After School

A quarter of the students spent 'almost every day (4 or more days a week)' and a thirty six per cent of students spent 'several days (1 to 3 days) a week' 'hanging out' out with friends straight after school. A quarter of the students participated in this activity only a few times each month and thirteen per cent indicated they never or almost never spent time with friends after school.

Figure 3.2: Amount of Time Students Spent with Friends After School by Gender

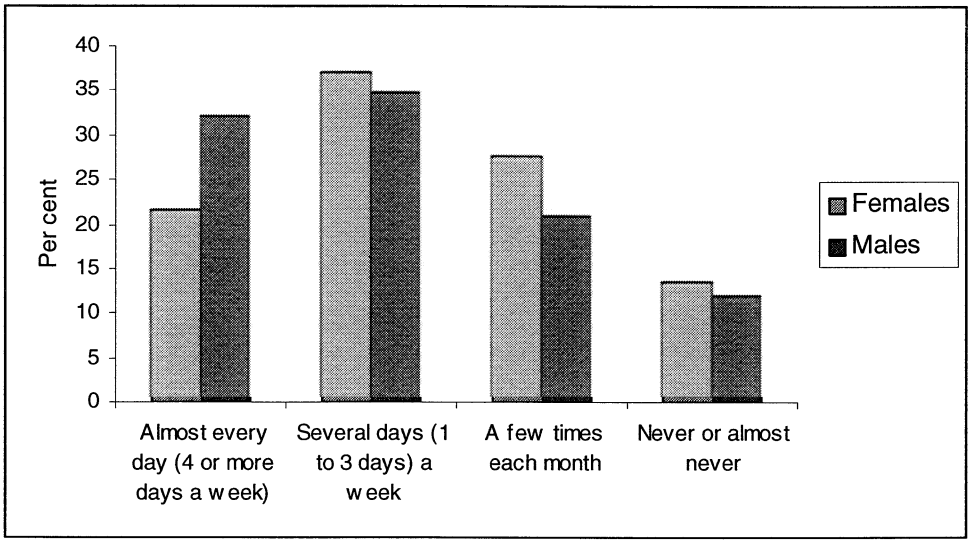
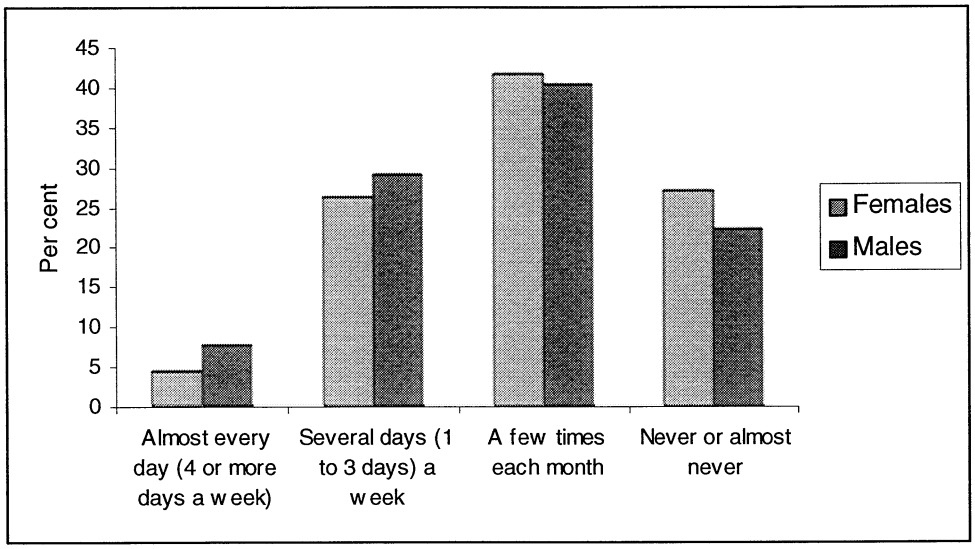


Figure 3.2 shows the patterns for males and females on the time spent with friends, after school. In all categories, except 'almost every day (4 or more days a week)' there were slightly more females who indicated they spent more time on this activity than males.

Going Out with Friends, in the Evening on School Days

The largest percentage of students (forty one per cent) indicated they only went out with friends at night a few times each month. Twenty eight per cent of students were out 'several days (1 to 3 days) a week' and only six per cent of students went out with friends 'almost every day (4 or more days a week)'. A quarter of the students never or almost never go at with friends at night during the week. Figure 3.3 shows that males indicated they go out more frequently than females.

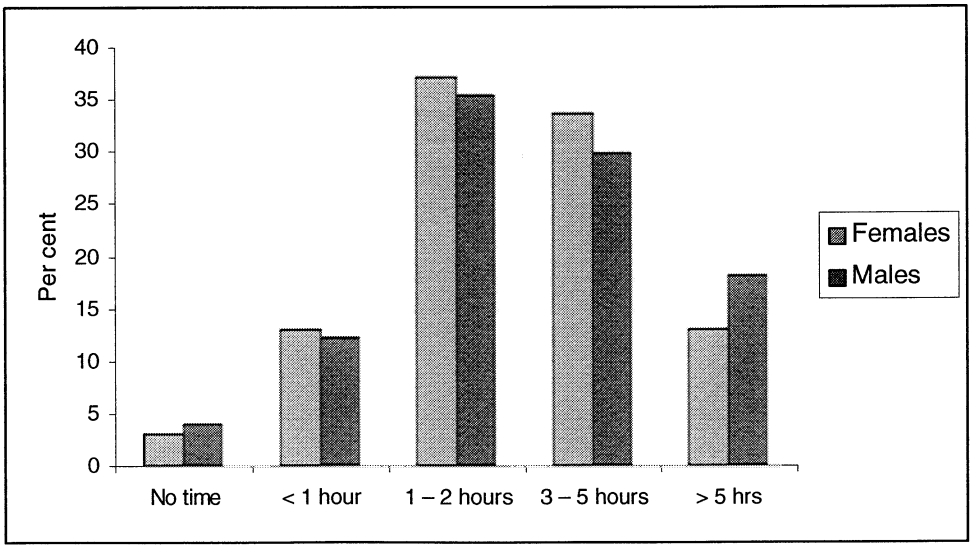
Figure 3.3: Amount of Time Students Spent Going Out with Friends in the Evening, on School Days



Watching Television or Videos

Thirty six per cent of the Australian students watched between one and two hours, and a further thirty two per cent of the students reported that they spent between three and five hours on a normal school day, watching television and videos. Fifteen per cent of students indicated they watched no television or videos. A further 15 per cent of students watched more than 5 hours of television. Of the students in these groups, there were slightly more males than females within these categories (Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.4: Amount of Time Students Spent Watching Television or Videos on School Days



Educational Aspirations

Table 3.8 shows that eight per cent of students intend to continue education for only one to two years. A third of the students intend to keep studying for the next three to four years. This could include completion of secondary school or commencement of a TAFE course. A further half of the students, of which there were more females than males envisage another five to eight years of education before them. Fewer than six per cent expect to be studying for more than ten years.

Table 3.8: Amount of Education the Student Expects to Complete After the Year of Testing

Number of Years	Females	Males	Total
0 years	0	2	1
1 or 2 years	6	11	8
3 or 4 years	25	30	27
5 or 6 years	30	22	27
7 or 8 years	28	17	23
9 or 10 years	7	10	8
More than 10 years	4	8	6

Summary Comments

This chapter has given a picture of who the Australian students were that participated in the IEA Civic Education Study in 1999. Some of the variables have been used in analyses, especially gender and home background. At certain times in this report, where results of these analyses reveal significant variations to our understandings, they will be reported. For the most part, however, secondary and multi-variate analyses will be undertaken in subsequent studies.

CHAPTER 4
AUSTRALIA IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONAL RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a summary of the international results of the IEA Civic Education Study, and to place the Australian findings in an international context. 3331 Australian students completed the Student Questionnaire, as part of a total international student cohort of nearly 90,000 students. Chapters 5-6 in this report deal with the Australian student achievement results in detail. Initially however the Australian results will be viewed in the light of how the students from the other twenty seven countries responded to the instruments. The report, *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight countries*, published in March 2001, has the full international findings of the study.

Twenty-four of the countries participating in Phase 2 of the study had been in Phase 1. Others joined relatively late in the process of item development. Therefore most countries had been involved in the item piloting and selection and were committed to the items used in the Student Questionnaire. The study met the IEA's benchmark measure of fairness when each of the final 38 cognitive items were acceptable to over 80 per cent of the NRCs. Given the diverse nature of the democratic processes employed in those 28 countries, to have achieved such a level of agreement was remarkable. This level of agreement, on the underlying structures and on the items themselves is reflected in the international results.

Six tables and four figures are introduced in this chapter. Two of the figures reference Civic Knowledge scales only. A figure and other tables reference the Attitudinal scales. Tables and figures provide Australian data in the context of full international comparisons. The text examines the meaning of the tables.

Appendix B of this report contains five tables which includes all the items, listed by Domain and by Type, with Australian responses by gender, compared to the international mean, for each cognitive item. It will be a useful supplementary table to the reading of this chapter. (See Appendix B: Tables B5.1-B5.6).

International Student Achievement on the Civic Knowledge Scales

Figure 4.1 shows the results for the students of all 28 participating countries, on the 38 cognitive items which form the 'test'. Given each student has completed the same items, it is possible to compare the performance of each country's cohort on the Total Civic Knowledge scale and the two sub-scales.

The countries are ranked (in Column 1) in order of their average achievement in terms of Civic Knowledge (total score). The international mean was set at 100.

There are three scores of interest in Figure 4.1:

- Columns 2 and 3 show the mean scores for sub-scales of civic knowledge
- Column 2 is the Content Knowledge sub-scale, consisting of twenty five items (Type 1).
- Column 3 is the Interpretative Skills sub-scale, consisting of 13 items (Type 2).
- Column 4 shows the mean scores for the Total Civic Knowledge scale.

Figure 4.1: Distribution of Civic Knowledge by Country (with Content Knowledge Sub-Scale and Interpretative Skills Sub-Scale)

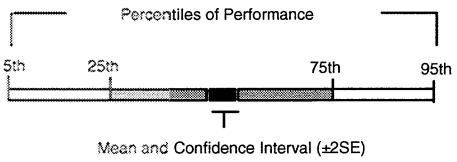
Country	Mean Scale Scores			Cognitive Civic Competence Scale Score
	Content Knowledge	Interpretative Skills	Total Civic Knowledge	40 60 80 100 120 140 160
Poland	▲ 112 (1.3)	▲ 106 (1.7)	▲ 111 (1.7)	
Finland	▲ 108 (0.7)	▲ 110 (0.6)	▲ 109 (0.7)	
Cyprus	▲ 108 (0.5)	▲ 108 (0.5)	▲ 108 (0.5)	
Greece	▲ 109 (0.7)	▲ 105 (0.7)	▲ 108 (0.8)	
Hong Kong (SAR)[2]	▲ 108 (1.0)	▲ 104 (1.0)	▲ 107 (1.1)	
United States[1]	● 102 (1.1)	▲ 114 (1.0)	▲ 106 (1.2)	
Italy	▲ 105 (0.8)	▲ 105 (0.7)	▲ 105 (0.8)	
Slovak Republic	▲ 107 (0.7)	▲ 103 (0.7)	▲ 105 (0.7)	
Norway[2]	▲ 103 (0.5)	▲ 103 (0.4)	▲ 103 (0.5)	
Czech Republic	▲ 103 (0.8)	● 102 (0.8)	▲ 103 (0.8)	
Australia	● 99 (0.7)	▲ 107 (0.8)	● 102 (0.8)	
Hungary	▲ 102 (0.6)	● 101 (0.7)	● 102 (0.6)	
Slovenia	▲ 102 (0.5)	● 99 (0.4)	● 101 (0.5)	
Denmark[2]	● 100 (0.5)	● 100 (0.5)	● 100 (0.5)	
Germany[2]	● 99 (0.5)	● 101 (0.5)	● 100 (0.5)	
Russian Federation[2]	● 102 (1.3)	▼ 96 (1.3)	● 100 (1.3)	
England[1]	▼ 96 (0.6)	▲ 105 (0.7)	● 99 (0.6)	
Sweden[1]	▼ 97 (0.8)	▲ 102 (0.7)	● 99 (0.8)	
Switzerland	▼ 96 (0.8)	● 102 (0.8)	● 98 (0.8)	
Bulgaria	● 99 (1.1)	▼ 95 (1.3)	● 98 (1.3)	
Portugal[2]	▼ 97 (0.7)	▼ 95 (0.7)	▼ 96 (0.7)	
Belgium (French)[2]	▼ 94 (0.9)	▼ 96 (0.9)	▼ 95 (0.9)	
Estonia	▼ 94 (0.5)	▼ 95 (0.5)	▼ 94 (0.5)	
Lithuania	▼ 94 (0.7)	▼ 93 (0.7)	▼ 94 (0.7)	
Romania	▼ 93 (1.0)	▼ 90 (0.7)	▼ 92 (0.9)	
Latvia	▼ 92 (0.9)	▼ 92 (0.8)	▼ 92 (0.9)	
Chile	▼ 89 (0.6)	▼ 88 (0.8)	▼ 88 (0.7)	
Colombia	▼ 89 (0.8)	▼ 84 (1.2)	▼ 86 (0.9)	

( ) Standard errors appear in parentheses. Because results are rounded to the nearest whole number, some totals may appear inconsistent.

▲ Country mean significantly higher than international

● No statistically significant difference between country mean and international mean.

▼ Country mean significantly lower than international



[1] Countries with testing date at beginning of school year.

[2] Countries which did not meet all the International requirements.

Source: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-year-olds tested in 1999.

Column 5 displays a graphical representation of the distribution of the mean score for the civic knowledge scale. The mean achievement for each country is shown as well as the 5th, 25th 75th and 95th percentiles. The solid box (centered on the midpoint of the distribution) shows the 95 per cent confidence intervals around the mean achievement in each country.

In columns 2-4 of Figure 4.1 arrows and dots alongside the scores display the relationship of the country's score to the whole. Thus a country whose score is significantly greater than the average of the whole cohort's score has an upward arrow beside its name, and those whose score is significantly less than the average of the whole cohort's score have an downward arrow beside their name. Countries whose mean score does not vary significantly from the international means have dots beside them.

Comments on the International Results on Total Civic Knowledge Scale

Ten countries have Total Civic Knowledge averages which are significantly above the international mean (they are the top ten listed on the figure) and eight countries have averages which are significantly below the international mean. Ten countries, positioned in between these two groups, have averages which do not vary significantly from the international mean. Australia is one of those countries. The ranking shows Australia to be in the upper part of that middle group, but this is not statistically significant.

There is an interesting mix of democratic history and regional representation conveyed by the list of countries in the top group. It includes old democracies, some post colonial ones and emerging post-Communist countries also. Northern, central and southern Europe, the 'New World' and Asia are all represented. (Poland, Finland, Cyprus, Greece, USA, Hong Kong, Italy, the Slovak Republic, Norway and the Czech Republic)

The range in democratic history and region of countries in the middle group is also very substantial. (Australia, Hungary, Slovenia, Denmark, Germany, the Russian Federation, England, Sweden, Switzerland and Bulgaria)

Western Europe is less represented in the group of countries with means significantly below average, with Central European and Baltic countries predominating, plus Latin America. (Portugal, French-speaking Belgium, Estonia, Lithuania, Romania, Latvia, Chile and Colombia)

Figure 4.1 demonstrates that the outcomes on the two sub-scales vary across countries. As the arrows indicate, some countries which are in the upper group on the Total Civic Knowledge Scale were not above the international mean on both sub-scales. The USA was below the international mean on the content knowledge sub-scale, and the Czech Republic was below the international mean on the interpretative skills sub-scale. Three countries in the average group achieved above-average scores on the interpretative skill sub-score. Australia was the only country which scored above average on the interpretative skills, average on the content knowledge and average on the total score. England and Sweden scored above average on the interpretative skills but below on the content knowledge and on the total score.

It is important to register that the differences between countries on the civic knowledge scale are small. Most country means do not deviate by more than half a standard deviation from the international mean. The three exceptions are Poland, Chile and Colombia. But the country mean for Poland does not vary significantly from that of seven of the other countries in the top group of ten. And the country mean of Colombia does not vary significantly from that achieved by Chile.

Few conclusions can be drawn from such lack of pattern in the distribution of national means. One explanation of the occurrence of such a small difference between national cohorts' achievement on this scale and of the lack of pattern is that the level of agreement embedded in the consultative process of item development pre-empted great divergence. This, added to the congruence of opinions of NRCs in the final selection of the 38 items for the final test, was reinforced by the IEA requirement for 80 per cent acceptance of all items. It seems that such a process of development is congruent with the outcome of small differences between countries on the test part of the Student Questionnaire. This report returns to another aspect of this issue in Chapter 5.

Eight International Release Items

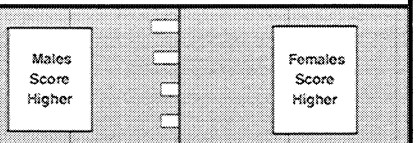
The report, *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries,* provided a sample of eight items for readers to consider. They are the only cognitive items to be released from the Student Questionnaire. Two of the sample items were described in Chapter 2 (see Figure 2.1 and Figure 2.2) of this report. There are four each of Type 1 & 2 items in the sample group. Each Domain is represented, though six of the items relate to Domain 1. The substance of the items and the results across countries are discussed in detail in Chapter 6 of the report, *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries* A more detailed analysis of Australian students' achievement in the sample items is reported in Chapter 5 of this report.

Gender Differences in Civic Knowledge

Figure 4.2 displays the gender differences revealed in responses of male and female students from each of the participating countries. The second column of the figure shows the mean score for each country that females achieved on the total Civic Knowledge scale. In the third column is the mean score of the male students. The fourth column contains the absolute difference of each national cohort. The fifth column shows the differences graphically. The countries are ranked from Denmark, which had the largest gender difference with a male skew, to French- speaking Belgium, which had the largest gender difference with a female skew.

In a majority of countries the females scored better than the male students. Such was the case in Australia. However, only in Slovenia, where the females outperformed the males, was the gender difference a statistically significant difference. The data suggest that civic knowledge is not gender-based. This constitutes a change from the early 1970s, as reported by the earlier IEA Civics Study.

Country	Mean Scale Score Females	Mean Scale Score Males	Difference	Gender Difference +10 0 +10
Denmark[2]	99 (0.7)	102 (0.7)	3 (1.0)	
Switzerland	97 (0.8)	100 (0.9)	2 (1.2)	
Chile	88 (0.8)	89 (0.8)	2 (1.1)	
Czech Republic	102 (0.8)	104 (1.0)	2 (1.3)	
Portugal[2]	96 (0.8)	97 (0.9)	1 (1.2)	
Germany[2]	99 (0.6)	101 (0.7)	1 (0.9)	
Norway[2]	103 (0.6)	103 (0.7)	1 (0.9)	
Russian Federation[2]	99 (1.2)	100 (1.7)	0 (2.1)	
Slovak Republic	105 (0.8)	105 (0.9)	0 (1.1)	
England[1]	99 (0.8)	100 (1.0)	0 (1.3)	
Cyprus	108 (0.7)	108 (0.6)	0 (0.9)	
Colombia	87 (1.3)	86 (1.1)	0 (1.7)	
Romania	92 (1.0)	91 (0.9)	0 (1.4)	
Hungary	102 (0.7)	101 (0.8)	1 (1.0)	
Hong Kong (SAR)[2]	108 (1.1)	106 (1.4)	1 (1.8)	
Sweden[1]	100 (0.8)	99 (1.1)	1 (1.3)	
Estonia	95 (0.6)	93 (0.7)	1 (0.9)	
Finland	110 (0.9)	108 (0.8)	2 (1.2)	
United States[1]	107 (1.2)	106 (1.3)	2 (1.8)	
Greece	109 (0.8)	107 (0.9)	2 (1.2)	
Italy	106 (0.9)	104 (1.1)	2 (1.4)	
Bulgaria	99 (1.5)	97 (1.2)	2 (2.0)	
Lithuania	95 (0.8)	92 (0.8)	2 (1.1)	
Australia	103 (0.9)	101 (1.1)	2 (1.4)	
Poland	112 (2.2)	109 (1.5)	3 (2.6)	
Slovenia	102 (0.6)	99 (0.6)	4 (0.8)	
Latvia	93 (0.9)	90 (0.9)	4 (1.3)	
Belgium (French)[2]	97 (1.1)	93 (1.3)	5 (1.7)	



( ) Standard errors appear in parentheses. Because results are rounded to the nearest whole number, some totals may appear inconsistent.

International Means

Female	Male	Difference
100.4	99.7	0.7

(Averages of all country means)

■ Gender difference statistically significant at .05 level.

□ Gender difference not statistically significant.

[1] Countries with testing date at beginning of school year.

[2] Countries which did not meet all the international requirements.

Source: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-year-olds tested in 1999.

Figure 4.2: Gender differences in Civic Knowledge, by Country

Civic Knowledge by Home Literacy Resources

The International Report discusses the relationship of home literary resources with civic knowledge, and reports the following findings:

> It should be noted that there are substantial differences in the students' report of home literacy resources across countries...(the data) shows that home literary resources are quite consistently correlated with the civic knowledge score. The inspection of the squared Etas ... reveals that in all but one country (Hong Kong) home literacy resources account for more than five per cent of the variance in the

> scores. ... In the large majority of countries, the more books students report in the home the better they perform on the civic knowledge test. (*Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries*, p65)

Australia is a classic example of this pattern, with the mean score rising from 88 (for the 4 per cent of students who had 0-10 books in the home) through a mean score of 100 (for the 20 per cent who had 51-200 books) to the 39 per cent of students who had more then 200 in their home and whose mean score was 106. However Australia is not one of the countries showing the strongest effect size. Further discussion of effects is conducted in Chapter 8 in relation to the model path analysis.

Summary Comments on the International Findings on Civic Knowledge

Analysis of the student responses to the civic knowledge part of the Student Questionnaire indicate the following:

- Students demonstrate different levels of content knowledge and interpretative skills, but the differences between countries in total Civic Knowledge are smaller than they are in mathematics.

- Most students have a content base though most also do not demonstrate a knowledge which would enable them to perform 'such civic tasks as deciding between candidates based on their election leaflets, understanding newspaper editorials, and deciding whether to join a political organisation with a particular ideology'. (*Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries*, p. 67)

- Gender differences in civic knowledge no longer appear to be as prominent as they were in earlier research, so boys are not generally advantaged in their future working within the political process as previously.

- Civic Knowledge is affected by (differences in) home background variables.

International Student Results on the Civic Engagement, Attitudes and Other Concepts Scales

Chapter 2 of this report discussed the process adopted for the development of the survey component (Part 3) of the Student Questionnaire. As with the Civic Knowledge items, serious attention was paid to both the Domains and item typology during the development of the three groups of attitudinal items. The same rigours of item trialing were applied to these attitudinal items as was applied to the knowledge items.

Content of the Concepts, Attitudes and Actions Items and Scales

- There were 146 question items spread over the fourteen sections (or topics) in Part Three of the Student Questionnaire. These are the Column 3-5 Items, referenced on the Domain Map in Chapter 2 of this report. (See Table 2.6)

Analysis and Presentation of the Concepts, Attitudes and Actions Items and Scales

Rasch analysis was the initial analytical process, but others were also employed. This was principally because eleven of the fourteen groups of items resulted in scales, and

the remaining three groups of items did not result in scales. The *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries* reported on eleven of them by scales, and on others by individual item analysis. The *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries* also reports on other items; including those from those groups of items which did not eventuate in scales, and individual items not included in the scales. Many of the sections had over a dozen items for students to respond to, but they did not meet IEA scaling standards, and the resulting scales range from 3-7 items.(See *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries* Chapters 5, 6 and 7)

Table 4.1: Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficients for All Scales

Scale Name	Alpha	Number of items in scale
Civic Knowledge		
Total Civic Achievement	.88	38
Civic Knowledge Subscale	.84	25
Skills in Interpreting Political Communication Subscale	.76	13
Civic Engagement		
Conventional Citizenship	.67	6
Social Movement Citizenship	.63	4
Expected Participation in Political Activities	.73	3
Confidence in Participation in School	.69	4
Civic Attitudes and Other Concepts		
Economy-related Government's Responsibility	.55	5
Society-related Government's Responsibility	.70	7
Positive Attitudes toward Immigrants	.82	5
Positive Attitudes toward One's Nation	.68	4
Trust in Government-related Institutions	.78	6
Support for Women's Political and Economic Rights	.79	6
Open Climate for Classroom Discussions	.76	6
Coefficients computed for Calibration Sample of 500 students per country.		

Source: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-year-olds tested in 1999.

Table 4.1 displays all the scales derived from the test and survey in the Civic Education Study, by their scale names and by the number of items in each scale. There are fourteen scales listed on this table. The first group is that comprising the two cognitive sub-scales and the Total Civic Knowledge scale. The eleven Concepts, Attitudes and Actions scales, have been grouped under two headings. The first of these is Civic Engagement, which contains four scales. The second group, named the Civic Attitudes and Other Concepts, contains the other seven scales. This table will be a useful reference in reading the rest of this chapter on the attitudinal items and the scales derived from them.

Relative Consensus, across countries, on Civic Engagement, Attitudes and other Concepts

On some of the individual items there was considerable consensus across countries, whilst on others there was very little consensus. An important reporting decision was made by the *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries* team when it developed a model of consensus across countries and used it to assist in reporting student responses across countries. The model incorporated a three-step range of consensus, from *strong consensus*, through *moderate consensus*, to *lack of consensus*. Items were classified according to country means. Without this decision there would have been a considerable information loss from student responses to Part 3 of the Student Questionnaire.

The consensus model was applied to the items in Sections A and B in the Student Questionnaire. In Section A: Democracy, no scale resulted from the Rasch analysis. (Hence no Democracy scale appeared on Table 4.1.) The most important of the questionnaire sections in Part 3 was that of Democracy. Clearly the concept of democracy had pre-eminence, due to the importance of Domain 1 in the study. When scaling of these items was not successful, it was recognised that an alternative reporting mechanism was necessary. The consensus model allowed meaningful across-country reporting on the Democracy items to be made. In Section B: Citizenship, two scales resulted from the Rasch analysis. Chapter 6 of this Australian national Report comments on the consensus model and applies it to the Democracy and the Citizenship items from Sections A and B.

An example of the item structure for a Part 3 item has been given in Chapter 2. (See Figure 2.3) The report, *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries* and Chapter 6 of this report, contain examples of the full range of item response formats employed in Part 3 of the Student Questionnaire. The response prompt formats needed to vary according to the concepts, attitudes and actions being examined. When reported in chapter 6, the short title of each item is used to identify the content of the item. Thus the range of the substance of the items, and scales, will be displayed, in addition to the range of consensus demonstrated by the students across countries and within Australia.

Figure 4.3 compares the civic achievement of participating countries across all scales on both the test and survey parts of the Student Questionnaire. The first three columns of Figure 4.3 refer to the three Civic Knowledge scales, discussed earlier in this chapter. They represent the first important dimension of citizenship examined by this study: Civic Knowledge.

Figure 4.3: Civic Knowledge, Civic Engagement and Civic Attitudes Across Countries

Country	Civic Knowledge			Civic Engagement				Civic Attitudes and Other Concepts						
	Content Knowledge (subscale)	Interpretative Skills (subscale)	Total Civic Knowledge	Conventional Citizenship	Social Movement Citizenship	Expected Participation in Political Activities	Confidence in Participation in School	Economy-related Government Responsibilities	Society-related Government Responsibilities	Positive Attitudes Towards Immigrants	Positive Attitudes Towards One's Nation	Trust in Government-related Institutions	Support for Women's Political Rights	Open Climate for Classroom Discussion
Australia		▲		▼	▼	▼		▼				▲	▲	
Belgium (French)	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼			▼
Bulgaria		▼		▲				▲		▼		▼	▼	▼
Chile	▼	▼	▼	▲	▲	▲	▲		▲	▲	▲		▼	▲
Colombia	▼	▼	▼	▲	▲	▲			▼	▲	▲			▲
Cyprus	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲		▲	▲	▲	▲	▲
Czech Republic	▲		▲	▼	▼	▼	▼				▲	▼		▼
Denmark				▼	▼	▼	▲	▼	▼	▼	▼	▲	▲	
England	▼	▲		▼	▼	▼			▲	▼	▼		▲	
Estonia	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼				▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Finland	▲	▲	▲	▼	▼	▼	▼	▲	▲		▲		▲	
Germany				▼		▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼		▲	▲
Greece	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲		▲	▼	▲	▲	▲	▲		▲
Hong Kong (SAR)	▲	▲	▲		▼	▲	▼	▼	▼	▲	▼		▼	▼
Hungary	▲					▼	▼	▲	▼	▼			▼	▼
Italy	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▼	▼	▲	▲	▼	▼			▲
Latvia	▼	▼	▼		▼	▲	▼		▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Lithuania	▼	▼	▼	▲	▲	▼		▲	▼	▼		▼	▼	▼
Norway	▲	▲	▲	▼	▲	▼	▲	▼		▲		▲	▲	▲
Poland	▲	▲	▲	▲		▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲			▲
Portugal	▼	▼	▼	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▼		▼
Romania	▼	▼	▼	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲					▼	▼
Russian Federation		▼		▼			▼	▲				▼	▼	
Slovak Republic	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▼		▲	▲	▼	▲	▲	▼	
Slovenia	▲			▼	▼		▼			▼		▼		▼
Sweden	▼	▲		▼	▼	▼	▲	▲		▲	▼		▲	▲
Switzerland	▼			▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▲	▲	▲
United States		▲	▲	▲	▲	▲		▼		▲		▲	▲	▲

▲ Country mean significantly higher than international mean.

▼ Country mean significantly lower than international mean.

Source: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-years-olds tested in 1999.

The eleven columns refer to the eleven Concepts and Attitudes scales listed in the previous figure (See Figure 4.3). These scales represent the two other important dimensions of citizenship examined in this study: Civic Engagement and Civic Attitudes and Other Concepts. The results are presented in Figure 4.3 in terms of each country's achievement, relative to the other countries. Those countries where the result was significantly higher or significantly lower than the international mean, are nominated with an appropriate symbol. Those without a symbol are close to the international mean.

Civic Engagement Dimension

The Civic Engagement Dimension consists of four scales (Conventional Citizenship, Social Movement Citizenship, Expected Participation in Political Activities and Confidence in Participation in School). Together these scales make up the second dimension of citizenship: that of Civic Engagement. The International Report describes it in the following way:

> A second important dimension of citizenship is the students' interest in and engagement in various types of participation in the different systems of which they are members. (*Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries,* p180)

Concepts of Citizenship: Conventional and Social Movement Scales

The items, some of which scaled as Conventional Citizenship and Social Movement Citizenship, asked students to consider a range of political activities, and indicate what they thought ' an adult who is a good citizen' would do. The response prompts ranged from 'totally unimportant' and 'fairly unimportant' through to 'fairly important' and 'very important'. They could also indicate 'don't know'.

Table 4.2 displays the results on two of the Civic Engagement scales for each country. The Conventional Citizenship scale had six items and the Social Movement scale had four items. The substance of these items is discussed in Chapter 6 of this report. In this table the countries are arranged alphabetically, each with the mean scale score, and a symbol that indicates whether the country is above, near or below the international mean.

The table enables a close comparison of the two country means for the two scales, and what emerges is the similarity, in most countries, of the levels of support students have for the two different kinds of engagement. Engagement is generally seen as more or less important regardless of kind. Australian students do not regard engagement as important as their peers from a range of other countries in the study, and consequently have the downward arrow next to the country name for both scales. In total, students from ten countries had a low measure of engagement on both scales. Ten country cohorts were above the international means on both scales. Between-county analysis of these differences would be most interesting and possibly informative, as to what causes these differences.

Table 4.2: Importance of Conventional Citizenship and Importance of Social-Movement-related Citizenship Scales, by Country

Country	Importance of Conventional Citizenship		Importance of Social-Movement-related Citizenship	
	Mean Scale Score		Mean Scale Score	
Australia	▼	9.4 (0.05)	▼	9.3 (0.04)
Belgium (French)	▼	9.2 (0.05)	▼	9.1 (0.09)
Bulgaria	▲	10.3 (0.08)		10.0 (0.08)
Chile	▲	11.0 (0.05)	▲	10.5 (0.04)
Colombia	▲	10.9 (0.07)	▲	11.3 (0.07)
Cyprus	▲	11.5 (0.04)	▲	11.0 (0.04)
Czech Republic	▼	9.2 (0.05)	▼	9.7 (0.05)
Denmark	▼	9.1 (0.04)	▼	9.5 (0.04)
England	▼	9.2 (0.04)	▼	9.2 (0.04)
Estonia	▼	9.2 (0.03)	▼	9.2 (0.03)
Finland	▼	9.1 (0.04)	▼	8.9 (0.04)
Germany	▼	9.6 (0.03)		9.9 (0.04)
Greece	▲	11.2 (0.05)	▲	11.4 (0.05)
Hong Kong (SAR)		10.0 (0.03)	▼	9.6 (0.03)
Hungary		9.9 (0.04)		9.9 (0.04)
Italy	▲	10.2 (0.04)	▲	10.2 (0.05)
Latvia		10.0 (0.05)	▼	9.5 (0.05)
Lithuania	▲	10.8 (0.05)	▲	10.6 (0.04)
Norway	▼	9.3 (0.04)	▲	10.2 (0.04)
Poland	▲	10.9 (0.04)		10.1 (0.05)
Portugal	▲	10.1 (0.04)	▲	10.6 (0.04)
Romania	▲	11.2 (0.07)	▲	10.7 (0.07)
Russian Federation	▼	9.6 (0.05)		9.9 (0.05)
Slovak Republic	▲	10.2 (0.04)	▲	10.4 (0.05)
Slovenia	▼	9.5 (0.04)	▼	9.6 (0.04)
Sweden	▼	9.4 (0.05)	▼	9.8 (0.05)
Switzerland	▼	9.7 (0.05)	▼	9.6 (0.04)
United States	▲	10.3 (0.06)	▲	10.3 (0.06)

( ) Standard errors appear in parentheses.

▲ Country mean significantly higher than international mean of 10.

▼ Country mean significantly lower than international mean of 10.

Source: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-year-olds tested 1999.

Expected Participation in Political Activities Scale

The third strand of the Civic Engagement Group of attitudinal scales was the Expected Participation in Political Activities scale. (See the third column of the Civic Engagement Scale on Figure 4.3) For the 12 Political Activity items, students were asked to rate the likelihood of them engaging, as an adult, in a range of political activities. The response prompts ranged from 'certainly will not', and 'probably will not', to 'probably will' 'certainly will'. They could also indicate 'don't know'.

The Confidence in Participation in School Scale

The fourth strand in the Civic Engagement dimension of citizenship relates to the Confidence in Participation in School scale. This scale deals with a slightly different kind of participation from that of the previous scales, insofar as it deals with students' current participation, in school. The propositions for the four items in the Confidence in Participation in School scale refer to outcomes to be gained from groups of students acting together. The four response prompts ranged from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. They could also indicate 'don't know'.

Table 4.3: Expected Participation in Political Activities and Confidence in Participation in School Scales, by Country

Country	Expected Participation in Political Activities		Confidence in Participation in School	
	Mean Scale Score		Mean Scale Score	
Australia	▼	9.8 (0.05)		9.9 (0.06)
Belgium (French)	▼	9.7 (0.07)	▼	6.9 (0.06)
Bulgaria		10.0 (0.08)		9.8 (0.10)
Chile	▲	10.2 (0.05)	▲	10.5 (0.04)
Colombia	▲	11.1 (0.06)		10.0 (0.07)
Cyprus	▲	10.4 (0.04)	▲	11.3 (0.05)
Czech Republic	▼	9.4 (0.04)	▼	9.6 (0.05)
Denmark	▼	9.5 (0.04)	▲	10.2 (0.04)
England	▼	9.7 (0.05)		9.9 (0.05)
Estonia		9.9 (0.04)		9.9 (0.05)
Finland	▼	9.7 (0.05)	▼	9.7 (0.04)
Germany	▼	9.6 (0.04)	▼	9.2 (0.04)
Greece		9.9 (0.05)	▲	10.8 (0.05)
Hong Kong (SAR)	▲	10.5 (0.05)	▼	9.8 (0.05)
Hungary	▼	9.9 (0.04)	▼	9.4 (0.04)
Italy	▼	9.8 (0.05)	▼	9.7 (0.04)
Latvia	▲	10.5 0.07	▼	9.5 (0.05)
Lithuania	▼	9.6 (0.05)		10.0 (0.05)
Norway	▼	9.7 (0.04)	▲	10.3 (0.06)
Poland	▲	10.5 (0.06)	▲	10.5 (0.08)
Portugal	▲	10.4 (0.04)	▲	10.8 (0.05)
Romania	▲	10.5 (0.05)	▲	10.4 (0.06)
Russian Federation		10.0 (0.06)	▼	9.7 (0.05)
Slovak Republic	▼	9.8 (0.05)		10.1 (0.05)
Slovenia		10.0 (0.04)	▼	9.5 (0.05)
Sweden	▼	9.8 (0.04)	▲	10.2 (0.06)
Switzerland	▼	9.7 (0.05)	▼	9.5 (0.05)
United States	▲	10.5 (0.05)		10.1 (0.07)

( ) Standard errors appear in parentheses.

▲ Country mean significantly higher than international mean of 10.

▼ Country mean significantly lower than international mean of 10.

Source: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-year-olds tested 1999.

The Australian response to the items on this scale was very similar to the international mean. This contrasts with the comparative international data on the three other participation scales. The subtle difference between the focus of this scale and the other three participation scales, is important in understanding the different responses of Australian students. They appear to have a more positive view of what can be achieved by groups of students in schools than they have of what adults can achieve by active participation in the political process.

Table 4.3 shows student achievement, across country, on the Expected Participation in Political Activities and the Confidence in Participation in School scales. The countries are listed alphabetically with their international mean scores, and a symbol which indicates whether the country is above, near or below the international mean.

Conclusions on the Civic Engagement Scales

Table 4.2 and 4.3 (and also Figure 4.3 in a summary form) reveal a most significant finding for Australia; that the Australian students' scores are significantly below the International mean on three of the four scales which make up the Civic Engagement dimension. All the scales reference active participation. Only four other countries registered below international means on three of the Civic Engagement scales. The students in the following countries responded at a level significantly above the international mean, across three of the four Civic Engagement scales: Chile, Colombia, Cyprus, Greece, Poland, Portugal, Romania and the United States. These countries cover all the continents and a full range of democratic traditions. The *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries* report concludes :

> Young people in these countries seem more willing than those in other countries to participate in several ways and at several levels of the social and political system. (*Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries*, p181)

This is not true for Australian students. The four Civic Engagement scales are the subject of particular discussion in Chapters 6 and 10 of the report, *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries*, and in Chapter 6 of this report.

Civic Attitudes and other Concepts Scales

The third group of scales in Figure 4.3 refers to a range of topics, collated under the heading of Civic Attitudes and Other Concepts. The subsequent seven columns in the figure show the international results on an assortment of scales, each named for their scale. (Economy-related Government Responsibilities, Society-related Government Responsibilities, Positive Attitudes towards Immigrants, Symbolic Patriotism, Trust in Government-related Institutions, Support for Women's Political Rights and Open Climate for Classroom Discussion.)

Economy-related Government and Society-related Government Responsibilities Scales

Students were asked to consider a range of possible responsibilities of government, and respond to them by using the response prompts which ranged from 'definitely should not be the responsibility of government', and 'probably should not be...' through to 'probably should be...' and definitely should be ...'. Examples of the responsibilities in the items were: 'to keep prices under control' and 'to provide free basic education for all'. These items were subsequently scaled and respectively became part of the Economy-related Government and Society-related Government

Responsibilities scales. Table 4.4 combines the achievement by country on the two Government Responsibilities Scales.

On the Economy-related Government Responsibilities scale the Australian mean is significantly lower than the international mean. Australian students were less likely than the international cohort to support notions of governments having economic-related responsibilities. Most of those countries below the international mean on this scale, including Australia, share a long history of capitalism (French Belgium, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Norway and Switzerland, with the strongest rejection coming from Denmark and the United States.) Students from Bulgaria and Russia are the most likely to endorse these propositions, though students from Cyprus, Finland, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovak Republic and Sweden also have means significantly above the international mean. A recent political history of shedding communism is shared by a number of the countries above the international mean on this scale.

Table 4.4: Economy-related and Society-related Government Responsibilities Scales, by Country

Country	Economy-related Government Responsibilities		Society-related Government Responsibilites	
	Mean Scale Score		Mean Scale Score	
Australia	▼	9.8 (0.05)		10.1 (0.04)
Belgium (French)	▼	9.5 (0.08)	▼	9.5 (0.07)
Bulgaria	▲	10.6 (0.14)		9.9 (0.14)
Chile		10.1 (0.03)	▲	10.5 (0.04)
Colombia		9.9 (0.05)	▼	9.8 (0.05)
Cyprus	▲	10.3 (0.03)		10.1 (0.04)
Czech Republic		9.9 (0.04)		10.0 (0.04)
Denmark	▼	9.4 (0.03)	▼	9.1 (0.03)
England		10.1 (0.04)	▲	10.8 (0.04)
Estonia		10.1 (0.05)	▼	9.7 (0.05)
Finland	▲	10.4 (0.05)	▲	10.4 (0.06)
Germany	▼	9.5 (0.04)	▼	9.4 (0.04)
Greece	▼	9.8 (0.04)	▲	10.8 (0.05)
Hong Kong (SAR)	▼	9.5 (0.03)	▼	9.8 (0.05)
Hungary	▲	10.2 (0.04)		9.9 (0.04)
Italy	▲	10.2 (0.04)	▲	10.4 (0.05)
Latvia		9.8 (0.06)	▼	9.5 (0.06)
Lithuania	▲	10.2 (0.04)	▼	9.6 (0.04)
Norway	▼	9.6 (0.03)		10.0 (0.04)
Poland	▲	10.4 (0.04)	▲	10.8 (0.06)
Portugal	▲	10.3 (0.04)	▲	10.5 (0.04)
Romania	▲	10.4 (0.06)		9.7 (0.09)
Russian Federation	▲	10.6 (0.05)		10.2 (0.06)
Slovak Republic	▲	10.4 (0.05)	▲	10.3 (0.06)
Slovenia		9.9 (0.05)		9.9 (0.04)
Sweden	▲	10.4 (0.04)		9.9 (0.03)
Switzerland	▼	9.6 (0.04)	▼	9.5 (0.04)
United States	▼	9.2 (0.04)		10.0 (0.05)

( ) Standard errors appear in parentheses.

▲ Country mean significantly higher than international mean of 10.

▼ Country mean significantly lower than international mean of 10.

Source: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-year-olds tested 1999.

The Society-related Government Responsibilities scale references a different set of responsibilities from the Economic responsibilities. The Australian mean is at the level of the international mean (and, being higher, contrasts to the response to the scale of Economy-related Government Responsibilities). Other countries with this level of support are Cyprus, Czech Republic, Norway and the Russian Federation.

Countries with the highest level of support, with means significantly above the international mean, are Chile, England, Finland, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal and the Slovak Republic. Five of the countries in this group were also in the highest group for the Economic-related Government Responsibilities scale.

The intent of presenting the two scales together is to demonstrate the different kinds of priorities students give to the two. Across most countries there is a tendency to place greater emphasis on one scale over the other. It is not surprising to see that students tend to prioritise one government orientation over the other. Nor is it surprising that the prioritising varies between countries. Taken together these two scales give a reasonably coherent picture of student opinion on the relative purpose and role of governments.

Trust in Government-related Institutions Scale

There are two Attitude scales on which Australian students ranked themselves as more positive than the international cohort. The first of these was the Trust in Government-related Institutions scale. Students were asked to consider a range of government-related institutions, and were asked 'how much you feel you can trust them'. The response prompts ranged from 'never', 'only some of the time', 'most of the time', through to 'always'. Examples of the government-related institutions in the items in Australian were the Commonwealth Government in Canberra, local council or government in your town, and the police.

Moderate levels of trust were shown across countries, with the courts and police trusted the most, generally followed by national and local governments. Political parties are the least trusted government related institution. Significantly above international means were achieved by students in Australia, Cyprus, Denmark, Greece, Norway, Slovak Republic, Switzerland and the United States. Scepticism regarding the trust that could be shown government related institutions was consistently shown by students in those countries whose experience of democracy was more recent and thus less than those of some other countries in the study.

Table 4.5: Trust in Government-related Institutions Scale, by Country

Country	Mean Scale Score	
Australia	▲	10.3 (0.06)
Belgium (French)		9.9 (0.07)
Bulgaria	▼	9.2 (0.07)
Chile		10.0 (0.05)
Colombia		9.9 (0.09)
Cyprus	▲	10.5 (0.04)
Czech Republic	▼	9.7 (0.05)
Denmark	▲	11.4 (0.04)
England		10.0 (0.04)
Estonia	▼	9.7 (0.04)
Finland		10.1 (0.05)
Germany		10.0 (0.04)
Greece	▲	10.4 (0.05)
Hong Kong (SAR)	▲	10.2 (0.05)
Hungary		10.1 (0.05)
Italy	▲	10.1 (0.03)
Latvia	▼	9.5 (0.06)
Lithuania	▼	9.5 (0.05)
Norway	▲	10.8 (0.04)
Poland		9.9 (0.05)
Portugal	▼	9.6 (0.04)
Romania		10.0 (0.08)
Russian Federation	▼	9.4 (0.06)
Slovak Republic	▲	10.3 (0.05)
Slovenia	▼	8.6 (0.05)
Sweden		10.2 (0.06)
Switzerland	▲	10.7 (0.04)
United States	▲	10.4 (0.07)

( ) Standard errors appear in parentheses.

▲ Country mean significantly higher than international

▼ Country mean significantly lower than international

Source: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-year-olds tested 1999

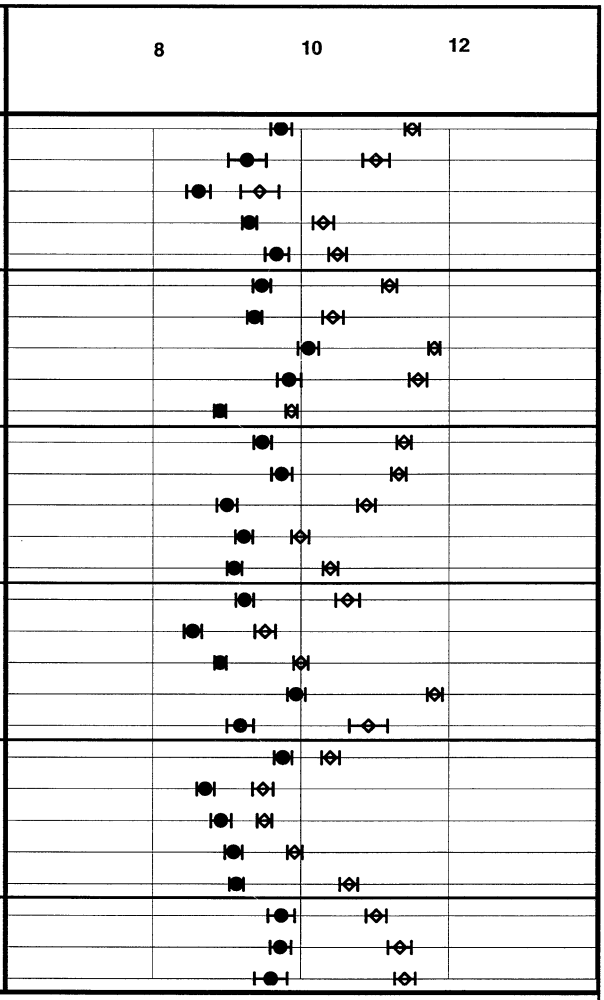
Support for Women's Political Right Scale

The second Attitude scale on which Australian students ranked more positively than the international cohort was on the Support for Women's Political Rights scale. Items about women having equal rights and getting equal pay drew 95 per cent agreement from the international cohort. However this support reduced when the items refer to examples of more specific political equality, to levels between seventy to eighty five per cent

Overall the Australian support for this scale was strong. As a country significantly above the international mean on this scale, Australia was in the sub-group of those countries with the highest scores, joined by Denmark, England and Norway. Other countries significantly above the international mean were Cyprus, Finland, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States.

Figure 4.4: Support for Women's Political Rights Scale, by Country and by Gender

Country	Total Mean Scale Score	Mean Score Females	Mean Score Males
Australia	▲ 10.7 (0.05)	11.5 (0.05)	9.7 (0.07)
Belgium (French)	10.1 (0.10)	11.0 (0.09)	9.3 (0.13)
Bulgaria	▼ 9.0 (0.10)	9.4 (0.13)	8.6 (0.08)
Chile	▼ 9.8 (0.05)	10.3 (0.07)	9.3 (0.05)
Colombia	10.2 (0.07)	10.5 (0.06)	9.7 (0.08)
Cyprus	▲ 10.3 (0.04)	11.2 (0.05)	9.5 (0.06)
Czech Republic	9.9 (0.05)	10.4 (0.07)	9.4 (0.05)
Denmark	▲ 10.9 (0.05)	11.8 (0.04)	10.1 (0.07)
England	▲ 10.7 (0.05)	11.6 (0.06)	9.8 (0.08)
Estonia	▼ 9.4 (0.04)	9.9 (0.04)	8.9 (0.04)
Finland	▲ 10.5 (0.05)	11.4 (0.05)	9.5 (0.06)
Germany	▲ 10.5 (0.05)	11.3 (0.05)	9.7 (0.07)
Greece	10.0 (0.05)	10.9 (0.06)	9.0 (0.07)
Hong Kong (SAR)	▼ 9.6 (0.05)	10.0 (0.06)	9.2 (0.06)
Hungary	▼ 9.8 (0.04)	10.4 (0.05)	9.1 (0.05)
Italy	10.0 (0.07)	10.6 (0.08)	9.2 (0.06)
Latvia	▼ 9.1 (0.05)	9.5 (0.07)	8.5 (0.06)
Lithuania	▼ 9.5 (0.04)	10.0 (0.05)	8.9 (0.04)
Norway	▲ 10.9 (0.04)	11.8 (0.05)	9.9 (0.06)
Poland	10.1 (0.07)	10.9 (0.13)	9.2 (0.09)
Portugal	10.1 (0.05)	10.4 (0.06)	9.8 (0.06)
Romania	▼ 9.1 (0.05)	9.5 (0.07)	8.7 (0.06)
Russian Federation	▼ 9.2 (0.04)	9.5 (0.05)	8.9 (0.07)
Slovak Republic	▼ 9.5 (0.05)	9.9 (0.05)	9.1 (0.06)
Slovenia	9.9 (0.04)	10.7 (0.06)	9.1 (0.05)
Sweden	▲ 10.4 (0.06)	11.0 (0.07)	9.7 (0.09)
Switzerland	▲ 10.5 (0.07)	11.3 (0.08)	9.7 (0.07)
United States	▲ 10.5 (0.09)	11.4 (0.07)	9.6 (0.11)



( ) Standard errors appear in parentheses.

▲ Country mean significantly higher than international mean of 10

▼ Country mean significantly lower than international mean of 10

= Mean for Males (± 2 SE).

= Mean for Females (± 2 SE).

Source: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-year-olds tested in 1999.

In reporting the gender difference on this scale, the report, *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries*, notes:

> The gender differences in Support for Women's Political Rights are significant and large in every country ... The countries that have especially large gender differences are Australia, Cyprus, England, Finland, Greece, Norway, Poland and the United States. (*Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries*, p. 110)

The graphic section of the table displays the strength of the gender difference, with the males and females means being shown as further apart than has been the case on any other scale. Even the males from Denmark, the only male cohort to be above the international mean, are a large distance from the females in their country, scoring significantly less than the females.

Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries reports: 'Countries where women hold many seats in the national legislature tend to have adolescents who are more supportive of women's rights'. This assertion does not assist in explaining the Australian students' support for the propositions on the scale, since in 1999, women held few seats in the national legislature. *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries* concludes that the scores indicate there is somewhat more support for the propositions in relation to Support for Women's Political Rights in 1999 than there was during the first Civics Study... but the gender differences in that support remain large. (*Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries*, p111)

Remaining Attitudinal Scales, with Australia Similar to the International Mean

On the remaining three of the Attitudinal scales, Australia's mean was not significantly different to the international mean. These scales were: Positive Attitudes towards Immigrants, Attitudes towards One's Country and Open Climate for Classroom Discussion. The country levels of support on these scales are shown on Table 4.6. As with the other scales, Table 4.6 shows the level the 28 countries achieved on each of the scales, so a comparison can be made for Australia by viewing the symbols indicating above and below the international mean. Except to report that Australian levels of support on these three scales are average, no generalised comment can be made about the Australian findings over this group of scales as a whole, as the concepts they access are too disparate. A more detailed discussion of the Australian responses is conducted in Chapter 6 of this report.

Table 4.6: Positive Attitudes Towards Immigrants, Positive Attitudes Towards One's Nation and Perceptions of Open Classroom Climate for Discussion Scales, by Country

Country	Positive Attitudes Towards Immigrants		Postitive Attitudes Towards One's Nation		Perceptions of Open Classroom Climate for Discussion	
	Mean Scale Score		Mean Scale Score		Mean Scale Score	
Australia		10.0 (0.08)		10.0 (0.05)		10.1 (0.1)
Belgium (French)		10.0 (0.09)	▼	8.4 (0.08)	▼	9.3 (0.1)
Bulgaria	▼	9.7 (0.10)		9.9 (0.06)	▼	9.3 (0.1)
Chile	▲	10.4 (0.03)	▲	11.1 (0.04)	▲	10.3 (0.1)
Colombia	▲	10.8 (0.04)	▲	10.9 (0.06)	▲	10.8 (0.1)
Cyprus	▲	10.8 (0.03)	▲	11.3 (0.03)	▲	10.4 (0.1)
Czech Republic		10.0 (0.06)	▲	10.2 (0.04)	▼	9.5 (0.1)
Denmark	▼	9.6 (0.05)	▼	9.8 (0.04)		10.0 (0.1)
England	▼	9.7 (0.07)	▼	9.4 (0.05)		10.0 (0.1)
Estonia	▼	9.7 (0.04)	▼	9.5 (0.04)	▼	9.7 (0.1)
Finland		9.8 (0.06)	▲	10.5 (0.05)		10.0 (0.1)
Germany	▼	9.2 (0.07)	▼	9.0 (0.06)	▲	10.4 (0.1)
Greece	▲	10.6 (0.05)	▲	11.4 (0.05)	▲	10.5 (0.1)
Hong Kong (SAR)	▲	10.5 (0.05)	▼	8.9 (0.03)	▼	9.6 (0.0)
Hungary	▼	9.5 (0.05)		10.1 (0.04)	▼	9.4 (0.1)
Italy	▼	9.8 (0.05)	▼	9.5 (0.04)	▲	10.4 (0.1)
Latvia	▼	9.5 (0.05)	▼	9.5 (0.06)	▼	9.6 (0.1)
Lithuania	▼	9.6 (0.03)		10.0 (0.04)	▼	9.8 (0.1)
Norway	▲	10.3 (0.07)		9.9 (0.05)	▲	10.6 (0.1)
Poland	▲	10.6 (0.06)	▲	11.1 (0.08)	▲	10.4 (0.1)
Portugal	▲	10.3 (0.03)	▲	10.7 (0.04)	▼	9.7 (0.1)
Romania		10.2 (0.06)		10.1 (0.06)	▼	9.5 (0.1)
Russian Federation		9.8 (0.06)		10.0 (0.05)		10.1 (0.1)
Slovak Republic	▼	9.8 (0.05)	▲	10.5 (0.07)		10.2 (0.1)
Slovenia	▼	9.4 (0.05)		9.9 (0.04)	▼	9.3 (0.0)
Sweden	▲	10.7 (0.08)	▼	9.3 (0.08)	▲	10.2 (0.1)
Switzerland	▼	9.4 (0.07)	▼	9.2 (0.06)	▲	10.4 (0.1)
United States	▲	10.3 (0.06)		9.9 (0.06)	▲	10.5 (0.1)

( ) Standard errors appear in parentheses.

▲ Country mean significantly higher than international mean of 10.

▼ Country mean significantly lower than international mean of 10.

Source: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-year-olds tested 1999

Summary Comments on the International Findings on Civic Knowledge, Civic Engagement and Attitudes

This chapter has conveyed a picture of the Australian students' performance across the whole of the Student Questionnaire in the Civics Study. It has introduced the Australian student data collected during the study on knowledge, skills, and understandings of concepts and attitudes of 14 year-olds. It has positioned those data in an international context. It has compared the knowledge, skills, understandings of concepts and attitudes as demonstrated by Australian 14 year-olds with those of their peers in 27 other democratic countries.

Australian students have demonstrated that on most aspects of the test and survey they are in the middle group of the total cohort. Their knowledge of civic content is average, but their ability to apply their civic knowledge to civic issues, especially on the workings of democracy, are above average.

Their views of the value of engagement in civic life, of what constitutes good citizenship, is less positive than that of most of the international cohort. This is a significant finding. It indicates a greater disenchantment with the political processes open to Australians than is felt by students in a majority of other countries in the study. Australian students express a greater interest or belief in the legitimacy of the social role of government than they do in the economic, and in this they are responding in a way that mirrors the responses of students from a majority of other countries. Australian students express greater than average interest in and commitment to women having equal rights. They also express greater than average trust in government institutions, so the underpinnings of Australian society are seen by students to be strong. Their understandings of the importance of symbolic patriotism and of having positive attitudes to immigrants are registered as being average. Their experience and views of the value of the openness of classrooms for discussion are of an average level. A more detailed discussion of how we might interpret these findings will follow in subsequent chapters of this report.

In this chapter there has been discussion of Australia's performance on the knowledge scales and on a range of the attitudinal items and scales, comparative to the international cohort. Some of the particular findings will be taken up again, in the appropriate chapters in this report. Attention to the similarities and differences in the student responses between Australia and the other participating countries has naturally, been the focus of much of this comparative chapter. In subsequent chapters of this report, in examining the Australian results, the patterns of the Australian results will be of interest in themselves. This discussion will, however, be undertaken with the comparative framework having been the international context established, and thus described.

CHAPTER 5
AUSTRALIAN STUDENTS' CIVIC KNOWLEDGE

Introduction

Chapter 4 of this report gave a generalised picture of the comparative achievement of Australian students on the Total Civic Knowledge scale. (See Figure 4.3) The purpose of this chapter is to provide more details of the Australian students' performance. This will be done chiefly through two figures displaying Australian achievement, and a discussion of the sample items in their full text. One figure displays the international relative difficulty of the eight sample items released as part of the *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries* report. It was mentioned in Chapter 4 of this report.

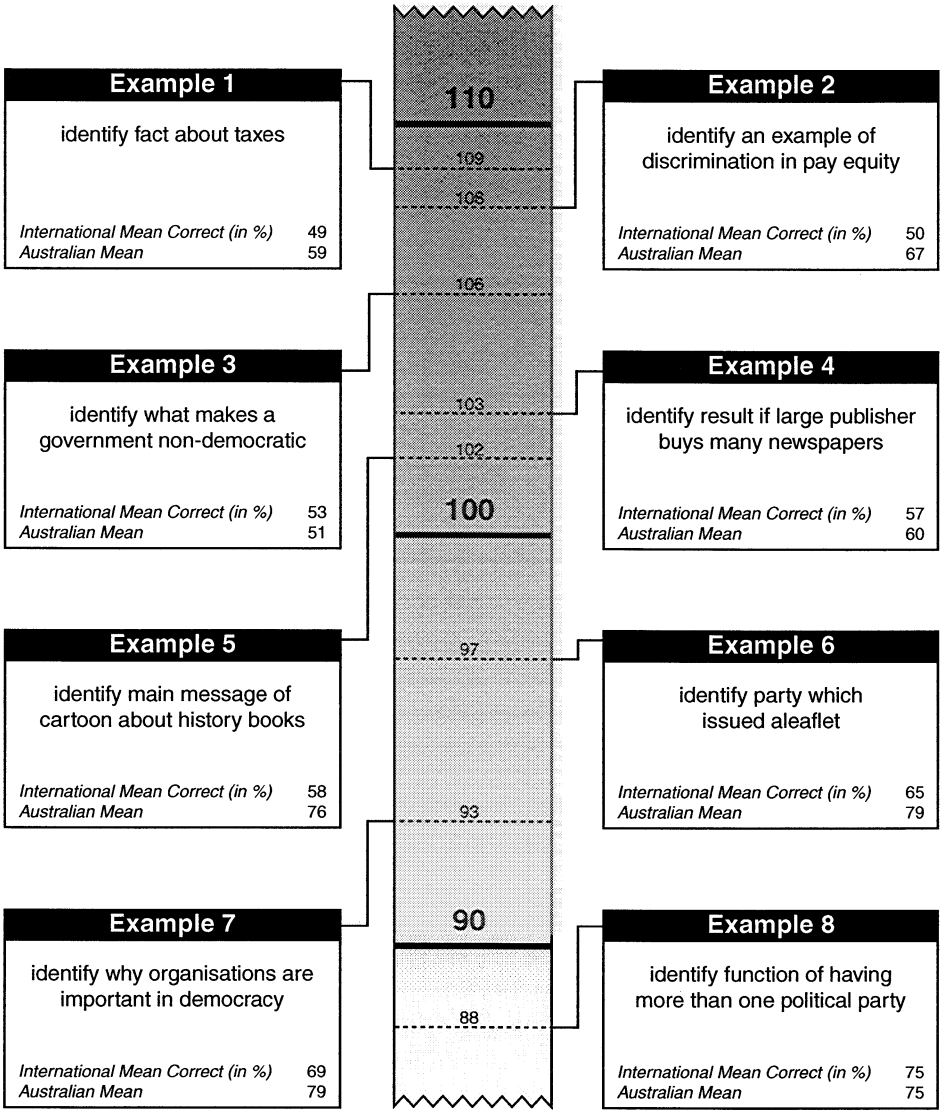
The second figure is an Australian item difficulty map (See Figure 5.2), across all 38 cognitive items, showing the distribution, by difficulty as experienced by the Australian cohort. It also shows the distribution by ability of the Australian cohort. This difficulty map incorporates the Australian data analysis and was developed specifically for this national report. The difficulty map is used as the structure against which the 38 cognitive items are analysed for their substance, type and domain association. An explanation is offered as to the difficulty each item presented to the Australian cohort. Some hypotheses are offered as to what content students need to be taught and to experience, if improvement in civic knowledge and understandings are to be achieved in the future.

Appendix B of this report contains six tables which includes all the items, listed by Domain and by Type, with Australian responses by gender, compared to the international mean, for each cognitive item. (See Appendix B: Tables B5.1-5.6) It may be of use in reading this chapter.

International Difficulty Map for Sample Items

Eight cognitive items were selected for release in the *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries* report. Figure 5.1 displays the relative difficulty of the eight sample items, as experienced by the international students. The international item difficulty map serves to illustrate the location of the Sample Civic Knowledge items in terms of both item difficulty and the ability levels of those who answered the item correctly. For each item the map conveys the sample item's short title and sample number, the international mean, with the difficulty as experienced by Australian students, as a comparison. Each item was placed on the scale at the point where the international students with that level of proficiency had a 65 per cent probability of answering the item correctly. This was also the level that was set in The Third International Mathematics and Science study. (TIMSS) Later in this chapter, Figure 5.2 shows all the 38 cognitive items on a difficulty map, positioned as experienced by Australian students. But on Figure 5.1 the international difficulty level of the sample items is the locus of the positioning.

Figure 5.1: International Difficulty Map for Sample Civic Knowledge Items: International and Australian Means



NOTE: Each item was placed onto the International Civic Knowledge Scale. Items are shown at the point on the scale where students with that level of proficiency had a 65 percent probability of providing a correct response.

Australian Results in the Cognitive Achievement Test

As outlined in Chapter 4, Australian students demonstrated a good grasp of the concepts and issues embedded in the eight sample items, and scored above the international mean on six of the eight released items. This achievement is better than was achieved by the Australian students on the Total Civic Knowledge Scale. A detailed examination of the items now follows. The Figures displaying the international results for each of the Sample items are contained in Appendix B. (see Figures B5.1-B5.6) In addition, Appendix B contains a series of tables showing the details of the 38 cognitive items by Domain (including the subsets of each) and Type, with Australian and international means, and the international item parameters. (See Tables B5.1-Table B5.6: *Achievement in Civic Knowledge in Australia).*

Each sample item is printed in full, with the Australian means for the whole cohort followed by that for females and males. The correct answer is asterisked thus: *, and is in **bold**. The per cent correct reported is of those students who attempted and responded to the item. The data does not include those students who did not complete the item, for example, students who chose not to answer the item or students who did not reach the item. The percentage of missing cases ranged from 2 to 2.7 per cent. (For this reason the Australian mean in the sample item tables may be slightly different from the Australian mean in Figures B5.1 to B5.8). The textual analysis of the item will refer to the range of conceptual knowledge and political understandings being dealt with by students in answering the question. The short title alone cannot do justice to the student knowledge being demonstrated.

Sample Item 1: **Identify fact about taxes**

Three of these statements are opinions and one is a statement of fact. Which of the following is a fact?	**Total**	**Females**	**Males**
People with very low incomes should not pay any taxes.	9	8	10
In many countries rich people pay higher taxes than poor people.*	59	63	55
It is fair that some citizens pay higher taxes than others.	13	11	16
Donations to charity are the best way to reduce differences between rich and poor.	19	18	19

Sample Item 1 was internationally the most difficult of the sample questions. This sample item is a Domain 1, skills in interpretation (Type 2) item. It is a Cognitive Skill Item, and as has been earlier reported, Australian students achieved well on the Knowledge Skill scale. In this item students are asked to distil the essence of a range of political issues, at the same time deciding which one of the responses is a fact, not an opinion. (See Figure B5.1 in Appendix B.) The political concepts to be considered revolve around tax, and include relative wealth, poverty, capacity and duty to pay taxes, what might be a charity, the donating of monies to charities, the goal of reducing the difference between rich and poor, by tax (or by other means). These are complex issues, and the overlay of 'fact' versus 'opinion' makes for a complex mix in the response pattern. The relative clarity and strength of the Australian correct response (the international mean was 49) suggests the students could fairly-readily

reject the first response option as being 'opinion'. They then had to deal with the other possibilities, either conceptually and/or in terms of the 'fact/opinion' dichotomy. Female students were less likely then males to select the first and third options, and more likely to select the correct response option.

Sample Item 2: **Identify an example of discrimination in pay equity**

Two people work at the same job but one is paid less than the other. The principle of equality would be violated if the person is paid less because of ...	**Total**	**Females**	**Males**
fewer educational qualifications.	6	5	8
less work experience.	8	7	9
working for fewer hours.	19	18	20
gender. *	67	70	63

This sample item is a Domain 3, skills in interpretation (Type 2) item. The second most difficult item, as experienced by the international cohort, is also a skill item. The scenario is set to test student understanding of the implementation of pay equity. The concept of pay equity has to be matched by the student to the correct one of four possible explanations for one person being paid less than another person. Students are to locate the explanation which equates with discrimination. They have to reject educational qualifications, being less experienced and working for fewer hours (all of which, in another scenario, might be discriminatory) as being the right answer. More Australian females than males selected the correct response, and significantly more Australians selected the correct response, comparatively. The international mean was 50 per cent, compared with the two-third of Australian students who correctly answered the item. (See Figure B5.2 in Appendix B.) One can conclude that Australian students have a more-developed concept of discrimination by gender than their international peers, and possibly also a greater language facility. (The assertion of language facility is always present as a variable explaining item success, and was the subject of discussion on some of the skill items in the Student Questionnaire).

Sample Item 3: **Identify what makes a government non-democratic**

Which of the following is most likely to cause a government to be called non-democratic?	**Total**	**Females**	**Males**
People are not allowed to criticise the government. *	51	49	54
The political parties criticise each other often.	15	15	15
People must pay very high taxes.	21	22	20
Every citizen has the right to a job.	13	14	11

This sample item is a Domain 1, knowledge of content (Type 1) item. This item was provided in Chapter 4 as an example of a civic knowledge item. The detail of the response rates enables a reader to see the degree of uncertainty Australian students

reveal on the topic of what constitutes criteria for a government being 'non-democratic'. This was the third most difficult item of the eight sample items, and whilst the previous two more difficult items did not present equal difficulties to Australian students as they did their peers, this one suddenly has them struggling. The country mean is slightly lower than the international mean of 53 per cent. (See Figure B5.3 in Appendix B.)

The three incorrect response options are very clearly not situations which threaten the democratic nature of a government, yet nearly half of the students in the Australian and international cohorts are uncertain of this. They are drawn by response options which are not serious ones, at least in relation to the option of people being *allowed* to criticise government. It appears that student understanding of the essence of a democratic government, that it can survive criticism, that criticism in a democratic system is all-important to any political policy and activity, is not well advanced. (There is a possibility that the item construction, especially the plethora of negatives played a role in student response in this item.) It will be noticed that Australian male students were clearer than females in their perceptions of what is a key criteria of democracy.

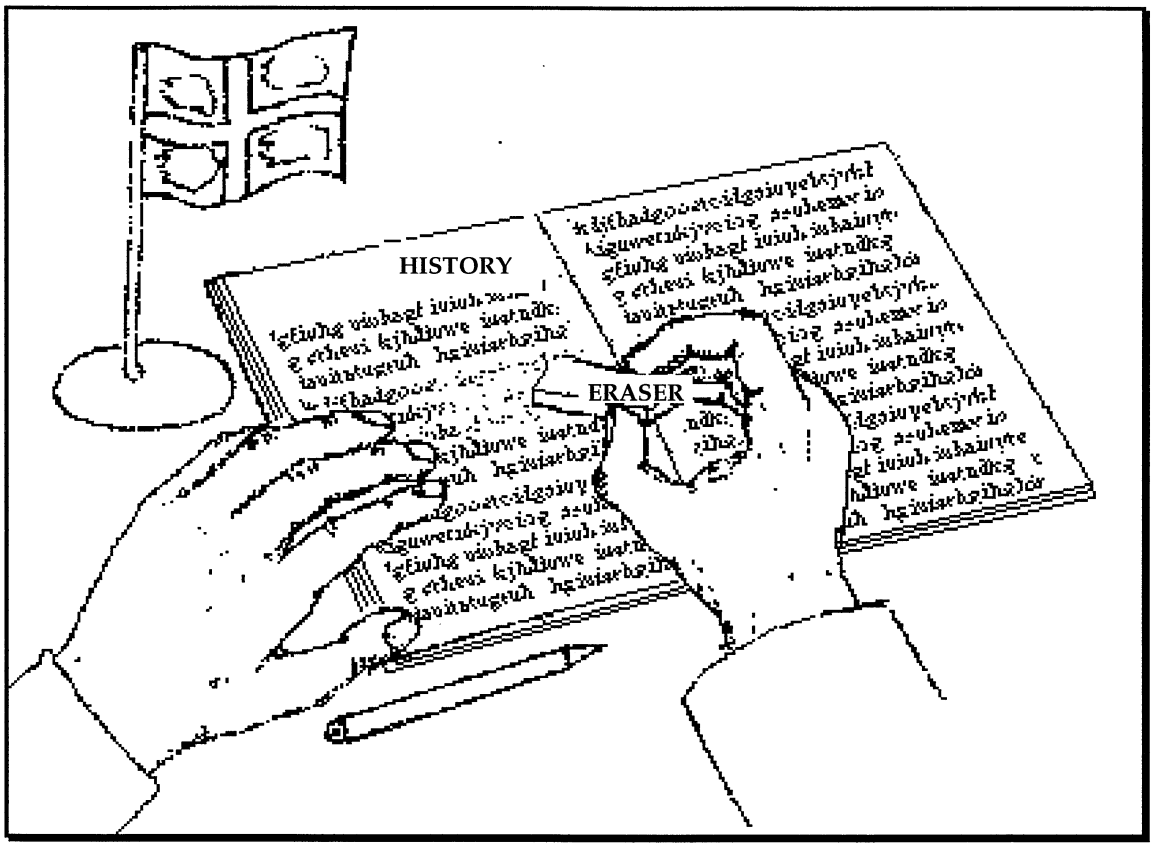
Sample Item 4: **Identify result if large publisher buys many newspapers**

Which of the following is most likely to happen if a large publisher buys many of the newspapers in a country?	**Total**	**Females**	**Males**
Government censorship of the news is more likely.	16	13	18
There will be less diversity of opinions presented.*	60	63	57
The price of the country's newspapers will be lowered.	10	10	11
The amount of advertising in the newspapers will be reduced.	14	14	14

This sample item is a Domain 1, knowledge of content (Type 1) item. The issue of press ownership is one with which the Australian and international students are familiar, in their countries. Yet less than two thirds of both groups of them were able to select the correct response option. The Australian correct mean was a little better than the international mean of 57 per cent. See Figure B5.4 in Appendix B.) If a student knew the importance of key words like 'diversity of opinions' the second option was instantly recognisable as the correct response. But if this was not the case the issue became a very complex one. To reject the first response option students need to know that government censorship generally increases with concentration of media outlets (though whether they always are those forces which support a incumbent government is open to question). A grasp of the economics of circulation and production are required knowledge to reject the third and fourth response options. Australian male students were more drawn to the censorship option than were the females, and they were less likely to select the correct option than the females.

Sample Item 5: **Identify main message of cartoon about history books**

This is the way history textbooks are sometimes written



What is the message or main point of this cartoon? History textbooks ...	**Total**	**Females**	**Males**
are sometimes changed to avoid mentioning problematic events from the past.*	76	78	73
for children must be shorter than books written for adults.	6	4	8
are full of information that is not interesting.	8	8	9
should be written using a computer and not a pencil.	10	10	10

This sample item is a Domain 2, skills in interpretation (Type 2) item. It is the fifth on the difficulty map, and it is positioned just above the point of 100, at 106. So students who had a scale score of at least 106 (as shown in the difficulty map) on the Civic Knowledge Scale had a 65 per cent chance or better to correctly respond to this item. As this item was being developed, efforts had been made to keep this concept as nationally value-free as possible. It was important that students only consider the concept of history being re-written, not why it might be re-written, or by whom. These would have been unwelcome distractions.

Even so, the range of means (26 per cent to 79 per cent) and the international mean (58 per cent) indicates that students in different countries experienced the matter

very differently. (See Appendix B.) The top group of countries, achieving over 72 per cent correct were the United States, England, Hong Kong, Australia and the Slovak Republic. There is then a drop to the mid high 60s. It is interesting to speculate on why this group found the issue so clear when so many others could not do so. The interpretation of the cartoon as a comment on the use of computers, the final response option, by ten per cent of Australian students (and possibly many more in other places) introduces a concern about the skew introduced by that distractor. Australian females were more likely to select the correct option and were less attracted than males to the option about children's books needing to be shorter than books written for adults.

Sample Item 6: **Identify party which issued a leaflet**

We citizens have had enough!

A vote for the Silver Party means a vote for higher taxes.

It means an end to economic growth and a waste of our nation's resources.

Vote instead for economic growth and free enterprise.

Vote for more money left in everyone's wallet!

Let's not waste another 4 years! VOTE FOR THE GOLD PARTY.

This is a political leaflet which has probably been issued by ...	**Total**	**Females**	**Males**
the Silver Party.	6	5	8
a party or group in opposition to the Silver Party.*	79	83	74
a group which tries to be sure elections are fair.	8	6	11
the Silver Party and the Gold Party together.	7	6	7

This sample item is a Domain 1, skills in interpretation (Type 2) item. It is the sixth item on the international difficulty map, and it is thus a less difficult item than the majority of the sample items. The item references the importance of elections and of being able to interpret campaign materials before deciding on voting intentions. Students had to read the campaign leaflet and then decide which of the two parties mentioned had authored it. Australian students found this a relatively-easy task, more especially the females. Again there is a rather different picture internationally, with a response range of 40 per cent to 83 per cent, and the students of eleven countries achieving at least 75 per cent. (See Figure B5.7 in Appendix B.) The response options allude to issues such as fairness in elections, the notion of coalitions, and requires the skill of identifying which voice is that of the author party (principally a matter of a close reading for consistency of thought in the argument in the leaflet).

Sample Item 7: **Identify why organisations are important in democracy**

In a democratic country having many organisations for people to join is important because it provides ...	**Total**	**Females**	**Males**
a group to defend members who are arrested.	3	2	5
many sources of taxes for the government.	8	6	10
opportunities to express different points of view.*	79	84	73
a way for the government to tell people about new laws.	10	8	12

This sample item is a Domain 1, knowledge of content (Type 1) item. As the seventh item on the difficulty map it is a relatively easy item for most students. The range of response means is from 82 per cent to 46 per cent, with the international mean being 69 per cent. (See Figure B5.7 in Appendix B.)

Australian students have achieved at a considerably higher level than the international average. Again the Australian females have found this a much easier item than the males. The matters under notice in the item are: the value of having many organisations, what joining them provides for the people who join them, people and organisations as taxpayers, organisations as sources of dissemination by government, the importance of people being able to be defended if arrested. (and subliminally, to be arrested for belonging to the 'wrong' organisations)

Sample Item 8: **Identify function of having more than one party**

In democratic countries what is the function of having more than one political party?	**Total**	**Females**	**Males**
To represent different interests in the national parliament.*	75	79	71
To limit political corruption.	9	8	11
To prevent political demonstrations.	6	4	7
To encourage economic competition.	10	9	11

This sample item is a Domain 1, knowledge of content (Type 1) item. It is the easiest item displayed on the map. The importance of having more than one political party is fundamental to a practising democratic system. There is a clear match between the correct response and the question being asked. It is not the function of single, less still multiple, political parties to limit political corruption or preventing political demonstrations, though some do seek to encourage economic competition. One could reasonably expect that students who had achieved better than their peers on most of the other sample items, especially for example on sample item 7, to do better than their peers on this item. But this is not a pattern continued. The Australian and international mean is the same, with 15 country means being higher than Australia's. (See Figure B5.8 in Appendix B.) The students have not responded to the 'more than one political party' cue. The male contribution to this somewhat distorted result is again evident with their mean being in the vicinity of 10 per cent less than that of their female compatriots.

Conclusions to be drawn from the Eight Sample Items

In six of the eight sample items Australian students achieve a higher score than the international cohort. In one item the Australian score was the same as the international mean and on the eighth item the Australian score was just two percentage points lower than the international mean. On five of the sample items the difference between the Australian and the international score was considerable, at 10 or more per cent. (See sample items 1, 2, 5, 6 and 7) Four of these five are Type 2 items, as might have been anticipated, given the findings on the relative achievement on the sub-scales reported earlier.

Also included in this group of five sample items where the Australian score is considerably above the international mean, are both the Domain 2 & 3 items in the sample. The Australian coverage of the substance and style of civic knowledge is demonstrably satisfactory on the group of sample items. The picture of the achievement levels of Australian students alters when the whole set of Knowledge items are considered, as has already been shown in Chapter 4 (see Figure 4.1).

The Australian Difficulty Map for Civic Knowledge

To better understand the Australian experience of the whole group of Knowledge items, a Rasch analysis was conducted to plot the difficulty levels of each item for Australian students. A map was developed which shows each item at the point on a difficulty scale appropriate to it, for the Australian cohort as a whole. The separations of items across the difficulty scale indicates the differences between each item's difficulty; with the greatest differences occurring between the easiest and the most difficult items. Thus the relative difficulty of each item, as experienced by the Australian students can be mapped and viewed.

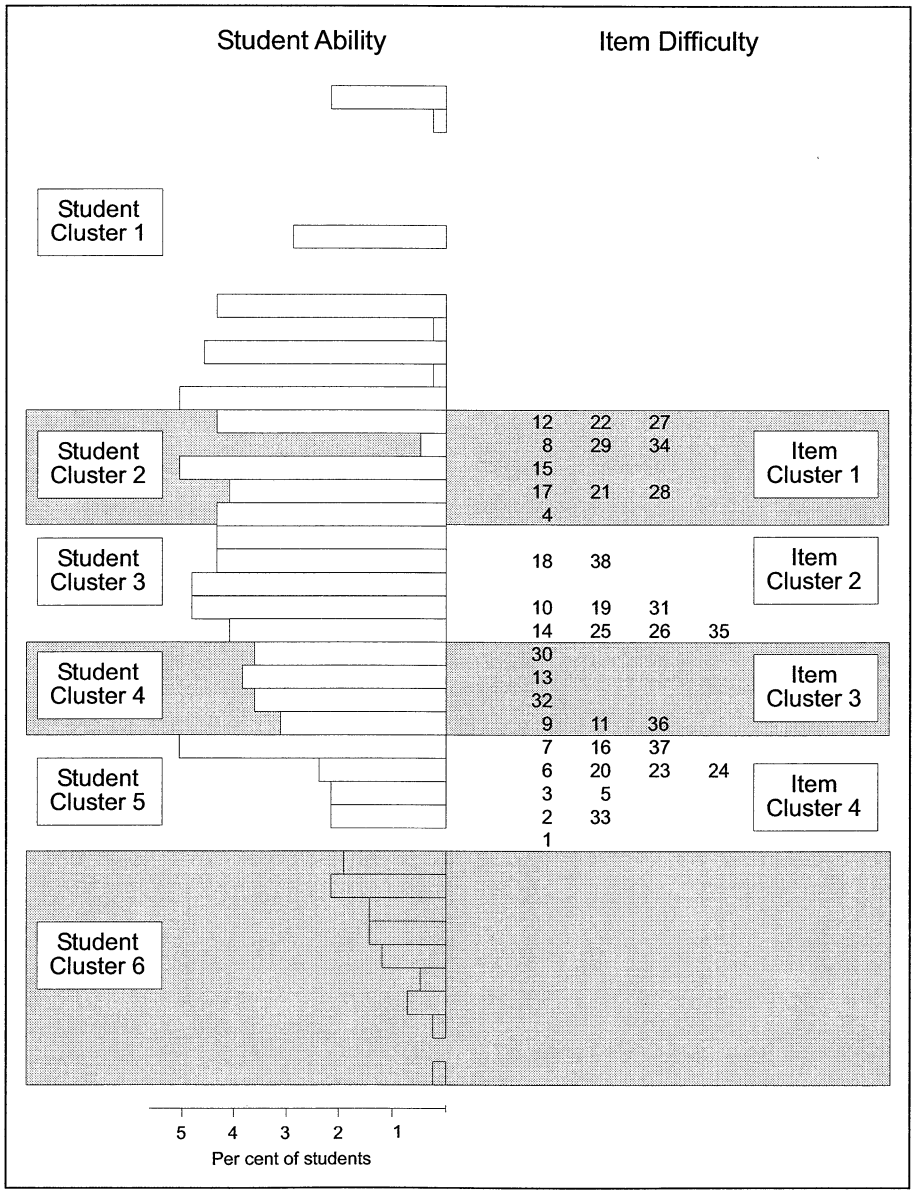
Commonly on such maps there is some clustering of items, graphically demonstrating those items of similar difficulty. A spread of items across a broad area of such a map indicates a wide range of difficulty levels within a test or survey. Within the clustering patterns of items may lie some explanations of the item difficulty levels experienced by the Australian students. The substantive content of clustered items may be the main common aspect the items share, though other characteristics may be more important in understanding the clusters. These comments are also true for the items which are at different difficulty levels. Where two items appear to deal with similar content but are placed apart on the difficulty map, clearly something other than just content is at work in the students' response and achievement. These other variables may be the item type, a particularised response to a key word, or possibly the issues embedded in the distractors (i.e. the incorrect responses) which formed part of the item structure. Discussion of individual items and possible explanations as to their relative difficulty follows Figure 5.2: The Australian Difficulty Map for Civic Knowledge.

The item numbers are those ascribed to the items in the Student Questionnaire. They have already been used in the Domain map (see Table 2.6) and in regard to the mapping of the Sample Items (see Figure 5.1). Readers will find it useful to reference Tables in Appendix B. These show the details of the 38 cognitive items by Domain (including the subsets of each) and Type, with Australian and International means,

and the international item parameters. (See Tables B5.1-Table B5.6: *Achievement in Civic Knowledge in Australia).*

The Australian mean varies from the International mean correct by 10 or more per cent on 14 of the 38 cognitive items. Of these 14 items, the variation is a positive one for Australian students on 10 items. Eight of these 10 items are skill items, an item type which, it has been previously reported, Australian students found relatively easier than the international cohort. On the remaining four items Australian students scored below the international mean. These four items are item numbers: 4, 8, 12 and 28. It can be seen by referencing the Domain Mapping figure in Chapter 2 (See Table 2.6) that these four items share content from Domain 1. Since over half of the cognitive items share that content, this is an insufficiently distinguishing characteristic for understanding the difficulty level of the item. The Difficulty Map can assist in an analysis of the relative significance of the substantive content, as opposed to other factors, in understanding the difficulty levels of these items.

Figure 5.2: Australian Difficulty Map for All Cognitive Items



The Difficulty Map shows the relative positioning of cognitive items, as experienced by the Australian students. The student cohort is shown distributed on the left side of the map, and is divided into six clusters, by ability, as demonstrated by percentage of items correct. The distribution of items is on the right hand side of the map, with four item clusters, matched by difficulty, with student clusters 2-5.

Student Cluster 1

The top cluster of students, consisting of approximately one fifth of the total Australian cohort, is positioned higher on the map than any of the items on the right side of the figure. These students had a better than 65 per cent chance of being able to correctly respond to all questions. This indicates that those students demonstrated an ability which was greater than the items required. At the very top of the map, approximately two per cent of the students appear as having correctly answered all 38 cognitive items. Below them, still in the first student cluster, are those students who did very well on the items, and who had a better than 65 percentage chance of answering all the items correctly.

The size of this cluster of students is an important finding. It demonstrates that the cognitive items did not fully test the ability or knowledge of civics of over one fifth (approximately 20 per cent) of the Year 9 Australian students in the study. It also suggests that the ability and knowledge in relation to civics of Year 9 students varies greatly across the nation. It may be that it reflects the variable introduction and level of civic education courses that existed in Australia in 1999. Further analysis could allow a firming of this hypothesis.

The size of this cluster of students is probably partly the result of the need of the international items to achieve the high rate of acceptance (65 per cent) required by the IEA from the national representatives of the 28 participating countries, generally determined by the National Research Co-ordinators (NRCs). The impact on item difficulty of the high rate of acceptance required for inclusion of items was a matter of concern, expressed by some NRCs, during the consultative processes of item development, especially after the trialing of items in 1998. In order to achieve the required level of agreement, items with a low, or uneven across county, success rate from the pilot, were rejected as unsuitable for inclusion in the final survey form. Some of these were items which, had they been included, would have been helpful in extending the range of knowledge and skills to be tested by the instrument. The occurrence of this phenomenon of untested ability in other countries in the study is not known.

Moving down the map, the reader can identify the section of the map which has clusters on both sides of the map: students on the left and items on the right, matched across the same levels of the map. On the right side of the map are four clusters of items, within which are grouped items which have roughly similar levels of difficulty (as experienced by the Australian cohort). The students who appear on the scale at the same point of the map as an item in any cluster are those who had a 65 per cent probability of getting that item correct. The items near the top of the map, in item cluster 1, are those items the Australian students found most difficult. The lowest item cluster on the map, item cluster 4, contains those items with the lowest difficulty. (That is they are the items which Australian students found easiest.)

Student Cluster 6

Continuing to the bottom of the map, student cluster 6 contains those students positioned below the bottom item on the right hand side of the map, in item cluster 4. This student cluster indicates those students with the lowest level of demonstrated ability; those students who got none of the items correct. Approximately ten per cent of the student cohort is in this cluster. This demonstrates a serious matter for educators in the area of civics education in this country. These students have not had a successful preparation for the democratic tasks they will be required to fulfil in their adult lives. Nor do they have any demonstrated knowledge upon which to build their democratic competence as adults. It is a very serious matter for future of democracy in this country.

Student Cluster 5 and Item Cluster 4

Returning to the cluster above this lowest group of students, we are engaged with student cluster 5 and the matched items in item cluster 4. These are the items Australian students found the easiest to answer correctly. Approximately fourteen per cent of the Australian students are positioned in student cluster 5, thus indicating they are those who had a 65 per cent probability of getting those 12 items correct. All the students positioned in the higher student clusters (i.e. student clusters 2 to 4) had a better than 65 per cent probability of getting the items in this cluster correct.

This cluster of 12 items contains items from each of the Domains, and both item types. By cross referencing with the tables in Appendix B5, the topics in the numbered items can be ascertained. Two of the items (7 & 23) are sample items which have previously been analysed for their content and type. (Sample Items 6 and 7) They are sample items at which Australian students did considerably better than their international peers. It is not insignificant that none of the items are from the Domain areas of 1A (Democracy and its defining characteristics). These are conceptually very complex topics.

Four items are from Domain 1B (Institutions and practices in Democracy). It should be noted that three of the items from Domain 1B are Type 2 items, and it has already been established that Australian students show a comparatively greater facility with this type that with Type 1 than their international peers. The Domain 1B items deal with issues such as 'qualifications for candidates', 'making up one's mind during elections' and 'basic character of law'. It seems the Australian students found these items relatively straight-forward and unambiguous.

Five of the items in the cluster come from Domain 1C (Citizenship: Rights and Duties). Australian students appear to have relatively greater knowledge about this topic than the other democracy topics. They deal with issues such as 'a political right', 'violation of a journalist's right', 'role of a citizen in a democratic country', 'human rights/United Nations.'

Two of the items deal with 'discrimination' associated with Domain 3A (International Relations) and a third, from Domain 2B is another item about the United Nations.

These figures suggest that the topic, or content had some impact on the difficulty experience by students, because despite the fact that Domain 1 contained nearly 80 per cent of the items, Australian students experienced them disproportionately in the upper clusters. But it appears it is unlikely that the topic which is the focus of the item is the chief significant variable in the difficulty level experienced by the students. When the 12 items in item cluster 4 are examined, in detail and as a group, it is clear they deal with facts, and rather simple ones at that. The item structures are unambiguous, and the distractors (i.e. the incorrect response options) did not create any additional burden to the Australian student.

Finally it should be recalled that approximately a quarter of Australian students had a less than 65 per cent probability of successfully answering all of them, and in excess of two thirds of Australian students had a better than 65 per cent probability of correctly responding to all of them. A high proportion of Australian students found this cluster of items easy to correctly answer, but a significant proportion (up to approximately 30 per cent) could not answer all of them.

Student Cluster 4 and Item Cluster 3.

The next matched cluster we are engaged with is the band encompassing student cluster 4 and item cluster 3. These are the items which Australian students found more difficult to correctly answer than those in item cluster 4, and less difficult than those in item cluster 2. Approximately 14 per cent of the Australian students are positioned in student cluster 4, thus indicating they are those students who had a 65 per cent probability of getting the 6 items in item cluster 3 correct. All the students positioned in the higher student clusters (i.e. student clusters 2 and 3) had a better than 65 per cent probability of getting the items in this cluster correct.

This cluster of 6 items contains items from each of the Domains, and both item types. By cross referencing with the tables in Appendix B5, the topics in the numbered items can be ascertained. Two of the items (11 & 36) are sample items which have previously been analysed in detail regarding their content and type. (Sample Items 5 and 8)

In summary these items are ones which are characterised by distinctions which are more important than those contained in the less difficult items in item cluster 4, and these distinctions are relatively clear in the items and therefore relatively easy to make. The issues here are 'factors undermining democracy' (Domain 1A), 'function of having more than one political party', 'example of corruption in a national legislature' and 'main task of national legislature' (Domain 1B), and two Type 2 items from Domain 2A: National Identity, on 'an opinion on flags', and 'the main message about history books from a cartoon'.

The items resemble those in item cluster 4 insofar as they are unencumbered by demanding distractors, but they do require the additional capacity to make critical distinctions about the issue. An example of this is contained in item 11 where a precise match between 'represent different interests' and 'the function of having more than one political party' needed to be understood in order to correctly respond. Such distinctions were not required by items in item cluster 1.

Item 30 is an appropriate ceiling item to the cluster because so many students in the cluster could correctly answer it. Like the other items in the cluster, the distinctions required to be made in the distractors, (students had to resist selecting as a response the examples of actions which are not corruptions) are such as to convince an assessor that the student has understood the key elements of the topic. At this point on the difficulty map, approximately 38 per cent of students had a less than 65 per cent probability of successfully answering all of the items in the cluster, and approximately 62 per cent of Australian students had a better than 65 per cent probability of correctly responding to all of them.

Student Cluster 3 and Item Cluster 2.

The next matched cluster we are engaged with is the band encompassing student cluster 3 and item cluster 2. These are the items which Australian students found more difficult to correctly answer than those in item cluster 3, and less difficult than those in item cluster 1. Approximately 22 per cent of the Australian students are positioned in student cluster 3, thus indicating they are those students who had a 65 per cent probability of getting the 9 items in item cluster 2 correct. All the students positioned in the higher student clusters (i.e. student clusters 1 and 2) had a better than 65 per cent probability of getting the items in this cluster correct.

This cluster of 9 items contains items from each of the Domains, and both item types. By cross referencing with the tables in Appendix B5, the topics in the numbered items can be ascertained. Three of the items (18, 26 & 38) are sample items which have previously been analysed in detail regarding their content and type. (Sample Items 1, 2 and 4)

This set of items has less to characterise it than the other three item clusters. The items are obviously more difficult, but it is not easy to readily see in what ways. Six of the nine items are Type 2 items; ones where the interpretative skills of the students are tested as much as their knowledge of a topic, and the relative superiority of the Australian students when responding to Type 2 items has been previously demonstrated. One can only speculate as to how different might the demonstrated achievement have been on these topics, if the item type had been Type 1. Australian students may not have been equally able to answer them correctly. It is interesting to see which part of the cohort demonstrates this ability the most; the middle range of students (i.e. those between 38 per cent and 60 per cent). It seems interpreting skills are being taught comparatively early and possibly comparatively well in Australian schools.

Two of the items in this cluster are from Domain 1A; 'necessary feature of democratic government' and 'strengths and weaknesses of democratic systems' (though this one is a skill item). Two items are from Domain 1B; 'what policy issuers of a leaflet are likely to favour' and 'a fact about taxes' (both Type 2 items). Three items are from Domain 1C; 'illegal activity for a political organisation', 'result if large publisher buys many newspaper' and 'economic objections to a factory being shut' (the last item being a skill item associated with an economic category). The two items from Domains 2B and 3A are also economic in focus and both are interpretative skill items; 'an opinion about the environment' and 'an example of pay equity'.

Thus despite the fact that Australian students have been identified as finding the interpretative skill items relatively easy, it seems they find them relatively difficult when the content is economic in nature. The conclusion can only be that Australian students do not have a strong understanding of the connections between the conduct of the economy and the strength or otherwise of democracy. Nor do they have a very strong grasp of the connections between the roles of the media and democracy, for they are slow to recognise the threats that certain media activities can have for democracy.

Despite these reservations, it is seems that approximately half of the Australian students have a grasp of the essential pre-conditions for the thriving of a democracy, as approximately 50 per cent of the Australian students were able to demonstrate a 65 per cent probability for correctly answering all these item cluster 2, albeit a majority of them were skill items.

Student Cluster 2 and Item Cluster 1.

The final matched cluster we are engaged with is the band encompassing student cluster 2 and item cluster 1. These are the items which Australian students found most difficult to correctly answer. Approximately 18 per cent of the Australian students are positioned in student cluster 2, thus indicating they are those students who had a 65 per cent probability of getting the 11 items in item cluster 1 correct. All the students positioned in the higher student clusters (i.e. student cluster 1) had a better than 65 per cent probability of getting all the items in this cluster correct.

Approximately one quarter of the cognitive items in the test are in this final item cluster. All items bar one of this cluster of 11 items derive from Domain 1, and all bar one of the items is a Type 1 item. By cross referencing with the tables in Appendix B5, the topics in the numbered items can be ascertained. One of the items (17) is a sample item which has previously been analysed in detail regarding its content and type. (Sample Item 3) This is the sole Sample item on which Australian students' achievement did not equal or excel that of their international peers, although the means only differ by two points. Not surprisingly the four items mentioned earlier, which Australian students found to be considerably more difficult than their international peers (4, 8, 12, & 28), rest within this 'most difficult' cluster.

This set of items has less to characterise it than the other three item cluster. The items prove to be difficult for a range of reasons. As likely as it is that the topic embedded in the item is problematic for students, so it is equally likely that the structure of the item and the complexity of the distractors which must be rejected by the students in order to arrive at the correct response, represented specific challenges for them. An analysis of the items will enable a better, though still-incomplete, understanding of the difficulties they represented to Australian students. We should conduct the analysis mindful of the fact that over one third of the Australian cohort was able to correctly answer all the items in the cluster.

Civic Knowledge of Australian students regarding Democracy

The most significant identifier of the set is that all bar one of them references Domain 1. They are all about Democracy: three are from Domain 1A, three from Domain 1B and four from Domain 1C. They are each of them items dealing with a critical element of the democratic process.

Item 17, which focuses on 'what makes a government democratic', in addition to having two economic distractors, has two other response options which offer perspectives on the different roles of 'criticism' in a democratic system. This is precision indeed, and only half the Australian students were able to correctly respond to the choice (compared to 53 per cent for the international cohort). Item 22 has as its focus 'functions of periodic elections', and only approximately 40 per cent of both cohorts could separate with confidence the distractors on maintaining laws, citizen interest in government, restricting power and managing change in a democracy. The point that needs to be made is that these are complex issues and untangling them requires some theoretical recognition of how the election process contributes to a democratic process. Small wonder all the students found it difficult.

Within Domain 1C: Citizenship: Rights and Duties, sits the issue of 'citizen rights to participate and express criticism and their limits'. Item 15 focussed on the issue of' violation of civil liberties in a democracy', and did so by presenting personal liberties in the context of a series of violations by representatives of the law. This resulted in a clash of rights across the distractors which the students in both cohorts found difficult to separate. The Australian mean was some five per cent lower than the international mean.

With Item 4 the issue was one of distinguishing the various civil rights of the reporter to identify the freedom of the press as the one which had been violated by her arrest. Australian students were not able to distinguish which was the reporter's violated right on this item. It is evident that Australian students are not strong in their understandings of what constitute their civil rights. The Australian mean was some 16 per cent lower than the international mean. It was one of the previously mentioned group of 4 items on which Australian students grossly underperformed, compared to the international cohort. The links between civil rights and other rights require an understanding of the sources of those rights, and the differences between those rights such as right to a fair trial, freedom of movement and freedom of choice of occupation. This item raised again the paucity of understanding of the legitimate role of the media in a democracy, and of economics, as the item had an economic component in one the distractors.

Items 12 and 29 which fall within Domain 1A are two of the previously-mentioned four items on which Australian students grossly under performed, compared to the international cohort. The Domain 1A content category for Item 29 is 'identify problems in transitions of government from non-democratic to democratic' and the item focus is 'most convincing action to promote democracy'. These are issues of considerable importance in the region in which Australia is situated, and Australian governments must be able to balance national interests and democratic responsibilities. It is important that Australian citizens be able to understand the

policy options that their future governments might develop. It appears that more knowledge is going to be required for informed judgements about such matters. Australian students were able to manage only 44 per cent correct (compared to 54 per cent by the international cohort) in selecting the right option describing what a dictator might do to convince a population he was prepared to promote democracy. Again the students had to know what is a real, as opposed to illusory, sign of democratic action, and over half of them could not do so, spreading their selections across all four options.

Item 12 was removed from the Australian data set because it was deemed an 'item misfit'. In such cases, an item is considered to deviate from the test characteristics, and does not provide comparability between countries, so it is removed from the analysis. This action was taken for this item for Australia and also in Hong Kong and England. It appears the students from each of these countries had misunderstood its meaning. Rather than deciding between several kinds of groups as to which would best govern in a democracy, Australian students chose to consider who would do the best job of governing, and a majority of them did not choose the popularly elected representatives! The ambiguity in the structure of the question enabled Australia (and other countries) to avoid carrying this low response rate into the Civic Knowledge score. However, the issue remains, why do students not understand (or is it that they do not believe in?) the importance of their representatives being elected? Representativeness lies at the heart of democracy.

The last Domain 1B item, which is also one of the four items on which Australian students significantly under-achieved, is Item 28. It deals with the essential content (and by implication the purpose of) a country's constitution. A bare majority (52 per cent) of the Australian cohort knew the right answer (compared to a majority of the international cohort; 62 per cent). Given the importance of constitutions to the conduct and protection of democratic traditions, a grasp of the essential ingredients of a strong constitution, and its purpose constitute fundamental knowledge. Approximately half of Australian students did not have that knowledge.

With regard to the Democracy items in this cluster, it seems that the general, experiential, grassroots understandings the students can bring to the issues are barely sufficient to deal with the precision demanded by the items. It is with items such as these that the lack of a clear set of theoretical principles that can be applied to a range of concepts of Democracy becomes evident. Whilst students' sense and experience of equity can enable them to settle some issues regarding democratic process it will not allow for a settling of the crucial issues. To achieve this goal, the most important civic knowledge Australian students require is a sounder grasp of the theoretical precepts of democratic models and structures.

Civic Knowledge of Australian students regarding Economics

The other major area of Australian weakness in civic knowledge relates to the interconnectedness of economic matters and democracy. There are four items in this item cluster, one which relates to aspects of the economy and democracy. Item 21 is from Domain 2B and it references multinationals as part of 'recognising international economic issues'. It is worth noting that the international mean for this item is five per cent lower than the Australian mean, and that international students generally had trouble with economic issues. One Domain 1B item with an economic

framework is item 27, which focuses on the 'essential characteristic of market economy'. Here the Australian cohort did less well then the international, for the Australian mean is 6 per cent below that of the international cohort. It could be argued that item 34, on 'the main point about a factory being shut' is economic in content. It is a Type 2 item, which probably helped Australian students.

Another item which demonstrates the Australian students' lack of understanding of the economic components of a modern democracy is item 8, which addresses the role of trade unions. It is possible that a general lack of understanding about the economy contributed to the relatively greater difficulty Australian students experienced with this item. The distractors for this item reference aspects of the interests of trade unions, but not their main purpose. Australian students could not distinguish between them, and only 46 per cent of them selected the correct response (compared with 64 per cent of the international cohort). General knowledge about what unions do is no help to students asked about the purpose of trade unions.

It has been demonstrated that about half of the Australian students do not have a strong grasp of the impact of economic issues in the functioning of a democratic system, nor do they have a sense of where the inherent tensions between democratic ideals and economic exigencies lie. Given that globalisation and its inherent economics will be forces which impact on all nations, especially relatively small ones like Australia in the future, we need Australian students to understand the issues. These data indicate that economic understandings are the second area of greatest need for Australian students, faced as they will be, with the task of keeping Australia a strong democracy.

Concluding Remarks on the Difficulty Map

The Difficulty Map has enabled the identification of those items, across Domains, which students found most difficult. From these items has been distilled those issues and concepts in which Australian students most need additional teaching and learning. Their current understandings need to be developed and deepened, aided by theoretical constructs and concepts and models of democracy. Resolution of social and political tensions, commonly seen by the students as conflictual situations, requires more information and knowledge about options than they currently have at their disposal. Once they have these new understandings they will need to test them for practical usefulness, in their democratic system, dealing with issues in the current society and in the broader region they inhabit as Australians.

The challenge for civic educators is clearly to develop courses which will engage students and enable the learning of the principles and underlying purposes of democratic structures. The lack of conceptual clarity as to the forms and purposes of democratic models is the major weakness in the Civic Knowledge demonstrated by the Australian student cohort in this study. The ways in which economic factors and issues impinge on democracy and democratic options is the other major area of conceptual linking and clarity which Australian students have demonstrated they require.

The other main insight gained as a result of producing and analysing the Difficulty Map has been the graphic demonstration that over a third of Australian Year 9 students have civic knowledge which was not fully tapped by the items in the

survey, and this is encouraging. In addition, the items were not spread out over a wide field, rather they were concentrated in such a way as to make the clusters more arbitrary than is preferable. However the individual item analysis has provided some validation for the clusters as identified, and specific insights into the civic knowledge Year 9 Australian students currently have.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a detailed analysis of all of the items that comprise the Total Civic Knowledge scale, referencing the two sub-scales. It has analysed the performance of the Australian students, in relation to the international students, with a view to gaining additional perspectives into what knowledge it is that 14 year olds are able to encompass

The power of the data and its analysis comes in part from the structure and scale of the study, its internationally-comparative structures and analyses, and the understandings those researchers close to the conduct of the study and the development of the instruments and subsequent analyses can provide. All of these are factors in the value of the nationally-representative sample of students whose responses we are able to interpret, in the light of when the survey data was collected, and what was the state of civic education in Australian schools in late 1999.

The description and analysis of the data in this chapter has been constructed and presented in the way it has in order that teachers and other practitioners in the field of civic education can use these data to the fullest degree to plan their future strategies in improving the civic education courses in this country.

It seems that Australian students have a sound general knowledge of democracy and how it operates. They have registered their level of knowledge as only average. The reasons for this were demonstrated by the detailed item analysis, which indicated the understandings which most of the cohort were able to bring to the concepts and principles embedded in the items. It could be described as 'a good working knowledge', but the researchers would wish to ask what sort of 'work' is envisaged by such a characterisation. If Australia wants an electorate and community that believes the political process is there to serve all members of the society, it will need to be able to exercise considerable more knowledge and skill than the majority of these students indicate they currently have to bring to the task.

The next chapter of this report will address the concepts and attitudes students have regarding Democracy, Citizenship and Engagement in civil society. Whilst this chapter has revealed what students know, the following one will shed light on what they believe and how they feel about that civil society. We need both kinds of data to devise courses which will engage students in civics and citizenship learning which is meaningful to them. To achieve effective participation, in addition to Civic Knowledge, citizens need to possess an inclination to participate. The degree to which Australian students, in comparison with their international peers, possess this tendency to participate, is elicited by the attitudinal items and scales. The description and analysis of the attitudinal items and scales are the basis of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6
STUDENT CIVIC ENGAGEMENT, ATTITUDES AND OTHER CONCEPTS

Introduction

The Civic Knowledge items and scales were introduced in Chapter 2 of this report and the Australian achievement on them was reported in Chapter 5. In addition to Civic Knowledge however, the Civic Education Study was designed to consider a broader range of understandings, and these are represented by the Civic Attitudes, Concepts and Actions of Columns 3-5 on the Domain Map (see Table 1.3 & Table 2.6)

There were 146 items in Part 3 of the Australian version of the Student Questionnaire, and they were presented in Sections A to M. Each Section was introduced to students with a description of the content context for that group of items and, in bold, the assertion that 'there is no right answers and no wrong answers to these questions'. From these 13 Sections of items, eleven scales were developed. Figure 4.3 showed the international achievement on each of these scales. General findings on the scales in relation to both the international and the Australian cohorts were contained in Chapter 4 of this report. The measures used to compare students' responses, within and between countries, were the degree of positiveness shown in the responses. All measures in the study are based on the model of citizenship embedded in Figure 1.2.

This chapter reports on the items which made up those scales, and discusses aspects of the Australian responses in a more detailed way. For two of the concepts the report uses a consensus map, prepared for the *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries* report, in which the items are arranged by the three degrees of consensus (high, moderate and low) which were revealed as existing across the international cohort. Constant reference will be made to Table 2.6 which mapped the content of the Domains of the Column 3-5 items and shows all the item groups by section letter identifier.

For all the scales reported in this chapter, analysis was conducted on the gender difference in the student responses. On six of the scales, where it was found to be significant, it is referenced in the text, and tables show the mean difference for the scale. Where the gender differences on individual items are of particular interest, some reference in the text is made. In Appendix C tables are provided which give the gender difference by response category on each item in the six scales where gender difference is substantial.

Throughout this chapter reference will be made to missing data. Across all countries there was a substantial proportion of missing responses on Part 3 of the Student Questionnaire. The proportion of missing data by item varied greatly. The IEA set to 'missing' those students who did not respond or marked the 'don't know' response option. This convention has been adopted in this report. The range of missing students, by percentage, will be quoted for each set of data discussed and analysed for this chapter. Where a significant proportion of student responses (i.e. more than 10 per cent set to missing) for an individual items, comment will be made.

Concepts of Democracy

Section A of Part 3 of the Student Questionnaire contained 25 items which were described in the contextual introduction as 'a list of things that might happen in a country that is a democracy'. Students were asked to respond to: 'What is good and

Figure 6.1: Items Measuring Concepts of Democracy

What is good and what is bad for democracy? (1=very bad ; 2=fairly bad; 3=fairly good; 4= very good)	Australian mean[1]	International mean[1,2]
Items with high consensus across countries		
When citizens have the right to elect political leaders freely	3.55	3.44
When many different organisations exist for people who wish to belong to them	3.16	3.15
When political parties have rules that support women to become political leaders	3.31	3.06
When people who are critical of the government are forbidden from speaking at public meetings	1.71	1.85
When one company owns all the newspapers	1.70	1.84
When courts and judges are influenced by politicians	1.74	1.73
When wealthy business people have more influence on the government than others	1.60	1.61
Items with moderate consensus across countries		
When everyone has the right to express their opinions freely	3.55	3.41
When a minimum standard of living is assured for everyone	2.78	3.03
When people peacefully protest against a law they believe to be unjust	3.08	3.02
When laws that women claim are unfair to them are changed	2.92	2.66
When newspapers are forbidden to publish stories that might offend ethnic groups	2.62	2.44
When private businesses have no restrictions from government	2.34	2.34
When all television stations present the same opinion about politics	1.95	2.13
When people refuse to obey a law which violates human rights	1.68	2.09
When immigrants are expected to give up the language and customs of their former countries	1.89	1.96
When political leaders in power give jobs in the government to members of their families	1.68	1.85
Items with a lack of consensus across countries		
When people demand their social and political rights	2.75	2.97
When young people have an obligation to participate in activities in the community	2.93	2.78
When differences in income and wealth between the rich and the poor are small	2.89	2.71
When political parties have different opinions on important issues	2.91	2.59
When people participate in political parties in order to influence government	2.63	2.53
When newspapers are free of all government control	2.69	2.52
When government leaders are trusted without question	2.25	2.35
When there is a separation between the church and the state	2.14	2.29

[1] Means between 1.00 and 1.99 indicate that the average respondent believes that the attribute is 'bad for democracy.' Means between 2.00 and 2.99 are classified as 'mixed' (usually meaning some means are in the 'good for democracy' range and some in the 'bad for democracy' range. Means of 3.00 to 3.99 indicate that the average respondent believes that the attribute is 'good for democracy.'

[2] Source: Based on *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries* Panel 4.2, p. 74.

what is bad for democracy?' Students were asked to give their opinion by selecting from the following range of response prompts: 'very bad for democracy' and 'fairly bad for democracy' to 'fairly good for democracy' and 'very good for democracy'. They could also select 'don't know'. Missing data accounted for only between 4.1 per cent to 6.0 per cent on this set of items.

Figure 6.1 displays all 25 items from Section A: Democracy, from Part 3 of the Student Questionnaire, from which scales that met IEA standards proved difficult to develop. The *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries* report reveals that an alternative method of grouping of student response by cohort was possible, and this report has built upon that reporting praxis/methodology. In Figure 6.1 the items are grouped in the three categories of consensus, (high, mixed and low), which reflect the degree of consensus shown in student responses on each item, by the international cohort. Figure 6.1 also conveys the gist of each item's content (column 1), the Australian mean (column 2), and the international mean (column 3) for each item.

- *'Good for Democracy'*

It can be seen that Australian students are of the opinion that five of the propositions indicate something that would be good for democracy. (i.e. the means are above 3) Three of those are in the international 'high consensus' grouping of 7 propositions. Thus it can be seen that Australian students are demonstrating they have a rather different set of important characteristics of democracy from their international peers. In addition, the Australian students are endorsing the propositions at a level above the international mean, on each item.

Australian students give equal and high levels of endorsement as good for democracy, to two of the propositions. They are: 'when citizens have the right to elect political leaders freely', and 'when everyone has the right to express their opinion freely'. It appears that, for Australian Year 9 students, these are the two most important elements of democracy.

Slightly less, but still very great, endorsement is attached to 'when political parties have rules that support women to become political leaders'. In this opinion the Australian students' mean was significantly higher than that of their international peers. High levels of endorsement were reserved by Australian students for a third group of two items: 'when many different organisations exist for people who wish to belong to them', and 'when people peacefully protest against a law they believe to be unjust'. With both these items there is a slight variation from the international mean.

Taken as a group, these five items reflect an approach to democracy which focuses on people's powers and rights rather than the power and role of institutions. It is one which endorses equity between all in relation to rights such as freely electing and becoming leaders, expressing opinions, peacefully protesting and belonging to organisations.

Equally–crucial to understanding what Australian students think as important elements of democracy are the negative opinions; things which are considered bad for democracy. The very worst thing for democracy is 'when wealthy business people have more influence on the government than others'. In this they are in agreement with their international peers.

The two next most bad things for democracy are 'when political leaders in power give jobs in the government to members of their family' and 'when people refuse to obey a law which violates human rights'. Australian students rate both aspects more negatively than their international peers, and with the latter we see again a most aberrant response. (It does however mirror the response on cognitive item 15 (where the proposition in the item is 'when people refuse to obey a law which violates human rights'), and it suggests a misreading of the item, or a lack of knowledge of what 'violation' means.)

Three items which together form the group of the next most bad things for democracy, in the opinion of Australian students, are: 'when one company owns all the newspapers', 'when people who are critical of the government are forbidden from speaking at public meetings' and 'when courts and judges are influenced by politicians'. These three items are all in the high consensus part of the figure.

The final two negatives for a good democracy, as registered by the Australian students, are 'when immigrants are expected to give up the language and customs of their former countries' and 'when all television stations present the same opinion about politics'. On both of these, especially the latter, they feel more strongly than the international students about the importance of these issues.

Thus, to the essential characteristics of democracy mentioned above should be added, according to Australian Year 9 students, the equity issues of undue influence of power, family or wealth over positions in government, media outlets and the judiciary. The importance of public free speech of individuals and, by implication, a free press are seen as essential to democracy.

- *General Concluding Comments on Concepts of Democracy*

These 'negative' additions to the list of essential characteristics make for a considerably more complex picture of the needs and pre-conditions of a healthy democracy, and a laudable sense of the threats a democracy must fight. Australian students, for the most part, have opinions on the essentials of democracy which closely resemble those of their international peers. However they feel more strongly about the threats represented by limited media ownership, and lack of diversity in political news, inequities suffered by women and immigrants and favouritism shown to family. Pleasingly, the opinions on the power of the media are more astute and measured than those demonstrated in the relevant cognitive items.

A close read of Figure 6.1 demonstrates the range of issues which Australian and the international students consider to be more or less important to the health of a democracy. The items which are shown as having a mean of between 2.0 and 2.9 are those on which there is a sense of ambivalence being manifested by students. Australian students rated all the low consensus items at levels which indicated ambivalence or uncertainty. The sole valid conclusion to be drawn from the similarity of these responses to the international mean is that the Australian students are as uncertain as a group as the international students when taken as a whole cohort. Of course, other national cohorts may not have rated them at this level.

In conclusion however, one should note Australian students indicate that it is good (mean of 2.93) for democracy 'when young people have an obligation to participate in activities in the community'. This has a plaintive quality, when one recalls how

they do not participate (as has been referenced already, and will be demonstrated in more detail on the Civic Engagement scales). But such a response, especially as it differs considerably from that of their international peers, can be taken as a most optimistic comment. Clearly they think it would be good for democracy, and they presumably believe they should be obliged to participate. Perhaps they are also saying they would like to be asked to participate, to be offered a role. We should take them up on their offer.

Concepts of Citizenship

Figure 6.2 displays all 15 items from Section B: Good Citizens, from Part 3 of the Student Questionnaire on Citizenship, from which the two scales (Conventional Citizenship and Social Movement) were developed. Chapter 4 of this report contained a discussion of these two scales, and the internationally comparative data has been conveyed in Table 4.2. The Citizenship items asked about what 'an adult who is a good citizen' would do. Students were asked to rate the importance of the 15 items by selecting from the range of 'totally unimportant', 'fairly 'unimportant', 'fairly important', and 'very important.' They could also select 'don't know'.

Figure 6.2: Items Measuring Concepts of Citizenship

An adult who is a good citizen ... (1=totally unimportant ; 2=fairly unimportant; 3=fairly important; 4= very important)	**Australian mean[1]**	**International mean[1,2]**	**Scale[3]**
Items with high consensus across countries			
Obeys the law	3.60	3.65	
Engages in political discussions	2.23	2.37	CC
Items with moderate consensus across countries			
Takes part in activities promoting human rights	2.86	3.23	SM
Takes part in activities to protect the environment	2.96	3.14	SM
Participates in activities to benefit the people in the community	3.00	3.13	SM
Votes in every election	3.40	3.12	CC
Would be willing to ignore a law that violated human rights	2.51	2.86	
Follows political issues in the newspaper, on the radio or on TV	2.42	2.85	CC
Joins a political party	1.81	2.11	CC
Items with a lack of consensus across countries			
Is patriotic and loyal to the country	3.14	3.20	
Would be willing to serve in the military to defend the country	2.59	3.17	
Works hard	3.22	3.12	
Knows about the country's history	2.55	2.96	CC
Shows respect for government representatives	2.76	2.89	CC
Would participate in a peaceful protest against a law believed to be unjust	2.62	2.83	SM

[1] Means between 1.00 and 1.99 indicate that the average respondent believes that the attribute is 'unimportant'. Means between 2.00 and 2.99 are classified as 'mixed.' Means of 3.00 to 3.99 indicate that the average respondent believes that the attribute is 'important.'

[2] Source: Based on *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries* Panel 4.4, p80.

[3] CC = Conventional Citizenship Scale; SM = Social Movement Scale

In the figure the items are grouped in the three categories of consensus, (high, mixed and low), which reflect the degree of consensus shown in student responses on each item, for the international cohort as a whole. The figure also conveys the gist of each item's content, and the Australian and international mean for each item. Column 4 of the figure indicates whether the item was scaled, and if so in which of the two scales it rests. Missing data accounted for between 8.4 per cent and 27.4 per cent on this set of items.

We can see that only for one item was there a high degree of consensus and endorsement across countries. Students across all the participating countries attached considerable importance to the notion that citizens obey the law (with a high international mean of 3.65). Additionally, there was consensus amongst the international students that the proposition that a good citizen 'engages in political discussions' was one which they believed was not to be endorsed, and they consistently gave it the less than positive mean of 2.37. Australian students supported the propositions at a similar level to their international peers.

Figure 6.2 shows there are six (one of which is a 'negative' endorsement) items containing propositions which Australian students show they believe make a contribution to the understanding of what constitutes a 'good citizen'. One of them is the high consensus 'obeys the law' item previously mentioned. On three of these six items the Australian support for the proposition is less than that showed by the international group.

Within the items of moderate consensus Australian students agree with their international peers on issues such as 'participates in activities to benefit the people in the community', 'votes in every election', and 'does (not) join a political party'. Australian students almost endorse the proposition that a good citizen is one who 'takes part in activities to protect the environment' (12 per cent missing), though not at the level of the international group. It is interesting to see the positive Australian response to the importance of citizens voting in every election, given they inhabit one of the very few countries in the world which have compulsory voting. Social researchers have commonly found Australians support compulsory voting, believing that some things in a democracy can be insisted upon. Most noticeable in this 'moderate consensus' section of the figure is the difference between the support of the two cohorts for the item regarding 'takes part in activities promoting human rights'. (13 per cent missing)

In the section of the figure on items with low consensus, Australian students show they endorse two items. The citizen who is 'patriotic and loyal' (13 per cent missing) is supported, though less enthusiastically than by the international cohort. Most interestingly, the Australian students give greater endorsement, measured by mean, than the international cohort to the proposition that a good citizen is one 'who works hard'. This position is congruent with an individualistic democracy, and it is not surprising the proposition gained a mixed response from the international cohort.

- *General Concluding Comments on Citizenship*

There are a several conclusions which can be made about the Australian responses to the 15 Citizenship items. Australian students appear to vary markedly from the international cohort in terms of the emphasis, or relative importance, they attach to

certain propositions. Three of their most important propositions lay in the 'moderate consensus' part of the figure, and two of them lay in the 'low consensus' part. Without knowing which countries mapped similarly, no conclusive interpretation can be made. Only on three of the fifteen items is the Australian response more positive than the international response mean. Herein lies the significantly lower mean (compared to the international mean) allocated to Australian achievement on the two Civic Engagement scales shown on Table 4.3.

- *Conventional Citizenship Scale*

The Conventional Citizenship scale was one of the two scales developed from the 15 citizenship items in Section B. This scale comprises six items. It formed the first of the four Civic Engagement scales shown on Table 4.3. Table 6.1 shows the six items in the scale, the gist of each item's content, and the Australian percentages for each response category, for each of the items. There were no significant gender differences in Australian student responses on this scale. The significant missing data information has already been supplied for items on this scale.

The levels of support for the propositions shown in this table reveal clear emphases. Australian students are most emphatic in their response to the proposition about the importance, to being a good citizen, of joining a political party, with almost half of them rating it as 'totally unimportant'. (Plus the 41 per cent who rated it as 'fairly unimportant'.) No other item has such a weighty response in two response categories. The most important proposition, as previously indicated, is the voting item, with a total support of 88 per cent. The weight of the positive response is in the most positive 'very important' response category.

Table 6.1: Australian Students' Concept of Conventional Citizenship

An adult who is a good citizen ...	Totally unimportant	Fairly unimportant	Fairly important	Very important
votes in every election	3	8	34	55
joins a political party	42	41	12	5
knows about the country's history	15	30	40	15
follows political issues in the newspaper, radio or TV	16	34	42	8
shows respect for government representatives	9	24	49	18
engages in political discussions	18	48	27	7

Note: The figures in each response category are percentages.

The relativity of the importance accorded three of the propositions is made clear by the weight of the response being in the 'fairly important' response category. None of these items have been previously discussed, and whilst the response rates show support, it is hardly enthusiastic.

The Australian attitude of relative unimportance is further indicated by the 'fairly unimportant' response category for the importance of a citizen to engage in political discussions. Presumably this means that two thirds of Australians think you can be a good citizen and not take part in political discussions. Just half of the Australian

students believe a good citizen knows about the county's history, and follows political issues in the press. But, it seems for Australian students, a good citizen does not have to subsequently discuss these opinions with fellow citizens, or anyone else.

- *Concluding comments on the Conventional Citizenship Scale*

The Australian students only positively endorse two of the items on the scale. They do believe a good citizen votes and shows respect for government representatives. This is a minimalist position, and thus, with a mean of 9.3, they register as significantly below the international mean (set at 10 for all scales) on this scale.

- *Social Movement Citizenship Scale*

The Social Movement Citizenship scale was one of the two scales developed from the 15 citizenship items in Section B. This scale comprises four items. The response prompts were the same as for the Conventional Citizenship scale. It formed the second of the four Civic Engagement scales shown on Table 4.3. Table 6.2 shows the four items in the scale, the gist of each item's content, and the Australian percentages for each response category for each of the items. The significant missing data information has already been supplied for items on this scale.

Table 6.2: Australian Students' Concept of Social Movement Citizenship

An adult who is a good citizen ...	Totally unimportant	Fairly unimportant	Fairly important	Very important
would participate in a peaceful protest against a law believed to be unjust	12	31	40	17
participates in activities to benefit people in the community	3	17	56	24
takes part in activities promoting human rights	7	25	44	24
takes part in activities to protect the environment	6	20	46	28

Note: The figures in each response category are percentages.

Each of these items has the heaviest weight of opinion in the 'fairly important' response category, thus indicating a less than enthusiastic endorsement. However when combined with 'very important', eighty per cent of the Australian students believe in the importance of a good citizen participating in 'activities to benefit people in the community', which is as vague a general social well-being proposition as one could ever hope to meet. Three quarters of the Australian students think taking part in the protecting the environment is important, and two thirds support the importance of promoting human rights. Only just over half of the Australian students think it important to participate in peaceful protest against a law they believe to be unjust.

The Australian mean is a very low 9.3, significantly lower than the international mean of 10. There were significant gender differences in the student responses to the items on this scale, with females having a slightly higher mean than males. (Table

6.3) Table C6.1 in Appendix C contains the details of the gender differences in the Australian student response to all the items on this scale.

Table 6.3: Gender Differences on the Social Movement Citizenship Scale

Scale	Mean (total)	Mean (Females)	Mean (Males)
Social Movement Citizenship Scale	9.3	9.4	9.2

- *Conclusions to the Citizenship Scales*

It appears Australian students do not endorse action by citizens. They are just not brave about, or engaged in, the issues associated with either Conventional or Social Movement Citizenship. We know from Figure 6.2 that there is another (unscaled) characteristic which they did endorse more than the international cohort. But it is only on this one characteristic (i.e. works hard) that they are comparatively positive. Not even on the voting item are they as positive as their international peers. With means like these it is no wonder that the Australian cohort, on both of the Citizenship scales, are significantly below the international mean.

Expected Participation in Political Activities Scale

The third strand of the Civic Engagement Group of attitudinal scales was the Expected Participation in Political Activities scale. In Section M: Political Action, from Part 3 of the Student Questionnaire, students were asked to rate the likelihood of them, when adults, of engaging in a range of political activities. The response prompts for likelihood ranged from 'I will certainly not do this', through 'I will probably not do/do this', to 'I will certainly do this'. Students could also select 'don't know' as a response. The scale which was developed from the 12 items has three items in it. There were no significant gender differences to student responses on this scale. Chapter 4 of this report contained a discussion of this scale, and the internationally comparative data has been conveyed in Table 4.3. Missing data accounted for between 18 per cent to 21 per cent on the scaled items.

We know already from the previous scale that Australian students hold the joining of a political party in low esteem, and it is therefore not surprising that a majority do not expect to join one when an adult. It is also not surprising therefore that a majority of them do not expect to be a candidate for any office. But the results of 89 and 87 per cent, respectively, point to a weakness in support for one of the basic political mechanisms. The results indicate a disassociation from, and perhaps a disdain for political parties and those who represent them in democratic assemblies. International students do not come far behind in their condemnation of these political party processes, but they are less negative on those two items. They do however demonstrate a similar lack of intention on the letters item. Young people across the world clearly do not find these congenial activities, or perhaps even meaningful. The Australian missing data for these two items are 18 and 21 per cent respectively. Does this data indicate a disdain even for the item, or, perhaps, an uncertainty in the students' minds?

Table 6.4: Australian Students' Expected Participation in Political Activities Scale

	Certainly will not do this	Probably will not do this	Probably will do this	Certainly will do this
Join a political party	48	41	7	4
Be a candidate for a local or city office	42	45	8	4
Write letters to a newspaper about social or political concerns	32	44	18	6

Note: The figures in each response category are percentages.

The third item in the table references the much less 'risky' democratic action of writing letters to the newspapers. This is an activity which many students will have been encouraged to have already undertaken through some school class activity. Yet 76 per cent do not expect to take such action as an adult. (19 per cent missing) It appears they will vote and work hard, but do little else to support the political process. The Australian mean for this scale was 9.8 per cent, bolstered by the voting item, and once again the Australian cohort was significantly below the international mean. Thus on three of the four Civic Engagement Scales the Australians are rated as being significantly lower than their international peers.

- *Likelihood to Vote in National Elections*

The individual item on voting assumed special significance when it was used as a predictor variable in the path analysis in Chapter 8, in the international report. This analysis was confirmed for the Australian report, and will be discussed in detail in Chapter 8 of this report. There was no gender difference, and missing data accounted for 18 per cent, on this item. Table 6.5 shows the student responses to this single item.

Table 6.5: Australian Students' Likelihood to Vote, when an adult, item

	Certainly will not do this	Probably will not do this	Probably will do this	Certainly will do this
Vote in national elections	7	7	39	47

Note: The figures in each response category are percentages.

We know from the previous scale that Australian students think highly of voting as the action of a good citizen. So it is no surprise to see their support for the likelihood of them, in the future, voting is at 86 per cent. To interpret the significance of such a level of support is more difficult, given compulsory voting in this country. To compare this rate of support with the means achieved in other countries, where compulsory voting does not exist, is even more difficult/foolish. So we can make little of this relatively high level of support, comparative or otherwise, except to suggest that if student voting intention is indicative of adult action, some number of them will be fined as Australian adults, for failing to vote.

It is interesting to note that the only other item in Section M on which more than two thirds of Australian students agreed, was another item regarding voting. Three quarters of them reported they would get information about candidates before they

voted. Again, there was no gender difference on this item. Missing data accounted for 16 per cent on this item, the lowest of any in the section.

Confidence in Participating at School

The fourth strand of the Civic Engagement Group of attitudinal scales was the Confidence in Participating at School scale. In Section J: School, from Part 3 of the Student Questionnaire students were asked to rate their confidence in the seven propositions on outcomes which might result from student participation in school. The response prompts were 'strongly disagree', disagree', 'agree' and 'strongly agree'. Students could also select 'don't know' as a response. The scale which was developed had four items in it.

Chapter 4 of this report contained a discussion of this scale, and the internationally comparative data has been conveyed in Table 4.3. The Australian response to the items on this scale was very similar to the international mean, unlike the response on the other participation scales. Missing data accounted for between 13 per cent to 17 per cent on the scaled items.

Table 6.6: Australian Students' Confidence in Participating at School Scale

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Electing student representatives, to suggest changes to help solve school problems, makes schools better	7	11	53	29
Lots of positive changes happen in this school when students work together	4	12	56	29
Organising groups of students to state their opinions could help solve problems in this school	4	13	59	25
Students acting together in groups can have more influence on what happens in this school than students acting by themselves	3	9	50	37

Note: The figures in each response category are percentages.

Each of the propositions in the four items in the scale refers to outcomes to be gained from groups of students acting together. As is demonstrated in the table, the weight of the student response to each item rests on the 'agree', rather than 'strongly agree'. Thus the pattern of lukewarm endorsement is continued. Approximately half of the students agree with each item, and approximately an additional quarter support the propositions with strongly agree, except for the last item, where an additional one third show strong support.

There were significant gender differences revealed in the student responses to the items on this scale. Table 6.7 shows the gender differences on the scale.

Table 6.7: Gender Differences on the Confidence in Participating at School Scale

Scale	Mean (total)	Mean (Females)	Mean (Males)
Confidence in Participating at School	9.9	10.1	9.6

The female responses are more positive on both the agree response categories for every item in the scale. The bulk of the female responses are still in the moderate 'agree', rather than the 'strongly agree' category. The greatest differences occur on two items. Eleven per cent of the males strongly disagree with the first proposition (compared with female 4 per cent), and only 24 per cent support the strongly agree category for the second proposition (compared with female 32 per cent). Male responses are more negative on every disagree response category, for every item on the scale, than females. Table C6.2 in Appendix C contains the details of the gender differences in the Australian student response to all the items on this scale.

Despite substantial levels of support by the Australian cohort as a whole, for the items, the Australian mean for the scale is less than the mean international support. The Australian mean is below the international mean, for each item bar the last, which is the same mean. Though the Australian mean, at 9.9, is lower than the international, it escapes being significantly below that of the international group. Thus, on this Confidence in Participating at School scale, we are slightly below on one and significantly below on the other three items.

- *Conclusions to the Civic Engagement Scale*

The Civic Engagement Scale was developed to enable a particular contrast of understandings to those embodied by the Civic Knowledge Scales. Table 4.3 shows the international findings. Some countries were able to demonstrate above international mean scores on a majority of the Civic Engagement scales, plus the Civic Knowledge scale. Only one participating country was significantly above the international mean on all seven scales: Cyprus. Greece and Poland were the only two countries which had above international means on all Civic Knowledge scales and three out of the four Civic Engagement scales. Chile, Portugal and Romania had four Civic Engagement scales significantly above the international mean, and Colombia and the United States had three. Australia is a long way from this company. Nine countries had three or four Civic Engagement scales significantly below the international mean: Australia, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, England, Finland, Germany, Sweden and Switzerland. However, unlike Australia, two of them had above international means on the Total Civic Knowledge scale. (Czech Republic and Finland)

Civic Attitudes and Other Concepts

The third set of scales in this study, as shown in Table 4.3, is called Civic Attitudes and Other Concepts. It is comprised of seven scales. They do not cohere into a group in the same way as the Civic Engagement group of scales, and will be dealt with individually. The first two scales are a pair. Chapter 4 of this report contained a discussion of these two scales, and the internationally comparative data has been conveyed in Table 4.4.

- *Government Responsibilities Scales*

The first two scales in the Civic Attitudes and Other Concepts group of attitudinal scales were developed from the twelve items in Section C: Government, from Part 3 of the Student Questionnaire. Students were asked to rate their decision on propositions as to Government Responsibilities. The response prompts were 'definitely should not be the government's responsibility', 'probably should not be...', through to 'probably should be...' and 'definitely should be the government's responsibility'. Students could also select 'don't know' as a response. The two scales which were developed from the twelve items were: Economic-related Government Responsibilities, with five items in the scale, and Society-related Government Responsibilities, with seven items in the scale. There were significant gender differences on the Society-related Government Responsibilities Scale but no significant gender differences on the Economy-related Government Responsibilities Scale.

Table 6.8 shows the Australian student response to the Economy-related government responsibilities scale. Missing data accounted for between 10 per cent to 17 per cent on the scaled items.

Table 6.8: Australian Students' Concept of Economy-related Government Responsibilities

What responsibilities should the government have?	**Definitely should not be**	**Probably should not be**	**Probably should be**	**Definitely should be**
To guarantee a job for everyone who wants one	7	15	38	40
To keep prices under control	3	7	36	53
To provide industries with the support they need to grow	4	18	49	29
To provide a decent standard of living for the unemployed	9	21	42	29
To reduce differences in income and wealth among people	10	26	37	28

Note: The figures in each response category are percentages.

Australian students reveal a fairly consistent level of endorsement to these five items, with a higher 'definite' level to the notion that it is government business to keep prices under control. The lack of enthusiasm in endorsement is again in evidence in the student responses, with the main support being in the 'probably' response category. The least certainty is shown in response to 'to reduce differences in income and wealth among people' item, where only two thirds endorsed the proposition, and 17 per cent of students were 'missing'. Table 6.9 shows the Australian student response to the Society-related government responsibilities scale.

Table 6.9: Australian Students' Concept of Society-related Government Responsibilities

What responsibilities should the government have?	Definitely should not be	Probably should not be	Probably should be	Definitely should be
To provide basic health care for everyone	5	5	25	65
To provide a decent standard of living for old people	2	7	34	57
To provide free basic education for all	4	9	26	61
To ensure equal political opportunities for men and women	4	6	22	68
To control pollution of the environment	6	16	32	47
To guarantee peace and order within the country	4	6	20	70
To promote honesty and moral behaviour among people in the country	6	13	32	49

Note: The figures in each response category are percentages.

The Australian response on the Economic-related scale, at 9.8, was significantly lower than the international mean. However the response on the Society-related scale, at 10.1, was the same level as the international mean. Missing data accounted for between 7 per cent to 11 per cent on the Society-related Government responsibilities scale.

Significant gender differences were found in the Society-related Government Responsibilities Scale. Table 6.10 shows that females had a higher mean than males. Details of gender differences in the Australian student response to all the items on this scale can in found in Appendix C, Table C6.3.

Table 6.10: Gender Differences on the Society-related Government Responsibilities Scale

Scale	Mean (total)	Mean (Females)	Mean (Males)
Society-related Government Responsibilities	10.1	10.2	10.0

The Australian students appear to be more confident in their opinions about these propositions than on the previous scale, with a lower percentage missing and a substantial proportion of them placing themselves in the 'definitely should be...' category. The Australian students' very top priority as a government responsibility is to provide a decent standard of living for old people, though the emphasis is more evenly distributed between the two positive response categories than is the case with the rest of the positive responses. Three of the propositions rate at ninety per cent support from the students, and each of these has over two thirds support in the 'definitely should' category. Peace and order are the top priority of this group of

three, followed by ensuring equal political opportunities for men and women, and the provision of basic health care for everyone.

These are the four top proper responsibilities of government, according to Australian students. They are rated as more than equal in importance to keeping prices under control, from the previous scale. Of almost equal importance is the government responsibility on the next item on this scale, that of providing free basic education for all. Australian students view these kinds of responsibilities as ones most appropriate to government, thus more appropriate than the raft of economic-related responsibilities in the previous scale. In this, they resemble their international peers. Young people think of these as government business and they want governments to manage them effectively.

- *Positive Attitudes towards Immigrants*

The third scale in the Civic Attitudes and Other Concepts group of attitudinal scales was developed from the eight (immigrant) items in Section H: Immigrants, from Part 3 of the Student Questionnaire. Students were asked to rate the correspondence of their views with propositions about immigrants and immigration in this country, Australia. The response prompts for likelihood ranged from 'strongly agree', and 'disagree' through 'agree' and 'strongly agree'. Students could also select 'don't know' as a response. The scale which was developed has five items in it.

Chapter 4 of this report contained a discussion of this scale, and the internationally comparative data has been conveyed in Table 4.6. Missing data accounted for between 11 per cent to 16 per cent on the scaled items. Table 6.11 shows the details of the Australian student response to the scaled items.

Table 6.11: Australian Students' Responses to Positive Attitudes Toward Immigrants

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Immigrants should have the opportunity to continue speaking their own language	11	16	48	24
Immigrants' children should have the same opportunities for education that other children in the country have	4	7	51	38
Immigrants who live in a country for several years should have the opportunity to vote in elections	5	11	55	28
Immigrants should have the opportunity to continue their own customs and lifestyle	8	15	50	27
Immigrants should have all the same rights that everyone else in a country has	5	12	47	35

Note: The figures in each response category are percentages.

The pattern of Australian support being focussed on the lesser 'agree' response category is seen most clearly in this table, where it applies to all the items. Approximately half of the students adopt the agree category for all items. Hereby lies the explanation for the Australian mean being in the average group of the international students.

A total 'agree' category has 89 per cent of students supporting the proposition that 'Immigrants' children should have the same opportunities for education that other children in the country have'. The least total support is reserved for the proposition that 'immigrants should have the opportunity to continue speaking their own language', with less than three quarters support, and 27 per cent disagreeing. A quarter of the young people of Australia are not prepared to tolerate this level of difference... immigrants should abandon their home languages. Almost a quarter of them believe immigrants should not have the opportunity to continue their own customs and lifestyles. This data provides an interesting perspective on the publicly-espoused multi-cultural, non-assimilationist policies all Australian governments (and most schools) have followed for decades. (It is also provides an interesting comment on the effectiveness of those policies.)

There was a significant gender differences to student responses to these items. Table C6.4 in Appendix C contains the details of the gender differences in the Australian student response to all the items on this scale. Table 6.12 shows the gender difference for the scale. If the national mean had been composed of just the males' levels of support, the country would have been significantly below the international mean of 10.

Table 6.12: Gender Differences on the Positive Attitudes toward Immigrants scale

Scale	Mean (total)	Mean (Females)	Mean (Males)
Positive attitudes toward immigrants	10.0	10.4	9.6

The female responses are more positive on both agree response categories for every item in the scale. The bulk of the female responses are still in the moderate 'agree', rather than the 'strongly agree' category. The greatest differences, of approximately ten percentage points, occur on four items. Seventeen per cent per cent of the males strongly disagree with the first proposition (compared with female 7 per cent), and only 19 per cent support the strongly agree category for the same proposition (compared with female 28 per cent). This is the immigrants' language item, discussed earlier.

Thirty per cent of the Australian males strongly support proposition two, and with total combined response of eighty three per cent of males agreeing with the proposition (compared with a female total of 89 per cent). The fourth strikingly different response is on the last item, where thirty per cent of males (compared with 39 per cent of females) strongly support the proposition. This results in a total of seventy six per cent males with a combined response agreeing with the proposition (compared with a female total of 87 per cent). Male response are more negative than females on every disagree response category.

Active tolerance of immigrants in Australian society is only as strong as it is internationally. If we wish to fulfil the rhetoric of Australia as the multicultural haven, some more work to increase that tolerance will be necessary with young people. The low rates of tolerance, displayed by the male students are significant in the overall mean. More analysis, as to what it is that has males less tolerant than females, would be necessary before some counter-balancing strategies could be recommended.

- *Positive attitudes to one's nation*

The fourth scale in the Civic Attitudes and Other Concepts group of attitudinal scales was developed from the twelve items in Section E: Our Country, from Part 3 of the Student Questionnaire. Students were asked to rate the correspondence of their views with propositions indicating positive attitudes to Australia. The response prompts for likelihood ranged from 'strongly agree', and 'disagree' through 'agree' and 'strongly agree'. Students could also select 'don't know' as a response. The scale which was developed has four items in it.

Chapter 4 of this report contained a discussion of this scale, and the internationally comparative data has been conveyed in Table 4.6. The Australian students' mean for the scale was similar to the international mean. There were no statistically significant gender differences on this scale. Missing data accounted for between 10 per cent to 15 per cent on the scaled items. Table 6.13 shows the details of the Australian student response to the scaled items.

Table 6.13: Australian Students' Views of Positive Attitudes to One's Nation

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The flag of this country, Australia, is important to me	7	19	43	30
I have a great love for this country, Australia	4	9	45	41
This country, Australia, should be proud of what it has achieved	4	5	50	42
I would prefer to live permanently in another country	47	37	9	7

Note: The figures in each response category are percentages.

The most emphatic response to any item on this scale is the 'strongly disagree' given to the fourth proposition. Almost half of the Australian students emphatically reject the notion that they would prefer to live permanently in another country. Moreover, in excess of another third join them in their rejection. It is the most telling of the items in another sense also. People may have reservations about a place, but in answering this question this way young people are 'voting with their feet', and only 16 per cent wish they were some place else.

The other three items in the scale show the familiar pattern of the majority response being in the lesser of the two 'agree' response options. But the response rates are all somewhat higher than has previously been the case. And when combined with high 'strongly agrees', the picture is a very positive one indeed. Ninety two per cent of the students think this country should be proud of what it has achieved, 86 per cent

love the country greatly and almost three quarters think the country's flag is important. It would be very interesting to know whether the students, in responding to the last mentioned item, were referencing the country's flag, *whatever it is*. It is possible to interpret the quarter of students who rejected the flag, as rejecting the *current flag*, as inappropriate, and thus unimportant, to them.

Between three quarters and one in nine have supported the classic indicators of patriotism: the flag, love of country, pride in achievements and preference for staying. These are high figures of patriotism and loyalty. In addition to these scaled items, it is interesting to note the lesser endorsement granted the proposition that 'the national anthem is important to me' (70 per cent), and that more than two thirds do not agree that 'people should support their country even if they think their country is doing something wrong' (65 per cent). These responses, showing a preparedness to take a critical stance, offer a valuable insight to the reflective kind of patriotism young Australians possess. This lack of an uncritical endorsement is the most probable indication as to why the Australian response is only in the middle range of internationally-comparative positive attitudes on one's nation.

- *Trust in government related institutions*

The fifth scale in the Civic Attitudes and Other Concepts group of attitudinal scales was developed from the twelve items in Section D: Trust in Institutions, from Part 3 of the Student Questionnaire. Students were asked to rate how much of the time you feel you can trust the institution in the propositions. The response prompts for likelihood ranged from 'never, and 'only some of the time' through 'most of the time' and 'always'. Students could also select 'don't know' as a response. The scale which was developed has six items in it.

Chapter 4 of this report contained a discussion of this scale, and the internationally comparative data has been conveyed in Table 4.5. The Australian students' mean for the scale was significantly above the international mean. There were no significant gender differences on this scale. Missing data accounted for between 9 per cent to 37 per cent on the scaled items. Table 6.14 shows the details of the Australian student response to the scaled items.

Table 6.14: Australian Students' Responses to Trust in government-related Institutions

How much of the time can you trust each of the following institutions?	Never	Only some of the time	Most of the time	Always
The Commonwealth Government in Canberra	12	29	49	10
The local council or government of your town or city	7	26	56	11
Courts	6	21	53	20
The police	7	15	47	31
Political parties	21	49	25	5
National Parliament	12	28	47	13

Note: The figures in each response category are percentages.

Yet again we see the familiar pattern of lesser endorsement on the propositions (bar one), with trust being accorded, but in a guarded manner. The exception is the refusal to support trust of political parties, though even here the lesser response category is preferred by the students. Apart from the political parties item, the levels of support range from between approximately two thirds to three quarters. This is greater trust than was found in the international cohort.

The least trust was afforded political parties, with 70 per cent of them not trusting them (missing 15 per cent). A total of 59 per cent of students who answered the question (missing 37 per cent) supported the Government in Canberra, and 60 per cent trusted the National Parliament (missing 23 per cent). The responses to the other three institutions (the police, the Courts and local government) showed a substantially greater proportion, between two thirds and three quarters, of the students trusted them. They also answered the questions more readily, with between 9 per cent missing for the police item and 15 per cent missing for the local council item. The police clearly win this poll as the most trustworthy institution.

Additional unscaled items reveal that approximately half of the Australian students trusted the news in the press, the radio and on television most of the time or always. They trusted them at almost identical levels, across all response categories. They showed significantly lower levels of trust than their international peers on the television and radio items. Australian missing data accounted for only 9 per cent of the total cohort on each of the three items.

There is much to ponder in these responses. Trust in the institutions which carry out the democratic procedures of a nation is an essential part of the fabric of a civil society, and some of the institutions do not rate highly with Year 9 Australian students. Most interesting is that the greatest trust is placed in the police and the courts. This is also the pattern with the international responses. In Australia, the closer to the community is the government institution serving it, the more the government institution is trusted. This is not the case in the international cohort, where trust in government institutions was much the same regardless of level, and at the rate of less than two thirds of students.

As was commented in Chapter 4, and earlier in this chapter, (see Table 6.3) the lack of trust shown in political parties is a worry for the practice of democracy. For political parties are a pivotal delivery mechanism for the exercise of choice to voters, via elections, in a democracy. If future voters do not trust political parties, how can they exercise meaningful choices at elections? Or will they not vote? If they wish to, for whom can they confidently vote? Is this the conundrum of the independents being presented here? But the power and influence of independent members of parliament rely on there being substantial groups within parliament with whom they can work and lobby. Democracy will collapse unless there are groupings which can be expected to deliver on the policies they espoused, and were voted in, at the last election. So parties are necessary. But this data clearly indicates they will need to change the way they present themselves to the electorate if they are to function effectively and survive the cynicism demonstrated by these future voters. Of course, the student opinion shown is not one they hold in isolation from their parents and peers, so perhaps the dissatisfaction is current.

- *Support for Women's Political Rights Scale*

The sixth scale in the Civic Attitudes and Other Concepts group of attitudinal scales was developed from the six (women's) items in Section G: Opportunities, from Part 3 of the Student Questionnaire. Students were asked to rate how much they agreed with propositions about the opportunities members of certain groups should have. The response prompts for likelihood ranged from 'strongly agree', and 'disagree' through 'agree' and 'strongly agree'. Students could also select 'don't know' as a response. The scale which was developed has six items in it.

Chapter 4 of this report contained a discussion of this scale, and the internationally comparative data has been conveyed in Table 4.4. The Australian students' mean for the scale was significantly above the international mean. There were significant gender differences on this scale, nationally and internationally, and these have been previously reported in Chapter 4. (See Table 4.4) More specific analysis of the Australian gender difference, by item will occur later in this section. Missing data accounted for between 11 per cent to 14 per cent on the scaled items. Table 6.15 shows the details of the Australian student response to the scaled items.

Table 6.15: Australian Students' Views of Support for Women's Political Rights

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Women should stand for a seat in parliament and take part in the government just as men do	4	4	43	49
Women should have the same rights as men in every way	3	7	29	61
Women should stay out of politics	66	25	4	4
When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women	57	29	10	5
Men and women should get equal pay when they are in the same jobs	3	5	28	65
Men are better qualified to be political leaders than women	54	30	10	6

Note: The figures in each response category are percentages.

The response pattern is somewhat different from the moderate endorsement usually shown by Australian students. Most of the largest endorsements of the propositions are in the most positive response category. The only exception to this is the first item on whether women should stand for parliament and take part in government as men do, where almost an equal number support the two positive response categories. The other two instances of lesser endorsement are found on the items dealing with women's rights to jobs when they are scarce, and the proposition that men are better qualified to be political leaders than women. With these items the rates of non-support for women are 15 and 16 per cent respectively; notably higher than for other items in the scale. It is interesting to see that ten per cent of Australian 14 year olds do not believe women should have the same rights as men in every way.

The gender differences on the Support for Women's Political Rights scale were statistically significant in Australia. Table 6.16 shows the gender differences on the scale.

Table 6.16: Gender Differences on the Support for Women's Political Rights Scale

Scale	Mean (total)	Mean (Females)	Mean (Males)
Support for Women's Political Rights	10.7	11.5	9.7

Table C6.5 in Appendix C contains the details of the gender differences in the Australian student response to all the items on this scale. The differences revealed on individual items assist in differentiating between the issues on which males and females (at aged 14) differ. Some patterns of difference can be described as a matter of degree. The males' responses on the most extreme response categories (i.e. strongly disagree or strongly agree) are generally between twenty to thirty percent less than those of the female responses. So they do not feel as emphatically about these matters as the females do. When the combined agree or disagree responses are compared the differences between the males and females is then, on four of the items, approximately ten per cent. One way of interpreting these findings is that, generally, 14 year old boys in Australia support women in politics and parliament, women having the same rights as men, and men and women getting equal pay for equal work, but less enthusiastically and at a rate of about ten per cent less than their female peers.

However, on two of the items the differences between the female and males students are greater than this. On the propositions regarding men having more rights to jobs if they are scarce, and men being better qualified as political leaders than women, male 14 year olds are strikingly less positive than females. On both items, males strongly disagree (i.e. do not support the proposition) by 38 per cent less than females, and when the two agree response categories are combined, the male students are still less supportive by sixteen and eighteen per cent.

These figures suggest a less than satisfactory situation, for they suggest a restriction to the possibility of females playing an equal part in the political (and social) processes of democracy. There are many levels of explanation for why boys feel so differently from girls about these issues, but the general hypothesis can only be premised on the conviction that girls feel it is their capacities and rights being questioned, and they have little doubt they can manage what any boys can. The boys of course, may sense that they are currently being challenged, and are in something of a resisting mode. One does not doubt their sincerity here; no doubt some of them believe females are not suited to certain roles, and should not have equal rights. The increase of women in parliament in Australia (to approximately one third) is more recent than the study's survey, and none of the main three parties have ever been led by a woman, so role models do not abound. But the female students can imagine it and perhaps like the idea, whilst some of the boys either cannot imagine it or they are less attracted to the image than the girls.

In conclusion, the Australian students showed support for women having equal political rights at levels above most of their international peers, though Denmark and Norway did have higher means. This indicates that throughout the world young

males are still holding views which need to be explicitly addressed if equity of civic engagement is to be a intended goal of civics education.

Open Climate for Classroom Discussion Scale

The seventh scale in the Civic Attitudes and Other Concepts group of attitudinal scales was developed from the twelve items in Section N: Classrooms, from Part 3 of the Student Questionnaire. Students were asked to rate how much their experience corresponded with the propositions. The response prompts for likelihood ranged from 'never, and 'rarely' through 'sometimes' and 'often'. Students could also select 'don't know' as a response. The scale which was developed has seven items in it.

Chapter 4 of this report contained a discussion of this scale, and the internationally comparative data has been conveyed in Table 4.6. The Australian students' mean for the scale was similar to the international mean. There was a statistically significant gender difference on this scale for Australian students. Missing data accounted for between 13 per cent to 20 per cent on the scaled items. This is a larger missing across a scale than has generally been the case in this study, which may suggest that students had more trouble with it than might have been expected. Table 6.17 shows the details of the Australian student response to the scaled items.

Table 6.17: Australian Students' Responses to Open Climate for Classroom Discussion

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Students feel free to disagree openly with their teachers about political and social issues during class	11	18	37	35
Students are encouraged to make up their own minds about issues	4	13	33	50
Teachers respect our opinions and encourage us to express them during class	10	17	36	37
Students feel free to express opinions in class even when their opinions are different from most of the other students	7	18	41	34
Teachers encourage us to discuss political or social issues about which people have different opinions	14	31	42	13
Teachers present several sides of an issue when explaining it in class	8	28	45	28

Note: The figures in each response category are percentages.

Approximately three quarters of the Australian students agree that they inhabit an open classroom climate, but only a few of the propositions do they endorse with any enthusiasm. They certainly believe they are encouraged to make up their own minds about issues, with half of the cohort rating their support on the more positive response category. But only slightly more than half of them believe they are encouraged to discuss certain political and social issues. They are reporting that time and effort are not put into making the exchange and testing of views occur, in class time. It is a laissez-faire climate, one where expression is open but not directed at challenging students to support their views, or form consistent or complex arguments.

The gender differences on the Open Climate for Classroom Discussion scale were significant in Australia. Table 6.18 shows the gender differences on the scale.

Table 6.18: Gender Differences on the Open Climate for Classroom Discussion Scale

Scale	Mean (total)	Mean (Females)	Mean (Males)
Open Climate for Classroom Discussion	10.1	10.4	9.7

Evidently, the Australian female students experience their classrooms as considerably more open than their male peers. This finding is very similar to Mellor's earlier work on the Political Attitudes of Australian Year 11 students[1]. But their positive experience is insufficient to raise the Australian mean beyond the international average.

Table C6.6 in Appendix C contains the details of the gender differences in the Australian student response to all the items on this scale. The item analysis shows that female students, like their male counterparts, generally prefer to endorse the moderate response categories. Additionally, they do so at a rate which is very similar to the male students. The big difference is that approximately ten per cent more of the females strongly agree with the propositions than do the males. This results in the combined agree rate being approximately ten per cent larger for the females than the males. However the patterns of relative support for particular items are mirrored.

The exceptions to these generalisations are the two items on students being encouraged to make up their own minds and teachers respecting and encouraging expression of student opinion. On these two items a majority of the female students selected the most positive response category. They do feel they are particularly supported in these aspects of their classes, and by their teachers. There is another exception to the general comments on gender difference. The female students were very similar to the male students in their response to the item regarding teacher encouragement of discussion of social and political issues. This variation to the gender difference on the other items emphasises the female rejection of the proposition. Barely half of the students agree with the proposition. This is approximately twenty per cent less support than any of the other items. The coalescing of the two genders suggests an activity which, one third of the students

[1] Mellor, S., (1998) *'What's the Point?' Political Attitudes of Victorian Year 11 students.* ACER Research Monograph No 53. Melbourne: ACER.

assert rarely happens, certainly happens less than any of the others referenced in the scaled items. The new element here, as was mentioned in the earlier general discussion of the item, is the encouragement of discussion of social and political issues.

The moderate endorsement of an Open Climate for Discussion, and this lack of an assertive classroom climate, with particular intents and outcomes in mind, are the reasons that the Australian mean is only average, compared with the international cohort. Eleven of the participating countries have classrooms which their students endorse as being more pro-active than the Australian students are able to do. These countries have means which are significantly above the international mean. It is not difficult to know what needs to be done by schools and teachers to raise the response rates on these items. More difficult is the discussion and consensus required about the values which underpin such a policy. Are they values we in Australia support? They are integral to having and/or providing a higher profile for civics and citizenship education.

- *What Students' have Learned in School about the Importance of Voting*

The individual item on what they have learned at school about the importance of voting assumed special significance when it was used as a variable in the path analysis in Chapter 8, in the international report. This analysis was confirmed for the Australian report, and will be discussed in detail in Chapter 8 of this report. There was some gender difference, and missing data accounted for 17 per cent, on this item. Table 6.19 shows the Australian student response to this item.

Table 6.19: Australian Students' View of What they have Learned in School about the Importance of Voting

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
In school I have learned about the importance of voting	15	30	41	14

Note: The figures in each response category are percentages.

The pattern of moderate support is continued with the response to this item, but it extends across both of the moderate response categories, and this marks a departure for the Australian students. Thus barely half of the cohort agrees that they have learnt about the *importance* of voting in school, and almost half disagree. The gender difference on the item is slight but interesting, because it shows the boys being the more positive of the two groups. Fifty seven per cent of the male students believe they have learnt about the importance of voting in school, but only fifty two percent of females agree they have done so. The international mean was also 55 per cent.

Questions arise here. Should students have learnt about the importance of voting from school? Might it not be something one would hope they had learned as their parents attended a voting booth at any number of elections since their birth? How much more likely it is that the attitudes of those parents will have coloured the values and attitudes of these young people, long before they reached school. If this is the case how is it that half of them agree with the proposition? It is important to register that the learnings achieved inside and outside school are not dichotomous.

One can learn about these kinds of matters in more than one setting. So half of the students are asserting that the importance of voting has been an issue for them and their learning, whilst at school. It does not mean that for the other half of students there has been no attention to the issue at school, only that they did not learn any more than they already knew. Of course they may still know little or a lot. We don't know for this item how much they know, where they learnt it, or how important they think voting is.

Concluding Comments on the Attitudinal and Conceptual scales and items.

These attitudinal items give us insights into areas of knowledge and understanding which we cannot gain from the cognitive items. The weighting of the responses, across the four response categories enables a broader picture of the spread of cohort views. And the style of question allows for a more reflective response. Where there are not correct answers, one can explore the nuances of view, and decide to place the weight of one's opinion in a position relative to other positions. Whilst there were 38 cognitive items (and thus 152 possible answers) students are looking for the correct response; they are seeking to narrow their line of sight. With the attitudinal items they spread their line of sight across the whole canvass and deal with nearly 600 possible responses. The detail of thought required to consistently respond to such a range of possibilities is very considerable and the Australian students showed careful thought and were consistent respondents.

One impression gained from analysing these attitudinal responses, especially after dealing with the cognitive data, is the greater reflectiveness shown by students. Compared to their responses to the cognitive items, there is a more measured and calmer tone. The question might be asked whether students were, by this stage of the survey just hitting their stride. It is certain that for many Australian students, for whom explicit lessons on the issues addressed in the cognitive items are rare, the precision required to answer the cognitive items was very taxing indeed. Part One of the questionnaire must have brought to the surface many issues which they needed to think about rather quickly in order to answer the cognitive items, without a secure context and knowledge base. But by the time they reached Part Three of the questionnaire they had become sensitised to issues and had sorted out some of their views. This helps explain why some of the views expressed in response to Part Three questions do not sit well with the confusions evinced by the responses to Part One items. One can only speculate how much better Australian students may have done had Parts 1 and 3 been taken in the reverse order.

The major characteristic of the Australian response patterns is the preference for the moderate response. As was demonstrated on most scales and items the Australian students do not become impassioned about many of the propositions or issues. There were some exceptions, as have been noted, but the main Australian result is that they are pretty low key in most of their enthusiasms and reticent in their endorsements. Another way of putting this is to say they are not very engaged in their democratic options. The message of the Civic Engagement group of scales is that Australian students are not as engaged as most of their international peers. The heart of Democracy is that the people act. This cohort of Australians currently citizens, who are also future citizens, do not show the disposition to engage in their democracy. They appear to prefer to not act in relation to democracy. The significance of this finding will be further discussed in Chapter 8.

CHAPTER 7
CIVIC EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIAN CLASSROOMS AND SCHOOLS

Introduction

This chapter reports on the findings gathered from the Australian responses to the Teacher and School Questionnaires. The rationale for the selection of teachers and classes and the issues associated with the administration of the questionnaires were described in Chapter 2 of this report. This section of the Australian report makes use all the teacher data which had been collected from the range of teachers as well as the responses by principals to Australian School Questionnaire

There are caveats to the interpretations that can be made from the teacher and school data here presented. These are unweighted data and thus they do not refer to nationally representative samples. This is because the respondents do not equally represent the whole cohort of Australian schools and their principals and teachers. Neither are they representative of all teachers of Civics, English or SOSE, nor of SOSE Curriculum Co-ordinators. But they are a large collection of interested teachers, with experience and some commitment to Civics Education. In her contact with the schools the project manager for Australia established that most of the English and SOSE teachers had taught most of the students in the tested class. They most certainly knew their schools and the development of school policies over recent years in relation to Civics Education. Given the history of little specific civics training and teaching in the Australian school system, it was believed this group could be a useful indicator of interested professionals. It was for all these reasons that the decision was made to analyse all the Australian teacher data.

The teachers and principals regarded the filling out of the questionnaires an important task. The response rate (that is the return of completed questionnaires) for the Teacher Questionnaires was a high 83 per cent (352 respondents), and for the School Questionnaires it was 85 per cent (120 respondents). (See Table 2.5) In addition, the rate of missing data within the questionnaires, that is non-responses to individual questions, was low. These are pleasing figures, especially given the onerous nature of some of the questions, and serve to emphasise the value of the data provided by the respondents. Gender differences are reported where they were significant, either for whole questions, or by individual section of a question. Missing data are referenced in this chapter when it is greater than five per cent of the respondents.

Part One: School Context

Time Allocated to Civics Education in Schools

Principals were asked to give details of the number of hours all Year 8 & 9 students were required to attend in three civic-related areas. (In Australia the subject options were Civics, History, and other civics-related subject, such as Social Studies (excluding History) Ethics, Legal Studies, Economics.) The response options included were: less than one hour, 1-2 hours, 3-4 hours, and 5-6 hours per week. It was not possible for the principals to say that students did not have to attend a class in any of the subjects listed. This is probably the explanation for the high rate of missing data. For Civics for both Years 8 and 9 over 15 per cent of principals did not

respond. The corresponding missing data for History was 6 per cent, and for the third option missing data was 9 per cent. As was explained in Chapter 2 of this report, it is not compulsory for all Year 9 students in all Australian states to be enrolled in a SOSE subject at any one time, though it is normal for them to be required to attend a SOSE subject for at least a semester during Years 8 & 9. Thus answering this question set a difficulty for principals and the rate of missing data is not surprising. But it is significant because it points to the inappropriateness of the question for Australia, and it also reinforces the high rate of responses received from both teachers and principals for almost every other questions on both questionnaires.

Table 7.1 shows the time Australian Year 9 students spent on civic-related curriculum areas. The data is presented in percentage terms for each subject option. Thus the column relating to Civics has 69 per cent of the principals who responded to the question (that is 85 per cent of all principal respondents) saying that their Year 9 students attend less than one hour of Civics classes in a week.

Table 7.1: Hours per Week Australian Year 9 Students Attend Civic-related Curriculum Classes

Time	Civics	History	Other Civics subject
< 1 hour	69	20	18
1-2 hours	19	55	46
3-4 hours	10	24	32
5-6 hours	2	1	4

The responses indicate that Year 9 students are undertaking more classes in history or other civic-related subject, including social studies (excluding history), ethics, legal studies and economics, than they do civics. Approximately 70 percent of principals indicated that Year 9 students undertake less than one hour per week on civics. Given the above description of the lack of a 'no civics' option, it would be a mistake to assume that 69 per cent of students in Year 9 do attend a civics class. A further fifth of principals indicated students spend between one and two hours per week on civics in comparison to the fifty five percent for history and forty six percent for other civic-related subject. Only 12 percent of principals indicated Year 9 students spent more than 3 hours per week. These data can be accorded more reliability than the first time category for civics, and they suggest that over thirty per cent of schools were offering civics at Year 9 in 1999.

The biggest civic-related curriculum area is History, where almost one quarter of principals suggested Year 9 students spent more than 3 hours per week on history. Whilst thirty six per cent of principals indicated more than 3 hours per week were spent by Year 9 students on other civic-related subjects, this figure is spread over many civic-related subjects, rather than concentrated in just one.

Role of SRCs in Schools

Teachers were asked to consider the purpose they saw Student Representative Councils having, in their schools. The most common function of the Student Representative Council meetings, as seen by teachers, was to organise cultural activities (87 percent). An almost equal percentage thought its function was to empower students to decide for themselves (85 percent). Almost three quarters of

the teachers recognised these meetings enabled students to participate in the political life of the school and enabled students to contribute to solving school problems.

Fewer than a third of teachers identified these meetings as the acceptable forum for students to co-operate with teachers to solve problems of discipline, to resolve conflicts among students or between students and teachers. Approximately a quarter thought their function was to organise excursions or to avoid classes. Table 7.2 shows a list of various functions, in order from the most to least frequently selected, for meetings of the Student Representative Council. Missing data accounted for between 12 per cent and 22 per cent on this set of items.

Table 7.2: Function of the Student Representative Council Meetings

Function	Teachers (percentage)
To organise cultural activities.	87
To empower students to decide for themselves.	85
To participate in the political life of the school.	72
To solve school problems.	70
To co-operate with teachers to solve problems of discipline.	32
To resolve conflicts among students.	27
To resolve conflicts between students and teachers.	23
To organise excursions.	18
To avoid classes.	4

These data may simply be reflecting the reality of the actual role Student Representative Councils currently play in Australian secondary schools. Anecdotal information suggests that most SRCs do not have much more of a role than a social one. But the second listed function, unless it is just rhetoric and the students can only pursue this through organising social functions, suggests that a majority of teachers regard empowerment of students as an important and legitimate function of SRCs. If this is so, then some of the subsequent suggestions are good sources of enhancement of the function of SRCs in schools. The third and fourth propositions for SRC function are participative activities, and the teacher endorsement of them shows they value the student contribution.

The next function, and the low support for it from teachers indicate that they regard co-operating with teachers to solve problems of discipline as not within the ambit of student contribution. This is a lost opportunity, but perhaps it will come to schools which have tried the previous three important functions. Separating the sixth and seventh functions from the previous one will prove to be most difficult. Perhaps teachers are not comfortable with conflict or with their conflict resolution skills, or just not about being accountable to student bodies. The sense of a team approach, with all members of the community working together is not visible here. The students' citizenship at school is thus seriously prescribed.

Few teachers regard organising excursions a proper part of the student work, though one can see the potential for having students learn organising competencies. Only a few teachers think students join SRCs to avoid classes.

Role and Contribution of Parents in Schools

Three statements were provided in the School Questionnaire for principals to supply information about areas of parents' involvement in schools, and the frequency of this involvement. Fifty seven percent of the schools indicated that parents *often* notified the school about their children's learning problems whereas forty three percent of schools had parents that notified the school about their children's learning problems *sometimes*.

Parents from forty four percent of schools *often* made sure that their child completed their homework and fifty six percent of schools had parents who *sometimes* checked their child had completed their homework.

Three percent of school principals indicated parents *never* raise and/or contribute funds other than tuition fees. Principals reported that about half of the parents *sometimes* raise and/or contribute funds, and another half *often* raise and/or contribute funds other than tuition fees. Table 7.3 contains the details.

Table 7.3: Parent Involvement in Schools

Parents ...	Never	Sometimes	Often
notify the school about learning problems of their children	0	43	57
make sure that their child completes his/her homework	0	56	44
raise and/or contribute funds other than tuition fees	3	50	47

Part Two: Teacher Background

Civics Teachers' Subjects

Almost all principals (99 per cent) indicated there were teachers, in their school, who specialise in a civic-related subject. For the purposes of the school questionnaire civic related subjects were civics and studies of society and the environment (SOSE), history, ethics, religious studies, legal studies, economics, English, geography, politics and some health and physical education courses. One eighth of principals did not respond to this question.

For each participating school in the Civics Education Study, three teachers (an English teacher, a SOSE teacher and a curriculum coordinator) were each asked to complete a Teacher Questionnaire. Discussion of the rationale for this selection procedure was presented in Chapter 2 of this report.

Of the teachers who completed a Teacher Questionnaire, there were slightly more females (54 percent) than males (46 percent) teaching civic-related subjects in 1999. Approximately 10 percent of teachers were 29 years old or younger and a fifth of teachers were 30 to 39 years old. Almost half the teachers were aged between 40 and 49 years old. Eighteen percent of teachers were 50 or over. The age of this group of teachers highlights the problems associated with the provision of training and professional development for future teachers of civics education in Australia.

Table 7.4 shows the percentage of responding teachers who taught the various civic-related subjects in Australian schools during 1999. Teachers were asked to indicate any subjects from the list that they taught. Thus many teachers ticked more than one subject. The most frequently taught civic-related subjects were English (49 per cent

of responding teachers), history (42 per cent), studies of society and the environment (38 per cent) and geography (28 per cent). Approximately 11 per cent of teachers taught economics, legal studies, religious education and civics. Fewer than 5 per cent of teachers taught health/physical education, politics and ethics.

Table 7.4: Civic-related Subjects Teachers Taught in 1999

Civic-related Subject	Per cent
English	49
History	42
Studies of Society and the Environment	38
Geography	28
Economics	11
Legal Studies	11
Religious Education	11
Civics	10
Health/Physical Education	5
Politics	4
Ethics	1
Other	19

Of the teachers who indicated they taught civic-related subjects, approximately one third of them taught only one civic-related subject. Almost 40 percent taught two civic-related subjects, a fifth of teachers taught three civic-related subjects, 6 per cent taught four civic-related subjects and 8 per cent of teachers taught five civic-related subjects. Most schools in most Australian systems now offer SOSE at Year 9, and yet a large number of teachers appear to be resisting this trend, with a high proportion of them still preferring to be a teacher of History or Geography. Of course, if all the teachers of the so-called SOSE subjects were combined into the SOSE category they would constitute the largest subject category, but the teachers have clearly categorised themselves differently to this. Not all civics teachers are a subset of SOSE teachers; some have indicated they teach civics and not SOSE.

Civics Teachers' Experience

On average, participating teachers had 16.7 years teaching experience. The range of years' teaching was between one and 37 years. There were equal proportions (15 per cent) of each of the teachers in the following age groups - less than 6 years, 6 to 10 years, 11 to 15 years and 21 to 25 years. About a fifth of teachers had between 21 and 25 years teaching experience and eleven per cent had between 26 and 30 years experience. Six per cent of teachers indicated they had more than 30 years of teaching experience. (See Table 7.5)

The average number of years teachers had taught a civic education related subject was slightly less than the average number of years teaching experience, at 15.2 years. Although the range for teaching a civic education related subject was the same as for the overall teaching experience, the distributions were somewhat different. There were more teachers (20 per cent compared to 16 per cent for overall teaching experience) who had taught a civic education related subject and fewer teachers who had taught a civic education related subject for more than 26 years than overall teaching experience.

Table 7.5: Number of Years of Overall Teaching Experience and Teaching a Civic Education Related Subject

Number of Years	Overall Teaching Experience	Experience Teaching Civic Education Related Subject
	Per cent	Per cent
< 6	16	20
6-10	15	17
11-15	15	16
16-20	15	16
21-25	22	18
26-30	11	9
> 30	6	4

Teachers' Training in Civics

Participating teachers were asked to provide information on their highest level of formal education. Approximately half of the teachers had completed a Bachelor Degree, and forty eight percent of teachers had obtained postgraduate qualifications. Thirty eight per cent of teachers had completed a Post-Graduate Diploma.

The same proportions of males and females had undertaken postgraduate qualifications (50 per cent and 49 per cent respectively) and there was no significant difference in the percentages of males and females who had completed a Bachelor Degree (50 per cent and 47 per cent respectively). Table 7.6 shows the percentage distribution of teachers' formal education.

Table 7.6: Teachers' Formal Education

Teacher Qualifications	Per cent
Vocational Course	1
Diploma of Teaching	2
Bachelor Degree	48
Post-Graduate Diploma	38
Master's Degree	10
Doctorate	1

Teachers were asked to provide details of any major they had undertaken which related to civic education. Hence it was possible for some teachers to supply their major and level of degree for more than one civic-related discipline. Ninety seven per cent of responding teachers had completed at least a Bachelor Degree and 82 per cent of teachers indicated they held a degree in a civic-related discipline.

Half the teachers indicated they held a major in history, a quarter of the teachers had a major in geography, 14 per cent had an economics major and 12 per cent had a major in politics. Fewer than 7 per cent of teachers had a major in ethics/religion/philosophy, law, civics and multi-cultural studies. Almost a fifth of teachers had majored in a discipline other than the one that related to civic education.

A further question in the Teacher Questionnaire examined the level of the degree or qualification, and the discipline, each teacher held. Of the 82 per cent of teachers who said they held a degree in a civic-related discipline, almost half the teachers indicated they held a second qualification in a civic-related discipline, 15 per cent held a third qualification and 3 per cent held a fourth discipline. Table 7.7 displays teachers' levels of degree with their corresponding discipline. The data reported in the table represents the percentage of responding teachers who indicated they had this level of qualification, in this discipline.

Table 7.7: Teachers Educational Qualifications and their Corresponding Civic-Related Discipline

	Level of Qualification(s)(per cent)				
Discipline	**Doctorate**	**Master's Degree**	**Post-Graduate Diploma**	**Bachelor Degree**	**Diploma of Teaching**
Civics			3.2	1.1	
History	0.7	2.8	58.2	1.4	
Ethics/Religion /Philosophy	0.7	0.4	5.0	2.5	
Law			4.3		
Economics			17.7		
Geography		0.4	28.0	0.4	0.4
Politics			14.9		
Multi-cultural Studies		0.4	1.4		
Other		2.8	17.0	1.8	

The highest number of teachers held a post-graduate diploma in history, followed by a post-graduate diploma in geography. Very few teachers who participated in the IEA Civic Education Study held a Bachelor Degree or higher in civics. This is not surprisingly, since such courses are rarely available.

Teachers' Professional Development in Civics

Teachers were asked what professional development in Civics they had experienced, either in the initial or post-training. The data reported in Table 7.8 represents the percentage of responding teachers who indicated they experienced such professional development, and in what context it had been delivered.

Seventy one percent of teachers said they had participated in in–service professional development activities related to civic education. Of those teachers who had taken part in these activities, a third of teachers indicated such activities had been undertaken during their teaching diploma or degree. These teachers are most probably recent trainees, whose course advisors have recognised the value of their students accessing the current wave of professional development activities associated with the *Discovering Democracy* program. There were few teachers who indicated this occurred during either an academic short course in Australia or overseas.

Table 7.8: Teachers' Participation in In-Service Professional Development Related to Civic Education

Activity	Per cent
Teaching Diploma or Degree	29
Academic Short Course in Australia	6
Academic Short Course Overseas	1
Professional Development days, led by	
• Professional Subject Associations	80
• Ministry of Education	45
• Curriculum Corporation	29

The majority of teachers who participated in in-service civic education professional development did so by attending professional development days, led by professional subject associations (80 per cent). Slightly fewer teachers had attended professional development days by the Ministry of Education and the Curriculum Corporation (45 per cent and 29 per cent respectively). This information attests to the significant role subject associations can play in teacher professional development, and probably also to the role they have played in recent years in the *Discovering Democracy* program.

Part Three: What is Taught and Learnt in Civics Education

Civic Competencies Learned in School

Both teachers' and principals' perspectives on the civic competencies learned in schools were sought. Although comparable results were recorded, the results showed that principals were much more liable than the teachers to suggest that students learnt these civic competencies at school. Table 7.9 shows the responses from teachers and principals on civic competences learned in school.

Table 7.9: Teacher and Principal Views on Civic Competencies Learned in School

	Teachers (per cent)				Principals (per cent)			
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
In our school students learn ...								
to work together in groups with other students.	0	4	69	27	0	2	53	45
how to act to protect the environment.	1	9	76	14	0	4	71	25
to understand people who have different points of view.	1	11	70	18	2	2	68	28
to be concerned about what happens in other countries.	1	19	67	13	0	8	63	29
to contribute to solve problems in the community.	2	29	64	5	0	14	68	18
about the importance of voting in national and local election.	3	28	55	14	0	17	71	12
to be patriotic and committed citizens of their country.	6	53	38	3	0	23	70	7

Teachers agreed or strongly agreed that students in their school learn to work together in groups with other students, that students learn how to act to protect the environment and that students learn to understand people who have different points of view (96, 90 and 88 per cent respectively). Female teachers are 14 per cent more likely than males to strongly agree that students learn to work together in groups with other students. Responses from the school questionnaire showed that at least 96 per cent of principals agreed or strongly agreed that students learn these civic competencies in their schools.

There were slightly fewer teachers (80 per cent) who agreed or strongly agreed that students learn to be concerned about what happens in other countries. On the other hand, principals were more positive, with 92 per cent agreeing or agreeing that this civic competency was taught in their school.

Similar variation in attitudes between principals and teachers were found to exist in relation to the statements dealing with students learning to contribute to solve problems in the community and learning about the importance of voting in national and local elections. Almost 70 per cent (69%) of teachers indicated they agreed that students learn these 'skills' in school. In comparison to the teachers, 86 and 83 per cent of principals respectively agreed or strongly agreed with the statements that students learned to contribute to solve problems in the community and learned the importance of voting, at school.

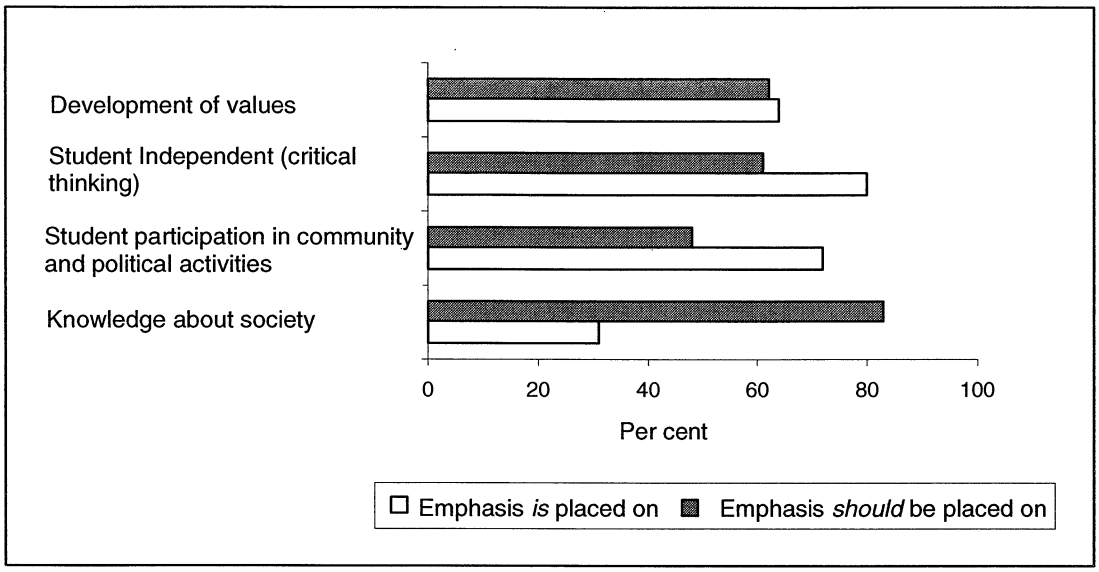
Of the seven statements related to civic competencies learned in school, the civic competency about being patriotic and committed citizens of their country showed the most negative response from teachers. Almost 60 per cent of teachers indicated that students do not learn to be patriotic and committed citizens of their country, in their school. By comparison, less than one quarter of principals disagreed that this civic competency was learned at school. Five per cent of principals did not respond to the fourth option for students learning.

Emphases in Curriculum Choice

Teachers were also asked about their views on the relative emphasis placed on skills and knowledge in civic education, in their school. The four choice alternatives were broad categories of curriculum content. Teachers were also asked their views on the relative emphasis that *should* be placed on skills and knowledge in civic education, in their school. Figure 7.1 indicates the level of support each alternative received from teachers who responded to the question.

Teachers indicated that greater emphasis was placed on student participation in community and political activities (80 per cent), and also student independent (critical) thinking (72 per cent). Considerably less emphasis was placed on knowledge about society (30 per cent).

Figure 7.1: Teacher Views on Curriculum Choices & Emphases in Civics Education in Schools



A different picture emerges when teachers were asked about the relative emphases they thought *should* be placed, in civic education, across the four alternatives. The importance teachers placed upon the 'knowledge about society' emphasis results in a reversal in its relative importance, from being the most minor of the four alternatives to being the most important. One would presume that the kinds of knowledge they think important are indicated by those topics to which they gave support in Table 7.10, such as 'Citizens rights and obligations' and 'Human and civil rights'. Continuing with the difference between what is and what should be taught, the teachers believed considerably less emphasis should be placed on student independent thinking and also less emphasis should be placed on student participation in community and political activities than is currently the case.

Interestingly, teachers indicated they believed the emphasis currently placed on the development of values is also the same emphasis that *should* be placed on it in civic education, so no change in emphasis was deemed necessary. This last reflection might change once the findings on the attitudes of Australian students, as represented by their responses to the Civic Attitudes scales in this study, are considered.

The weight teacher gave to the relative importance of the other emphases is valuable information. Teachers are of the view that it is not the place of school to provide for student participation in the community or political affairs. They may well teach about community participation or political affairs, but do not think schools should actually enable it.

Civics Topics

The next important step to having teachers consider the content of civics education, in greater detail than the previous question had done, is shown by the next question, which listed 20 topics potentially taught in a civic education course. For each of these topics teachers were asked to rank the importance they attached to each topic,

the confidence they felt to teach the topic and the opportunity for students to learn this topic, in the curriculum in their school. Table 7.10 shows teacher responses, by importance ranking, on each of the twenty listed topics, and for each of the three questions asked. In the table, only three rankings are shown for each question, since in responding to each question one of the ranking options had been used by only a small minority of teachers. Missing data accounted for between 3 per cent and 7 per cent on this set of items. Significant gender differences were evident in eleven of the items in this question.

Importance of Topics in Civics Education

Most of the civics education topics listed in the Teacher Questionnaire were considered to be important or very important. Human and civil rights and citizens rights and obligations were the most important topics, with 56 and 50 per cent of teachers indicating they were *very* important topics for civic education. They were followed in importance by, important events in the nation's history (44 per cent), environmental issues (44 per cent), dangers of propaganda and manipulation (43 per cent) and cultural differences and minorities (43 per cent).

Over 60 per cent of teachers indicated that the following topics were considered important to civic education - social welfare, migrations of people, trade/labour unions, international organisations, international problems and relations, comparative political systems, different conceptions of democracy and civic virtues/attitudes.

A fifth of the teachers considered the topics economic issues and trade/labour unions not to be important or of little importance, and 17 per cent of teachers did not think international organisations were important or of little importance. No more than 13 per cent of teachers indicated that other topics were not important or of little importance.

Confidence in Teaching Topics in Civics Education

A teacher's confidence plays an important role in enhancing a student's learning of civic education. Generally, teachers had positive attitudes towards their confidence in teaching various topics. Teachers were very confident in teaching important events in the nation's history (41 per cent), media (35 per cent), equal opportunities for women and men (34 per cent) and environmental issues (32 per cent). Topics teachers most considered themselves confident to teach were citizens rights and obligations, social welfare, environmental issues, different conceptions of democracy, human and civil rights, migrations of people, cultural differences and minorities, civic virtues/attitudes, dangers of propaganda and manipulation and National Constitutions and State/political institutions. There were over 55 per cent of teachers who felt they were confident to deal with the above mentioned topics, and there were no fewer than 47 per cent who indicated they felt confident to deal with the rest of the topics.

Table 7.10: Civics Topics: Student Opportunity to learn, Importance of Topic, Teacher Confidence to Teach

Topics	How important do you think this topic is for civic education?			How confident/well equipped do you feel to deal with this topic?			How much opportunity do students up to and including Year 9 have to learn this topic?			
	Not important/ of little importance*	Important	Very important	Not at all/little confident**	Confident	Very confident	Not at all	Little	Considerable	Very much
National Constitution and State/political institutions	9	65	26	26	52	22	10	69	19	2
Citizens rights and obligations	1	49	50	13	62	25	5	47	43	5
Different conceptions of democracy	13	62	25	20	57	23	12	63	24	1
Comparative political systems	12	64	24	21	53	26	18	64	16	2
Election and electoral systems	7	58	35	17	55	28	11	55	29	5
The judicial system	6	59	35	31	48	21	16	62	19	3
Human and civil rights	1	43	56	16	56	28	4	54	37	5
Important events in the nation's history	3	53	44	10	49	41	2	28	56	14
International organisations	17	65	18	29	51	20	16	68	14	2
International problems and relations	8	64	28	22	55	23	10	64	23	3
Migrations of people	12	67	21	20	56	24	6	56	33	5
Economic issues	21	65	14	35	47	18	18	66	15	1
Social Welfare	8	73	19	24	60	16	13	62	23	2
Trade/Labour Unions	21	65	14	29	49	22	25	64	9	2
Equal Opportunities for women and men	3	55	42	11	55	34	7	50	37	6
Cultural differences and minorities	2	55	43	14	56	30	3	40	49	8
Environmental issues	2	54	44	9	59	32	2	28	56	14
Civic virtues/attitudes	11	62	27	23	56	21	10	57	30	3
Dangers of propaganda and manipulation	5	52	43	13	56	31	13	57	27	3
Media	3	55	42	9	56	35	5	41	45	9

* These categories were combined because fewer than 2 per cent of teachers had responded to the 'not important' category.

** These categories were combined because fewer than 5 per cent of teachers had responded to the 'not at all' category.

The topics teachers considered to be least confident or well equipped with were economic issues (35 per cent), the judicial system (31 per cent), international organisations (29 per cent), trade/labour unions (29 per cent) and National Constitution and State/political institutions (26 per cent). Teachers are indicating they have a lot to learn before they will feel confident teaching these topics.

Likelihood of Students Learning Topics in Civics Education

The responses from teachers raise the issue of the opportunity for students up to and including Year 9 to learn various civic education topics. Although the range of teacher percentages who indicated there was considerable or 'very much' opportunity for students to learn various topics was between 16 to 70 per cent, there were only 7 out of 20 topics where more than 40 per cent of teachers had responded to a topic. The topics were environmental issues (70 per cent), important events in the nation's history (70 per cent), cultural differences and minorities (56 per cent), media (54 per cent), citizens' rights and obligations (48 per cent), human and civil rights (42 per cent) and equal opportunities for women and men (41 per cent).

On the other hand, trade/labour unions, international organisations, economic issues, comparative political systems and the judicial system were civic education topics considered by at least three quarters of the teachers to be topics which students did not have the opportunity to learn the topic.

Part Four: Goals and Resources in Civics Education

Resources used in Teaching and Learning in Civics Education

When teachers plan their lessons for civic education related activities they rely on varied resources. This includes referring to official curricular guidelines, textbooks and original sources. Table 7.11 indicates the range of resources used by teachers in civics education.

Table 7.11: Resources Used in Teaching Civics Education

	Not important	Less important	Important	Very important
Official curricula or curricular guidelines or frameworks.	4	19	59	18
Official requirements/standards in the area of civic education.	4	24	57	15
Your own ideas of what is important to know in civic education.	1	11	70	18
Original sources (such as constitutions, human rights declarations).	2	14	50	34
Textbooks	1	22	64	13
Materials published by commercial companies, public institutes, or private foundations.	4	46	44	6
Self-produced materials.	1	17	65	17
Media (newspapers, magazines, television).	1	3	46	50

The use of media, by means of newspapers, magazines and television, was considered an important source by forty six percent of teachers and very important

by a further half the teachers. On the other hand, very few (4 per cent) teachers, considered this resource less or not important for planning civic education related activities.

A teacher's own ideas of what is important in civic education, original sources and self-produced materials were also considered to be useful resources in preparing activities, with over 82 percent of teachers viewing these resources as important or very important. Only 12 and 18 percent of teachers indicated that these resources were less important or not important at all.

Some inferences on pedagogic practice can be drawn from the responses to questions about resources. They suggest that teachers are running discussions on current affairs. When combined with the very high support teachers give to 'Your own ideas of what it is important to know in civic education' as a 'resource' the view that discussion is being conducted increases. It also suggests that civic education can be a moveable feast in the hands of teachers who do not have a curriculum to guide them.

Approximately three quarters of teachers considered textbook use important or very important when planning civic education activities. Approximately the same percentage of teachers allocated similar importance to official curricular, curricular guidelines or frameworks. Female teachers were 12 per cent more likely than male teachers to consider such official curricula guidelines very important in planning civics courses. A similar number of teachers (72 percent) gave importance to official requirements or standards in the area of civic education as a resource.

About half the teachers viewed materials published by commercial companies, public institutes, or private foundations as important or very important, whilst the other half of teachers indicated that this resource was less important or not important in preparing for civic education related activities.

Values and Attitudes as Goals in the Teaching of Civics Education

In the Teacher Questionnaire, a list of values and attitudes, stated as goals for civic education were presented to teachers, for them to rate by perceived importance. Table 7.12 displays the percentage distribution of teachers' rating of the importance they attribute to the listed values and attitudes statements, as goals for student learning in civic education.

The most important goals, for civic education teachers, is that students learn to develop consciousness about the needs of the whole world, to develop honesty, as well as to fight against social injustice, to stand up for one's opinion, to ensure opportunities for minorities to express their own culture and to recognise the value of Australia as a nation. Over ninety percent of teachers viewed each of these goals as important or very important. Significant gender differences were evident for three of these items. Female teachers were more inclined than the male teachers to think the following topics were 'very important': consciousness of the needs of the whole world (14% more likely), 'fight against social injustice' (12%) and 'ensure opportunities for minorities...' (8%). The value of honesty and the attitude of consciousness about the needs of the whole world are granted the most importance, as nearly two thirds of teachers say these are *very* important goals of civics education.

Table 7.12: Teacher Rating of Importance of Values, Attitudes as Goals in Civics Education

How important is it for you that students learn...	Not important	Less important	Important	Very important
to develop honesty.	0	3	32	65
to develop consciousness about the needs of the whole world.	0	2	36	62
to fight against social injustice.	0	4	48	48
to stand up for one's opinion.	0	4	56	40
to ensure opportunities for minorities to express their own culture.	0	9	56	35
to recognise the value of our nation.	0	10	59	31
to develop industriousness.	2	17	53	28
to recognise one's own interests.	2	21	50	27
to be aware of the dangers of technological progress.	2	25	51	22
to follow the rules/regulations.	3	22	59	16
to accept conflict and make the best of it.	8	31	47	14
to understand that civil disobedience is sometimes necessary to achieve better conditions.	4	30	53	13
to develop orderliness.	7	40	42	11
to criticise nationalism.	10	52	29	9
to strengthen national culture against foreign influence.	19	43	29	9

Slightly fewer teachers considered developing industriousness as an aim for students to learn, with almost thirty percent of teachers viewing this as very important, and a further half of the teachers considering this as important.

Recognising one's own interests, following rules or regulations, and being aware of the dangers of the technological progress were all considered to be important or very important by almost three quarters of teachers.

Teachers placed less emphasis on students learning to criticise nationalism and to strengthen national culture against foreign influence. Sixty two percent of teachers indicated both statements of goals were less important or not important. Less emphasis was also placed by teachers on understanding that civil disobedience is sometimes necessary to achieve better conditions, accepting conflict and making the best of it and developing orderliness. Between 30 and 40 percent of teachers considered these goals as less important and between 4 and 8 percent of teachers categorised them as not important.

Does the Teaching of Civics Education Make a Difference?

Teachers were also asked much they thought civic education matters. Data are recorded in Table 7.13. The responses of teachers illustrate that they believe they are making a difference to students' outlook on civics and citizenship by teaching civic education in schools. Overwhelmingly, 97 percent of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that teaching civic education makes a difference for students' political and

civic development, and 91 percent of teachers believed teaching civic education matters a great deal for Australia. Gender difference in the response to both of these questions was significant, with female teachers more likely to 'strongly agree' than male teachers by 14% and 13% respectively.

Table 7.13: How Teaching Civics Education in Schools Can Make a Difference

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Teaching civic education makes a difference for students' political and civic development.	0	3	69	28
Teaching civic education at school matters a great deal for our country.	0	9	58	33
Schools are irrelevant for the development of student's attitudes and opinions about matters of citizenship.	43	52	3	2
Education authorities pay little attention to civic education.	5	51	38	6

Teachers concluded that schools *were* relevant institutions for the development of students' and opinions about matters of citizenship. The context of this material was presented negatively, but once again the majority of teachers illustrated the importance of teaching civic education in the schools by disagreeing with the statement.

Contrasted to the similarity of views expressed in relation to the three previous statements, the part played by education authorities in civic education divided the opinions of civic education teachers. Although 44 percent of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that education authorities pay little attention to civic education, 56 percent of teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed, and believe that education authorities ought to be giving more consideration to civic education.

Part Five: Inhibitors and Encouragers for the Effective Delivery of Civics Education

Creating and implementing a civic education syllabus involves many factors. Consideration must be given to those factors and issues which might hinder the developing program. Teachers were able to use their experience and raise their possible concerns when answering a question late in the questionnaire. Teacher responses regarding factors which might inhibit civic education programs are reported in Table 7.14.

Only on one of the six statements is there a high level of agreement between teachers. Over eighty percent of teachers indicated that teachers should teach according to curriculum standards or requirements in the civic education area. However, teachers were sharply separated in their opinions on three of the other statements, with approximately half the teachers agreeing with the statement, and the other half disagreeing. This pattern of difference of opinion applies to statements about whether there is a broad consensus in the Australian society as to what is worth learning in civic education, what should be taught in civic education, given the rapid changes in recent years, and also to negotiating with students what is to be studied in civic education. Female teachers are 15 per cent more likely than male teachers to

'strongly agree' with the first and last of these three items. Two of these statements deal with the low likelihood of finding agreement, given social and practitioner factors, and the third deals with a potential source of positive input (students), which is not going to be effectively utilised.

Table 7.14: Teacher Opinion on Factors which Inhibit Developing Civics Education Programs in Schools

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Teachers should teach according to curriculum standards/requirements in the area of civic education.	1	16	74	9
There is a broad consensus in our society as to what is worth learning in civic education.	9	45	42	4
Changes have been so rapid in recent years that teachers often do not know what to teach in civic education.	6	43	44	7
Teachers should negotiate with students what is to be studied in civic education.	7	40	48	5
What is important in civic education cannot be taught in school.	24	67	9	0
Because of conflicts and different opinions in society there cannot be agreement on what should be taught in civic education.	17	63	17	3

Although eighty percent of teachers disagreed the civic education syllabus could not be agreed on, because of conflicts and different opinions in society, it is difficult to see how such agreement can occur across the society, given the responses to the previous statements. The remaining one fifth of teachers indicated this would hinder their decision on what is worth learning in civic education. The majority of teachers considered that the important aspects of civic education could be taught in schools. These teachers are possibly looking to prioritise curriculum content and get agreement on the main aspects/ topics/issues for inclusion.

Thus it seems that there are problems associated with introducing civics education curricula into schools in terms of the lack of consensus among teachers on inhibiting factors. One interpretation of this data suggests that the biggest inhibitor to the development of civics education courses in Australia is the belief that they should all reflect the whole society, and that they should agreed upon by all. Such a prescription would be a major stumbling block for the introduction of any curriculum.

Perhaps it will be possible to have very broad, general standards and content prescriptions, with a range of local and community-owned variants. The discussion will need to be held in the communities, and anxiety about course variation will need to be addressed.

Optimal Delivery for Civics Education Courses

Both Teachers and Principals were asked to answer a question about 'How should civic education be taught?' This is not a question about pedagogy, but one of how

civic education should be packaged in the total curriculum a school provides its students. It is a key question for policy developers, and for any school looking to introduce civics education, particularly in the light of responses in Table 7.15. Missing data for teachers accounted for between 3 per cent and 6 per cent on this set of items.

Table 7.15: Teacher and Principal Views on Optimum Delivery of Civics Education

Civic education...	Teachers				Principals			
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
should be taught as a specific subject.	12	48	24	17	16	52	28	4
should be taught integrated into subjects related to human and social sciences, like history, geography, languages, religion, ethics, law.	5	5	41	49	2	7	43	49
Should be integrated into all subjects taught at school.	7	29	49	14	6	30	42	22
Should be an extra-curricular activity.	52	34	12	2	56	32	10	2

Most teachers (90 percent) and principals (92 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that civic education should be taught as an integrated SOSE subject. It is probable that respondents' positive response to the notion of civics as an integrated subject confirms teachers' and principals' contentment with the current teaching practices in Australia, of teaching civics as part of an integrated SOSE curriculum. The positive response suggests that integration is working reasonably well.

However there was some difference between the views of teacher and principals, about how best to teach civic education. Given that results showed both teachers and principals were favourable to teaching civic education as an integrated subject, it would followed that teachers would disagree that civic education should be taught as a single subject. However, teachers and principals were more divided about teaching civic education as a specific subject. Forty one percent of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that civic education should be taught as a specific subject, and sixty percent didn't consider that civic education should be taught as a specific subject. There were about 10 percent more teachers than principals showing positive responses about civic education being taught as a specific subject.

Approximately two thirds of teachers and principals were positive toward civic education being integrated into all subjects taught at school. A third of both sets of respondents disagreed with the statement, and were not keen to have civic education in all subjects. This data suggests a greater flexibility by professionals, as to the proper locus of civics education, than has generally been accepted as existing in schools. It indicates that greater fluidity in delivery may be possible across schools.

Eighty six percent of teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed that civic education should be an extra-curricular activity. Similarly high rejection of this idea was found for the principals. These professionals do not believe that civics education should be relegated to the extra curricula part of the school's provision for students. One hopes that it does not mean a lessening of the valuing of the extra curricular possibilities, such as Student Representative Councils, community service etc....as important sources of civics education learning.

Part Six: Concluding Comments

This chapter has described the data collected from the teachers' and principals' responses to the Teacher and School Questionnaires. Data on teacher and training backgrounds was collected. Teachers showed they are well-trained in civic-related disciplines, that many have been teaching civics-related subjects for a considerable length of time, and some of them feel confident to teach a wide range of topics in civics. Of all the civic-related subjects, history proved to be the one most commonly offered in Year 9.

Although only about a quarter of the teachers had received initial training in civic education, almost three-quarters of them had undertaken professional development in civic education. The majority of the teachers who had experienced professional development in civics education, had received it via their subject associations, traditionally the vehicle of much teacher professional development in Australia.

The great majority of principals and teachers agreed that their students learn the civic competencies of working together in groups with other students, how to act to protect the environment and understanding people who have different points of view. They did not confine the learning of these competencies to any particular subject area.

Data on the role of a Student Representative Council was collected, and teachers thought that its role was to organise cultural activities, through which the students would be able to make decisions for themselves.

Principals responded that the role parents most commonly took in the school was in relation to reporting or seeking information about their child's learning difficulties. However parents also contributed to school life by assisting their child complete homework and to the school by contributing to the raising of funds. These forms of parent engagement were very common, with most parents taking part.

Teacher opinions were sought on the emphases placed within the civic education in their schools and what they thought were appropriate emphases in the substance of civics courses. That over three quarters of the teachers thought knowledge of the society needs more attention in civics education will be of interest to curriculum developers. That teachers think these civic-related topics rest easily in SOSE as well as other subjects is encouraging data.

The detailed collation of the teachers' opinions on the relative importance of particular topics, and the teachers' perceptions as to the confidence they feel to teach them, and their perception of students' opportunity to currently deal with these

topics and issues is important data. They indicate the kinds of curriculum currently provided in schools and their views on what should be provided. The confidence indicators , for each topic, demonstrate the kinds of professional development which are needed by teachers in order to deal with an appropriate range of issues in the curriculum in civic education. They acknowledge weaknesses in their capacity to teach economic issues, judicial systems, international organisations, trade unions and national constitutions and state political institutions.

The questions about resources demonstrated that teachers use a wide range of resources in teaching civics. The resource teachers defined as the *most important* they used was cited as being 'Media: newspapers, magazines, television', followed by 'original sources, such as constitutions, human rights declarations'. In the context of the greatest *use* being given to 'Your own ideas of what it is important to know in civic education' as a 'resource' it seems that the most likely form of teaching is the conduct of class or group discussion. Given the earlier picture of low teacher confidence in a number of the topics regarded as important by teachers, there might be some concern that teaching in civics still lacks some focus. The need for curriculum materials which address the topics thought important, becomes more urgent.

In response to a later question about what is the optimum delivery of civics, teacher and principals both strongly supported the view that it should be 'taught integrated into subjects related to human and social sciences'. However, later still in the questionnaire, teachers were asked to consider the factors which inhibit the introduction of civic education programs. They were very emphatic that a prescribed curriculum would be the greatest inhibitor, and it was agreed that this was because there could not be agreement on 'what should be taught in civic education'. It appears that teachers are reluctant to have a curriculum imposed, because they have strong views about what students should learn in civics, and their preferred way of teaching civics requires an open agenda of topics, to catch the current affairs issues which develop during a course.

Connected to teachers wanting to resolutely keep control over civics education courses is their conviction that certain values are a critical aspect of what their students should learn from a civics course. These are the key learning outcomes for this group of teachers, it seems. Teachers most want their students to learn to develop a consciousness about the needs of the whole world, to develop honesty, as well as to fight against social injustice, to stand up for one's opinion, to ensure opportunities for minorities to express their own culture and to recognise the value of Australia as a nation. Over ninety percent of teachers viewed each of these goals as important or very important. Few courses in Australian schools have these as their chief learning outcomes, so perhaps we may find teachers more relaxed about teaching curricula which were shaped to achieve these kinds of goals.

For all the complexities shown in, and even the contradictory nature of, the teacher responses to some of the questions about the content and shape of civic education in schools, teachers were very supportive of it. Ninety eight per cent of the teachers thought that 'teaching civic education makes a difference for students' political and civic development' and that 'it matters a great deal for our country'. A similar percentage of teachers thought that schools had a very important role in developing student attitudes and opinions.

The main conclusion to be reached as a result of the findings reported in this chapter is that, despite all its difficulties, teachers and principals enthusiastically endorse the introduction of civic education in Australian schools, based on an integrated courses in the human and social sciences, with a focus on knowledge of society and values. Additionally, they believe they can teach such courses, but that with specific professional development they would be more confident about doing so. As with many of the findings reported in this chapter, a significant gender difference applies to this conclusion, with females feeling more strongly about the importance of such outcomes, but generally being less confident in their ability to teach them effectively.

CHAPTER 8
HOW MIGHT WE BETTER UNDERSTAND CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION BASED ON THE OUTCOMES OF AUSTRALIA'S PARTICIPATION IN THE IEA CIVIC EDUCATION STUDY?

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to draw conclusions from the results of the IEA Civic Education Study, especially as they relate to Australian students. These conclusions will draw on the data that were generated by the study yet where that data is suggestive of broader issues, a more speculative approach will be adopted. Recognising that this report has only provided an outline of major issues related to the civic understanding and values of young Australians, additional areas for future research utilising the IEA data base will be suggested

When the IEA Civic Education Study commenced, civic education in Australia was neither a policy priority for governments nor for most schools. Since that time both governments and school authorities have been moved to make civic education a priority for the school curriculum. The *National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century*, endorsed by all Australian Ministers for Education in April 1999, state that students, when they leave school, should 'be active and informed citizens with an understanding and appreciation of Australia's system of government and civic life'. All Education Ministers have also endorsed performance indicators for civics and citizenship education to measure student learning outcomes.

It should be noted that the survey of students and school staff was conducted late in 1999. There had not been sufficient time for the new *Discovering Democracy* initiatives to have their full effect on student learning. There had been time for some effect on teachers however, and this is reflected in some of the study's findings in relation to professional development and related matters. As civics and citizenship education initiatives are being implemented, there has been much debate about content, pedagogy and related issues. The Australian report has been written in 2001 and the authors are conscious that they are reporting on the situation as it was some eighteen months earlier.

Thus the achievements of Australian students in this study must be seen in a context where formal programs of civic education are relatively recent, and informal rather than formal activities have characterised much civic education. In this context most of the students surveyed in 1999 would have gained most of their understandings and values largely from family, peers, informal school activities, the media and their everyday activities in the community. An issue for the future is how best to sustain an intelligent citizenry. Put another way: how should future citizens be prepared and what do we expect them to know and be able to do? These issues will be addressed in this chapter.

The following sections will provide the main framework for addressing these issues:

- Civic Knowledge: Which Knowledge is Important?
- Correlates of Civic Knowledge: How Can Civic Knowledge Be Developed?
- Civic Engagement: Getting Young People Involved
- Civic Attitudes: Developing a Caring and Just Citizenry

- Teachers and Civic Education
- Directions for the Future

Civic Knowledge: Which Knowledge Important?

What is civic knowledge? What should young people know in order to be considered literate citizens? The results of this study suggest some answers to these questions. In some important ways, it also suggests where the focus might lie for future developments in civic education.

Civic knowledge was defined in this study as "knowledge of content" and "skills in interpretation". The conceptual and statistical distinction between these two aspects of civic knowledge is not straight forward. A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on a calibration sample of 500 students from each of the participating country. It demonstrated that a two factor solution using "content knowledge" and "interpretive skills" was statistically defensible. Nevertheless, there was a correlation of .91 between the two factors suggesting a considerable degree of overlap between the conceptual properties of the constructs. Australian students, however, performed comparatively much better on the interpretive skills scale (ranking 4th) than they did on the content knowledge scale (ranking 11th). The only other students who shared a similar pattern of performance were those from the United States. What does the pattern of Australian students' performance suggest about civic education?

It certainly suggests that Australian students, more so than many of their international peers, have well developed interpretive skills. Such skills involve critical thinking, the ability to make inferences, to make evaluative judgments and to draw conclusions. That Australian students do well in this area should not be surprising given the thrust of curriculum reforms in both civic and non-civic related areas over the past few decades. It might also suggest that Australian students have well developed linguistic abilities that allow them to cope well with the demands of interpretive type questions. Whatever the explanation for Australian students' success in this area, it is important to highlight interpretive skills as an essential component of civic education. It is not just a case of being successful at a particular type of test item. The ability to interpret complex data is a process that students as citizens will require as they continually negotiate their way through demanding civic contexts and issues. Reading the world around them, being able to respond to it in a sophisticated way and feeling empowered to influence it should be key outcomes of any civic education. The results of this study suggest that Australian fourteen olds are being well prepared to do these things.

This is not in any way to underestimate the importance of content knowledge in civic education. This study has identified that a major task for Australian civic educators is to deepen the understanding of Australian students about theoretical constructs and models of democracy. Australian teachers feel that students should know more about Australian society. Such emphases takes civic learning way beyond the surface learning of names, dates, places and events, although there is a place for this kind of learning. For the future, however, civic learning needs to be characterised by deep learning in key areas: the major constructs underpinning democratic governance, the shape and contours of Australian society both past and present and the challenges confronting contemporary Australia in a globalised world. Civic

education can no longer be local: young people need to understand democracy not only in Australia but also in our region. While there are some shared understandings across the region, there is by no means universal agreement about the form democracy should take in the twenty first century. Citizens of the future need to be prepared to engage in and influence those debates within Australia as well as in the region.

Taken together, therefore, 'content knowledge' and 'interpretative skills' should provide an important foundation for any program of civic education. The definition of the specific kind of content knowledge remains an important task for curriculum developers. This study has given some indication of the direction to be taken. Equally important is the definition of interpretive skills for these will prepare citizens for the unknown, the new and the problematic. Both policy makers and curriculum developers have a formidable task ahead to ensure that young people can confidently adopt their role as citizens in the twenty first century.

Correlates of Civic Knowledge: How Can Civic Knowledge Be Developed?

If it is accepted that civic knowledge is composed of content knowledge and interpretative skills, it seems important to understand how such knowledge might be constructed by students. The international study approached this issue by estimating a path regression model using the calibration sample of 14,000 students, selected from each participating country, as well as regression models using the full weighted sample from each country. (*Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries*, p.147) The path analysis model used for the calibration sample, but using the Australian data, is shown in Figure 8.1.

In terms of background variables, gender does not appear to have a significant effect on differing levels of civic knowledge for boys and girls. On the other hand, home literary resources, as measured by the number of books students reported having at home, is the third largest predictor of the level of civic knowledge possessed by students. It is well worth remembering, therefore, that social well being is a powerful determiner of civic knowledge in our society. If that society is committed to social justice for its citizens, then special efforts will have to be made to ensure that all students have access to programs of civic education and that some students are not disadvantaged because of their home background.

School factors have an important effect on levels of civic knowledge. The single most powerful variable is student expectations about further education. The higher these expectations, the higher their level of civic knowledge. To some extent, this variable is also related to social well being since students from relatively well off backgrounds will always have aspirations to succeed to higher levels of education. Again this suggests that care needs to be taken to ensure that all students have access to civic education irrespective of their social background. It is perhaps important to note that this variable was the most significant predictor of level of civic knowledge across most of the twenty eight participating countries.

There were two other school factors of particular importance for thinking about the future of civic education. They were open classroom climate (defined by students' perceptions of whether civics lessons were characterised by an open classroom climate that encouraged discussion) and participation in school councils. These are

two variables that can play a central role in the development of civic education programs and that have positive effects on the development of civic knowledge. Open classroom climate has a small but significant effect for Australian students. Interestingly, the effect size of this variable was greater for the international calibration sample than it was for the Australian sample (.13 compared to .08). This finding has important implications for pedagogy and the way students will learn civic related knowledge and skills.

The finding was reinforced by the effect of the variable participating in school councils on students' civic knowledge. The effect size for the Australian sample was significant and greater than the effect size for the international calibration sample (.13 compared to .09). Experiencing democracy appears to be a good way to build civic knowledge and gain some commitment to civic processes like voting. What is more it is also intuitively correct: if civic education is preparing young people to be participants in a democratic society, then a participative pedagogy and participative decision making strategies seem almost axiomatic. On the other hand, teachers indicated elsewhere in the study that they wished to restrict the role of Student Representative Councils to being concerned with 'cultural activities'. This is an important area for future study.

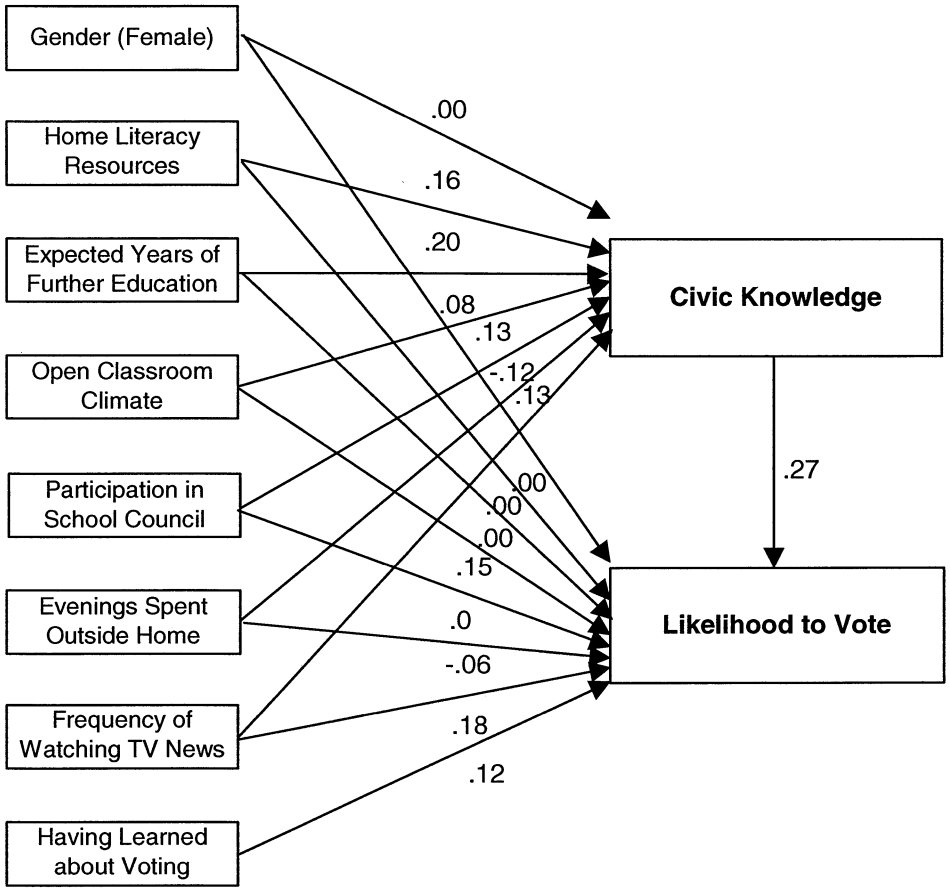
Two factors outside of school were included in the path model with very different results. Evenings spent outside the home correlate negatively with both level of civic knowledge and likelihood to vote. *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries*, p.149 pointed out that this variable has been used in other studies as a correlate of risky or anti-social behaviour. Suffice it to say here that we need to know much more about young people's out-of school behaviour and its effects on the development of civic knowledge and skills. Kennedy (2000) has pointed to the often negative consequences of young people's engagement in youth cultures and this is an issue that could well be explored further in future studies.

The second out of school factor was frequency of watching TV news. This factor had a positive effect on levels of civic knowledge for both the international calibration sample and the Australian sample yet the effect size was greater for the Australian sample than it was for the international sample (.13 compared to .07). The implication of this finding can be related not only to the influence of a particular media form but to pedagogy as well. This study has shown that teachers use media more than any other resource in teaching civic related topics. Additionally, students reported that it was the major source of their information about the news of Australia and other countries. If television is an important source of information for students about civic related issues it is a small step to use this interest to generate an informed and critical attitude to both the medium and the message it presents.

Overall, the model shown in Figure 8.1 suggests that civic knowledge in itself is a good predictor of a student's likelihood to vote. This latter variable means less in the Australian context where voting is compulsory than it does in the majority of countries where there is some choice about whether citizens vote or not. Nevertheless, if the variable can also be taken to indicate a commitment to important civic processes then the importance of civic knowledge is further enhanced. That is to say, civic knowledge is not just an end in itself: it has the potential to link young people to their future roles as citizens.

This study has identified variables that influence the construction of civic knowledge and also the subsequent influence of civic knowledge itself on a civic process like voting. These findings have the potential to support policy makers, curriculum developers and teachers as they confront the challenges of developing civic education programs for the future. Undoubtedly, there is much more to learn about these complex processes but this study made a detailed start and provided a foundation for future developments.

Figure 8.1: Path Model for Civic Knowledge and Likelihood to Vote



Explained Variance (R^2)	
Civic Knowledge	.18
Likelihood to Vote	.26

NOTE: Standardized coefficients. Correlation between predictor variables is not displayed.
Model estimated for calibration sample with 500 students per country.
Listwise exclusion of missing values.

Source: *IEA Civic Education Study,* Standard Population of 14-year-olds tested in 1999.

Civic Engagement: Getting Young People Involved

The importance of civic knowledge has been well established in this study. Yet knowledge itself will be of little relevance if it does not lead to action in the civic sphere. Civic education must be able to play a role in the creation of fair and just societies, in order to justify having a place in the school curriculum. Thus information about civic engagement became an important focus for this study.

The results for Australian students were not promising in terms of there being a desire of young people to be engaged in different aspects of civic life. This seemed more so for what the study defined as 'conventional citizenship'. While students are in no doubt about the importance of voting and the need to show respect for government representatives they are not at all attracted to joining a political party with some 83 per cent of students believing that such an action is unimportant for an adult who is considered a good citizen. Only a bare majority think it is important for citizens to know about the country's history (55 per cent) or follow political issues in the media (50%). Some 66 per cent of students think it is unimportant for citizens to engage in political discussions. With an overall mean of 9.3 for the conventional citizenship scale, Australian students are below the international mean. How might we account for these results?

Commitment to voting in Australia is understandable since it is compulsory. In reality it is somewhat of a minimalist position in a democratic society since it does not require active engagement. Perhaps for these students such engagement in the formal aspects of politics is too much of an adult activity to have any real appeal. It may also be that politics and politicians do not have the kind of image that appeals to young people. Day to day politics may indeed seem quite irrelevant, especially considering the adverse publicity they so often get in the daily media. Whatever the explanation, encouraging young people to take an interest in conventional citizenship seems like an important objective for any democratic society, for it is more often than not through a society's legal structures and frameworks that progress can be achieved.

Students' attitudes to conventional citizenship are all the more interesting when compared with their attitude to what the study called social movement citizenship. Some 80 per cent of students thought it was important for a good citizen to participate in activities to benefit people, 74 per cent thought the same for taking part in activities to protect the environment and 68 per cent thought citizens should take part in activities promoting human rights. Yet only 57 per cent thought citizens should participate in a peaceful protest against a law believed to be unjust. Thus students were able to exercise some discrimination in identifying the kind of activities they thought were appropriate for citizen action.

It seems that Australian students are more inclined to be involved in social movement type activities than in conventional citizenship activities. This is an important finding since it suggests that young people might increasingly look outside the formal structures of governments to find solutions to problems. There is some evidence at the present time to suggest that increasingly young citizens are doing this in the face of globalisation and other trends which they see conventional democratic forces as unable or unwilling to confront. Yet despite Australian students' seeming inclination to social movement activities, they are still not as

engaged as their international peers. The mean score on the social movement scale is below the international mean, although girls score higher than boys on this scale.

The seeming lack of engagement of Australian students is further exacerbated when their performance on the Expected Participation in Political Activities scale is considered. Only 11 per cent of students expect to join a political party, only 24 per cent would write a letter to a newspaper about a social or political issue and just 12 per cent would want to be a candidate for local political office. Again the mean score for Australian students was well below the international mean for these items.

An interesting note on civic engagement is introduced when Australian student performance on the confidence in participating at school scale is analysed. Students agreed that democratic processes used in school contexts could materially affect schools. Eighty two per cent of students felt that electing student representatives could help bring about change in schools, 85 per cent thought positive changes in schools could be brought about when students work together, 84 per cent of students felt that organising groups of students to state their opinions could help solve school problems and 87 per cent thought that students working together could have more influence on what happens in schools that acting alone. These responses suggest that students have some belief in their own efficacy or agency to bring about change through action. It seems that girls more than boys have confidence in these processes. Even so, international peers believe these things even more strongly than do Australian students. Nevertheless, schools appear to be good places in which to encourage students to believe in democratic processes and outcomes and schools seems obvious sites to help develop such cultures.

How important is civic engagement? As a democratic society, are we content that citizens know their system of government or do we want them to take a deep interest in the business of government, almost on a daily basis? These are important questions for the future since this study has suggested that Australian students are at the passive rather than the active end of the citizenship spectrum. They will participate formally though voting and they will pursue issues where they see some community benefit but they do not see themselves having an ongoing brief or as a possible check on the excesses of government. If we want citizens in the future who are engaged in the democratic process, a good deal of work will need to be done to convince them that is it is a useful and beneficial thing to do. As indicated above, schools would appear to be a good place to do some of this work.

Civic Attitudes: Developing a Caring and Just Citizenry

Seven separate scales were used to try and get a broad measure of students' civic attitudes. These can be broadly grouped under students' attitudes to government responsibilities and the nation, attitudes to groups within society and attitudes to learning. The measures used to compare students' responses, within and between countries, were the degree of positiveness shown in the responses. All measures in the study are based on the model of citizenship embedded in Figure 1.2.

Australian students have a generally positive attitude to the both the social and economic role of governments although they are somewhat more positive about the social role of governments than the economic role. Australian students think governments should play a role in guaranteeing jobs for everyone and keeping prices

down. Despite the strong balance of favourable opinion on these items Australian students still performed below the international mean on this scale.

Australian students appeared much more confident about items concerned with the society related responsibilities of governments (for example provision of health care, a decent standard of living for the elderly, free basic education, equal political opportunities for men and women, control of pollution, guarantee of peace and order and promoting honesty and moral behaviour). The mean for this scale was the same as the international mean. What is more, girls appeared to be more confident than boys about the society related role of governments.

Attitudes to the role of government were tested again when students were asked about their level of trust in government related institutions. The police, the courts and local councils were most trusted by students with moderate levels of trust being accorded the Commonwealth government and the national parliament. In line with other data in this study, political parties were ranked as the institutions with the least amount of trust. It seems that Australian students have higher levels of trust in these institutions than their international peers.

Despite their criticism of some aspects of Australia's political system, 84 per cent of the Australian students prefer living in Australia than elsewhere and 96 per cent have a great love for their country. The flag is important to 73 per cent of them and 92 per cent of them think Australia should be proud of its achievements. These are positive signs of young people's commitment to their nation, although the relatively low response to the flag perhaps suggests the debate about the flag has some resonance with young people. Despite the mix of the student responses on different items on this scale, based on these data, young Australians can nevertheless be seen as patriotic.

In terms of young people's attitudes to particular groups, there is strong support for the rights of immigrants and women in Australian society. There was also an interesting gender difference in responses with girls being much more positive about rights than boys. In terms of the rights of women, boys support women in politics and parliament, having the same rights as men and equal pay but much less enthusiastically at about a rate of some 10 per cent less than girls. Perhaps this might be expected but it shows that equity is still an issue that needs to be addressed in Australian schools. It is by no means self evident to many young men.

The final attitudinal scale had to do with students' perception of classroom climate. The results on this scale give much pause for reflection. The effect of this variable on civic knowledge has already been noted and while it was significant it was only moderately so especially compared to the international cohort. The reasons for this can be seen in students' responses to individual items. The majority of students did not feel they were often encouraged to disagree openly with their teachers on social and political issues and only 50 per cent of students felt that they were often encouraged to make up their own minds. While about a third more students felt that these things happened sometimes it is not a ringing endorsement for developing independent thinkers. This pattern of limited endorsement for independent thought and discussion was continued across all items. Interestingly, girls felt they had more opportunities for independent thought and action than did boys. Students from many other countries felt they had many more opportunities for engaging in

discussion and expressing their own view than did Australian students, particularly the boys. The creation of classrooms characterised by lively debate, the recognition of different views on political and social issues, respect for these differences and freedom to put a case is not beyond Australian teachers. If we want active citizens in the future we shall need to encourage teachers to move in this direction.

We can conclude from an examination of these scales that Australian students have well developed attitudes on a range of topics and issues. They see an important role for governments and government related institutions but they do not trust politicians. They have some commitment to equity principles but this is stronger for girls than it is for boys. They are patriotic but not unquestioningly so. They do not see themselves having a great deal of space for discussing and debating social and political issues in classrooms. Yet, overall, they do not seem greatly impassioned about anything in particular and this is perhaps also reflected in the civic engagement scales. Young Australians appear to accept, and in some case appreciate, their democracy. The key to the future appears to be to engage them in such a way that they will want to shape and influence it. Perhaps the place is to start is with schools, although the end point is the real world where decisions get made every day and citizens have a chance to influence them. Helping students to realise their agency in these contexts remains an important task for civics and citizenship education.

Teachers and Civic Education

There is little doubt that teachers are crucial to civics and citizenship education but it is not always clear in schools who these teachers are. The study, recognising that civic education is not always a discrete subject in the school curriculum, defined civic-related subjects. In Australian schools, this included English, History, Studies of Society and the Environment and Geography as the main civic related subjects with a host of other subjects also being included. This spread across subject areas can be beneficial if there is a coherent school policy about civic education as a cross curriculum perspective. It can be detrimental and lead to fragmentation if civic education is left up to individual teachers. State/Territory curriculum frameworks for civics can help here and Australian education systems have moved in this direction. It is unclear how the issue of coherence is dealt with in independent schools unless there are deliberate school level policies for civics. Yet unless this issue is addressed in all schools fragmentation is likely to characterise civic education at the classroom level.

Teachers do not seem to be well prepared to teach civics in the sense that there is very little offering at the undergraduate level and the main subjects they have access at the postgraduate level are history, geography and economics. This raises the interesting question of how of cross disciplinary subject areas like civics can best be addressed in terms of teacher preparation. Research on teacher subject matter knowledge seems to suggest that teachers operate in subject areas with quite distinctive subject matter structures that determine their approach to the subject. These structures are not the same for all teachers and are often influenced by the way teachers themselves have been taught or by what they have been taught. There has been strong support for history as the main vehicle for teaching civics but structures relating to history as a school subject are not necessarily the same as those relating to civics. This is an area where much more work needs to be done since the appropriate

teacher preparation for civic education is the first step towards successful civics teaching.

Of course, ongoing teacher professional development is also important. An encouraging 71 per cent of teachers in this study indicated that they had access to professional development in civics and the very large majority of them (80%) experienced this through their professional subject association. This was probably a reflection of increased Commonwealth funding in this area over the past few years. Yet this raises the question of ongoing funding for professional development in this area. It cannot continue to rely of Commonwealth funding and needs to be main-streamed in systems and schools themselves.

In terms of civic competencies teachers had some very firm views - both positive and negative. There was substantial agreement on issues such as understanding people with different points of view, working together in groups, acting to protect the environment, and concern about what happens in other countries. The importance of voting and contributing to solving community problems was strongly supported but not as strongly as the other competencies just mentioned. Yet teachers were negative about developing students who were patriotic and committed to their country with 59 per cent of teachers indicating their disagreement with such a competency. This is in contrast to the views of students themselves as reported in the previous section where there was a strong sense of patriotism in relation to national symbols, preference for living in Australia and pride in Australia's achievements. This is an interesting area for future exploration.

Another such area is the apparent gender differences between teachers on some of the questions on competencies. In particular, significantly more female teachers thought that students should learn to work in groups than male teachers. This is an interesting finding suggesting some relationship between gender and preference for pedagogy. Given the importance of pedagogy in civics, more work needs to be done in this area.

An interesting pattern in teacher responses also emerged when teachers were asked to indicate their views on the actual curriculum emphasis in civics and their preferred emphasis. Surprisingly, they felt there was least emphasis being given to knowledge about society and this should be the main area of future emphasis. They also thought that there was currently more emphasis on developing critical thinking skills and student participation in the community that they would prefer although the current emphasis on values was seen to be about right. These are very important indications of what content teachers think is important in the civics curriculum. For teachers, the most important topics in civics are human and civil rights, citizens' rights and obligations followed by important events in Australia's history, environmental issues, the dangers of propaganda and manipulation and cultural differences and minorities. There is a distinct social orientation to these topics and they suggest a very specific emphasis for civic education. It would be of interest to compare teachers' views and the current content of civic education programs in the States/Territories and also with the *Discovering Democracy* materials to see what congruence exists between the views of teachers and current programs.

Teachers' predilections for teaching civics also seem related to their confidence in teaching those topics. While all the above topics elicited positive responses from

teachers in terms of their confidence to teach them there were other topics that they did not feel confident in teaching. Topics that cause some teachers concern are those to do with economic issues, the judicial system, international organisations, trade unions, constitutions and State political institutions. These could well be important areas for future professional development.

There is remarkable agreement amongst teachers regarding values and attitudes in civics. More than 90 per cent of teachers agreed developing honesty, developing consciousness about the needs of the whole world, fighting against social injustice and standing up for one's opinion are important aspects of civics education. Evident in some of these preferences again were gender differences where female teachers thought issues such as social justice and developing consciousness of the needs of the whole world were more important than did many males teachers.

The teachers in this sample showed a great capacity for both understanding civics and articulating what they thought it should be. They do not want to see it as a separate school subject but neither do they see it as purely extra curricular. They attach it mainly to values and attitudes rather than any specific content. They use a vast range of resources to teach it but are more likely to rely on newspapers, the media and their own ideas, although text books can also be important. Given the relatively recent revival of civics education in Australia, these are good outcomes for teachers and for civics education.

Directions for the Future

The IEA Civic Education Study has been a six year study involving 90,000 students in twenty eight countries. It was comprehensive in its design and its coverage of the field. It has provided current data on students' civic knowledge and attitudes and it has enabled comparisons to be made with the original 1975 IEA study of civics. At the same time it has been suggestive of future directions for further study. These will be addressed in this section.

Policy

One of the original aims of the study was to provide information for policy makers. The study is rich in such information whether it be about the civic knowledge, civic engagement and civic attitudes of students or about teacher attitudes to civics. A key issue for policy research is to establish what should be the role and functions of civic education in the future school curriculum. There seems little inclination to make civics a separate subject yet it is subjects that have status in the curriculum. There is often not an agreed time allocation for civics and without time, it is difficult to build civic competencies and knowledge. Often civics is not a core subjects for all students, so who misses out on important subject matter? These are significant issues for policy makers to address if civic education is to play its rightful role in the future.

Curriculum

The school curriculum is rapidly becoming overcrowded as different areas compete for attention. There has been a significant emphasis on literacy and numeracy in recent years and it is important to ensure that all young people get access to these important skills. At the same time during the course of this study there has also been

an increased emphasis by policy makers on civics and citizenship education. This increased emphasis has ranged from the Commonwealth government's commitment to a broad ranging *Discovering Democracy* program with its substantial materials development component, to the inclusion of civics and citizenship perspectives into curriculum frameworks in all States and Territories. Thus the importance of civic learning and civics curricula has been recognised by governments and policymakers in ways they were not when this study commenced.

The current policies locate civics and citizenship primarily in the SOSE area of the curriculum and this approach does not address the 'across the curriculum' or 'whole school dimensions' of civics and citizenship curriculum delivery. Such issues can be addressed at the school level and should be the subject of future directions in the area. Curriculum guidelines and frameworks which support teachers in their citizenship modelling role and which resource a range of pedagogies that can encourage a participative and engaging approach to teaching will be also very useful to teachers.

Teachers

Teachers are central to the success of civic education. This study has shown that teachers have very definite views about civics. These need to be taken into consideration when frameworks and guidelines are being designed. Teachers are not automatons who will implement guidelines without thinking and without injecting their own values. This seems particularly true in civics. This is not to say that teachers' views should not be subject to change. Issues like the role of Student Representative Councils and the primacy of critical thinking, for example, need to be addressed directly with teachers. This study has afforded some insight into teachers' views and these now need to be followed up in a variety of ways.

Teacher Education

Teacher education is a key issue when it comes to preparing young teachers for their roles as civic educators. Yet if the school curriculum is overcrowded so too is the curriculum of teacher education. Nevertheless, young teachers need to be prepared, not only as teachers of citizens, but as active citizens themselves. This cannot be left as an option in teacher education programs. When they enter schools fully trained, teachers must be ready to contribute to the civics education program of the school. This might mean a radical rethink of priorities in teacher education including the redevelopment of university subjects, the recasting of curriculum subjects and the rethinking of what is mean by core requirements in teacher education.

Youth

The fourteen year olds in this study demonstrated some very positive attitudes towards their country and towards life in general. Yet there are also indications from the data collected in this study that many of them they are becoming alienated from a world which seems, to them, to promise them so little. Young people are our most precious resource and we need to take more notice of how they respond to the situations we arrange for them to experience. They are not passive recipients of knowledge. They have well developed - and at times not so well developed - ideas.

We need to build on these and to engage young people in an ongoing dialogue. They need to be seen as partners in their learning and as citizens of the future.

Gender

The study did not identify gender issues related to civic knowledge. Yet it did identify such issues related to civic attitudes on the part of students and a predilection for certain kinds of content on the part of teachers. These need to be explored in depth. There is a rich data base that contains much more data than has been reported here. Why do female teachers support certain kinds of pedagogical strategies and why do female student have much stronger views about certain kinds of civic attitudes. These issues have been explored in some other curriculum areas but it is a completely untapped area of research in civic education.

Cross National

Given the twenty eight countries involved in the study, there is a range of possibilities about further cross national research. One grouping of countries that readily comes to mind is England, Hong Kong, the United States and Australia. All these countries share links to the legislative, executive and other institutions associated with a British heritage, and have colonial connections of one kind or another. Initial anecdotal indications are that such research would be fruitful. It would be of interest to see how students from these different countries, and as a cohort, performed and how this compared to the international cohort or other groupings of countries. Insights into our national data could come from such work. The data is available and there is a deal of goodwill that could, with adequate funding, see additional productive analyses made.

Conclusions

The preparation of future citizens cannot be left to chance. Directions need to be set at all levels of education to indicate that this is one of the priorities for the future. The data produced by the IEA Civic Education Study provides a solid foundation on which future developments can be built. Policy makers need to come to grips with the implications as they have been outlined here. As civics and citizenship education initiatives are being implemented, there will be continued debate about content, pedagogy and related issues.

There are two fundamental challenges for the future. First, to continue to support teachers in their role as civic educators both at the preservice and in-service levels. There have been some promising beginnings under the *Discovering Democracy* Program but such support needs to be ongoing and built into priorities at the State/Territory levels as well as in university teacher preparation programs. Second, debates and discussions need to be encouraged relating to the forms that civics and citizenship education should take in schools. Such debate will involve consideration of both the formal and informal curriculum, the role of so called extra curricular activities and the role that the involvement of students in the community can play in constructing broadly based programs of civics and citizenship education. These are important challenges for schools and their communities as well as policy makers and if they are successfully met they will build on the solid foundations that have already been laid over the past few years.

The Australian findings in this report provide useful guidance for these debates. Curriculum developers can focus on these findings as the starting point for deliberations about the form civic education programs should take. Teachers can be better informed about what their students are likely to be thinking when it comes to civic knowledge and attitudes. Researchers can take up many of the issues that have been raised and explore them further in other contexts and with complementary methodologies. If these become the responses to the IEA Civic Education Study it will have played an important role not only in helping us understand schools and students today, but also in helping to shape the future. This would be an important achievement.

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APPENDIX A: MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE IEA CIVIC EDUCATION STUDY

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Barbara Malak-Minkiewicz (ex officio), IEA Secretariat

Heinrich Mintrop, Consultant to the Steering Committee

APPENDIX B: ADDITIONAL TABLES AND FIGURES REFERENCED IN CHAPTER 5

Figure B5.1: Sample Item: A fact about taxes

Country	Correct Answers (in %)	Example 1 (Item #38) Type 2: Skills in Interpretation
Australia	58 (1.5)	**38. Three of these statements are opinions and one is a fact. Which of the following is a FACT [the factual statement]?** A. People with very low incomes should not pay any taxes. B. In many countries rich people pay higher taxes than poor people.* C. It is fair that some citizens pay higher taxes than others. D. Donations to charity are the best way to reduce differences between rich and poor.
Belgium (French)	42 (1.5)	
Bulgaria	44 (2.5)	
Chile	26 (1.1)	
Colombia	26 (1.6)	
Cyprus	63 (1.3)	
Czech Republic	46 (1.6)	
Denmark	54 (1.0)	
England	54 (1.1)	
Estonia	46 (1.2)	
Finland	68 (1.0)	
Germany	53 (1.5)	
Greece	53 (1.3)	
Hong Kong (SAR)	57 (1.6)	
Hungary	48 (1.4)	
Italy	55 (1.4)	
Latvia	42 (1.5)	
Lithuania	35 (1.6)	
Norway	59 (1.2)	
Poland	50 (3.2)	
Portugal	25 (1.6)	
Romania	39 (2.4)	
Russian Federation	52 (2.4)	
Slovak Republic	44 (1.5)	
Slovenia	44 (1.2)	
Sweden	54 (1.8)	
Switzerland	56 (1.5)	
United States	69 (1.6)	
International Sample	49 (0.3)	

( ) Standard errors appear in parentheses.
* Correct answer.

Source: *IEA Civic Education Study,* Standard Population of 14-year-olds tested in 1999.

Figure B5.2: Sample Item: Which is an example of discrimination in pay equity?

Country	Correct Answers (in %)	Example 2 (Item #26) Type 2: Skills in Interpretation
Australia	66 (1.4)	**26. Two people work at the same job but one is paid less than the other. The principle of equality would be violated if the person is paid less because of ...** A. fewer educational qualifications. B. less work experience. C. working for fewer hours. D. gender [sex].*
Belgium (French)	47 (1.6)	
Bulgaria	33 (2.4)	
Chile	31 (1.2)	
Colombia	32 (2.0)	
Cyprus	56 (1.3)	
Czech Republic	48 (1.6)	
Denmark	67 (1.2)	
England	64 (1.1)	
Estonia	41 (1.3)	
Finland	75 (1.0)	
Germany	51 (1.2)	
Greece	49 (1.5)	
Hong Kong (SAR)	65 (1.6)	
Hungary	56 (1.4)	
Italy	48 (1.4)	
Latvia	33 (1.8)	
Lithuania	42 (1.5)	
Norway	57 (1.3)	
Poland	68 (2.3)	
Portugal	41 (1.4)	
Romania	32 (1.9)	
Russian Federation	29 (2.4)	
Slovak Republic	29 (1.6)	
Slovenia	46 (1.2)	
Sweden	68 (1.6)	
Switzerland	57 (1.8)	
United States	76 (1.6)	
International Sample	50 (0.3)	

( ) Standard errors appear in parentheses.
* Correct answer.

Source: *IEA Civic Education Study,* Standard Population of 14-year-olds tested in 1999.

Figure B5.3: Sample Item: Identify a non-democratic government

Country	Correct Answers (in %)	Example 3 (Item #17) Type 1: Knowledge of Content
Australia	50 (1.3)	**17. Which of the following is most likely to cause a government to be called non-democratic?** A. People are prevented from criticising the government.* B. The political parties criticise each other often. C. People must pay very high taxes. D. Every citizen has the right to a job.
Belgium (French)	51 (1.8)	
Bulgaria	53 (2.0)	
Chile	44 (1.3)	
Colombia	38 (1.9)	
Cyprus	59 (1.3)	
Czech Republic	60 (1.6)	
Denmark	46 (1.1)	
England	45 (1.1)	
Estonia	39 (1.4)	
Finland	63 (1.3)	
Germany	56 (1.2)	
Greece	67 (1.2)	
Hong Kong (SAR)	73 (1.3)	
Hungary	45 (1.2)	
Italy	63 (1.5)	
Latvia	36 (1.9)	
Lithuania	44 (1.6)	
Norway	57 (1.0)	
Poland	65 (2.3)	
Portugal	55 (1.5)	
Romania	42 (1.8)	
Russian Federation	57 (2.3)	
Slovak Republic	60 (1.6)	
Slovenia	50 (1.3)	
Sweden	66 (1.6)	
Switzerland	56 (1.6)	
United States	53 (1.7)	
International Sample	53 (0.3)	

( ) Standard errors appear in parentheses.
* Correct answer.

Source: *IEA Civic Education Study,* Standard Population of 14-year-olds tested in 1999.

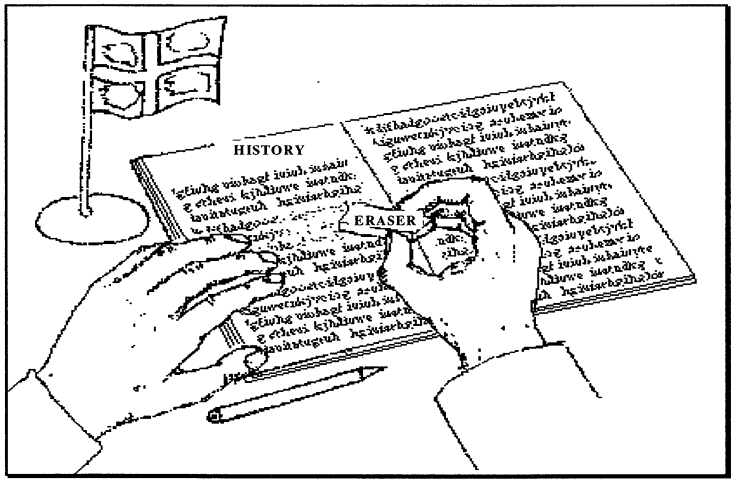
Figure B5.4: Sample Item: Result if large publisher buy many newspapers

Country	Correct Answers (in %)	Example 4 (Item #18) Type 1: Knowledge of Content
Australia	59 (1.4)	**18. Which of the following is most likely to happen if a large publisher buys many of the [smaller] newspapers in a country?** A. Government censorship of the news is more likely. B. There will be less diversity of opinions presented.* C. The price of the country's newspapers will be lowered. D. The amount of advertising in the newspapers will be reduced.
Belgium (French)	50 (1.6)	
Bulgaria	55 (1.6)	
Chile	40 (1.1)	
Colombia	49 (2.1)	
Cyprus	71 (1.0)	
Czech Republic	51 (1.4)	
Denmark	70 (0.9)	
England	49 (1.3)	
Estonia	61 (1.0)	
Finland	48 (1.2)	
Germany	62 (1.1)	
Greece	71 (1.1)	
Hong Kong (SAR)	70 (1.3)	
Hungary	54 (1.2)	
Italy	44 (1.2)	
Latvia	57 (1.6)	
Lithuania	65 (1.1)	
Norway	65 (0.8)	
Poland	78 (1.5)	
Portugal	34 (1.0)	
Romania	39 (1.9)	
Russian Federation	66 (1.9)	
Slovak Republic	61 (1.3)	
Slovenia	55 (1.2)	
Sweden	69 (1.0)	
Switzerland	56 (1.2)	
United States	59 (1.6)	
International Sample	57 (0.3)	

( ) Standard errors appear in parentheses.
* Correct answer.

Source: *IEA Civic Education Study,* Standard Population of 14-year-olds tested in 1999.

Figure B5.5: Sample Item: This is the way history textbooks are sometimes written

Country	Correct Answers (in %)	Example 5 (Item #36) Type 2: Skills in Interpretation
Australia	75 (1.2)	 **36. What is the message or main point of this cartoon? History textbooks ...** A. are sometimes changed to avoid mentioning problematic events from the past.* B. for children must be shorter than books written for adults. C. are full of information that is not interesting. D. should be written using a computer and not a pencil.
Belgium (French)	66 (2.1)	
Bulgaria	47 (2.3)	
Chile	49 (1.5)	
Colombia	48 (2.3)	
Cyprus	53 (1.1)	
Czech Republic	54 (1.5)	
Denmark	60 (1.0)	
England	76 (1.2)	
Estonia	39 (1.2)	
Finland	65 (1.3)	
Germany	61 (0.9)	
Greece	56 (1.3)	
Hong Kong (SAR)	76 (1.4)	
Hungary	67 (1.3)	
Italy	61 (1.3)	
Latvia	48 (1.7)	
Lithuania	48 (1.4)	
Norway	49 (1.0)	
Poland	64 (2.1)	
Portugal	49 (1.1)	
Romania	26 (1.7)	
Russian Federation	45 (2.1)	
Slovak Republic	72 (1.5)	
Slovenia	56 (1.1)	
Sweden	52 (1.2)	
Switzerland	67 (1.4)	
United States	79 (1.4)	
International Sample	57 (0.3)	

( ) Standard errors appear in parentheses.
* Correct answer.

Source: *IEA Civic Education Study,* Standard Population of 14-year-olds tested in 1999.

Figure B5.6: Sample Item: This election leaflet has probably been issued by ...

Country	Correct Answers (in %)	Example 6 (Item #23) Type 2: Skills in Interpretation
Australia	78 (1.3)	
Belgium (French)	56 (1.8)	
Bulgaria	47 (2.4)	
Chile	54 (1.5)	
Colombia	40 (2.4)	
Cyprus	81 (0.9)	
Czech Republic	66 (1.6)	
Denmark	49 (1.1)	
England	75 (1.2)	
Estonia	54 (1.4)	
Finland	85 (0.8)	
Germany	81 (0.9)	
Greece	73 (1.3)	
Hong Kong (SAR)	76 (1.4)	
Hungary	78 (1.2)	
Italy	85 (1.2)	
Latvia	44 (1.9)	
Lithuania	55 (1.6)	
Norway	57 (0.9)	
Poland	58 (2.0)	
Portugal	55 (1.3)	
Romania	46 (2.0)	
Russian Federation	45 (1.9)	
Slovak Republic	66 (1.6)	
Slovenia	75 (1.0)	
Sweden	73 (1.5)	
Switzerland	77 (1.3)	
United States	83 (1.4)	
International Sample	65 (0.3)	

We citizens have had enough!

A vote for the Silver Party means a vote for higher taxes.

It means an end to economic growth and

a waste of our nation's resources.

Vote instead for economic growth and free enterprise.

Vote for more money left in everyone's wallet!

Let's not waste another 4 years!

VOTE FOR THE GOLD PARTY.

23. This is an election leaflet which has probably been issued by ...

A. the Silver Party.
B. a party or group in opposition to the Silver Party.*
C. a group which tries to be sure elections are fair.
D. the Silver Party and the Gold Party together.

( ) Standard errors appear in parentheses.
* Correct answer.

Source: *IEA Civic Education Study,* Standard Population of 14-year-olds tested in 1999.

Figure B5.7: Sample Item: Importance of many organisations for democracy

Country	Correct Answers (in %)	Example 7 (Item #07) Type 1: Knowledge of Content
Australia	78 (1.2)	**7. In a democratic country [society] having many organisations for people to join is important because this provides ...** A. a group to defend members who are arrested. B. many sources of taxes for the government. C. opportunities to express different points of view.* D. a way for the government to tell people about new laws.
Belgium (French)	68 (1.6)	
Bulgaria	71 (1.9)	
Chile	69 (1.1)	
Colombia	60 (2.0)	
Cyprus	80 (1.1)	
Czech Republic	76 (1.2)	
Denmark	75 (0.9)	
England	79 (1.0)	
Estonia	61 (1.1)	
Finland	82 (1.0)	
Germany	67 (1.0)	
Greece	76 (0.9)	
Hong Kong (SAR)	79 (1.1)	
Hungary	46 (1.3)	
Italy	71 (1.4)	
Latvia	55 (1.8)	
Lithuania	61 (1.4)	
Norway	69 (0.9)	
Poland	78 (1.6)	
Portugal	59 (1.2)	
Romania	48 (2.2)	
Russian Federation	68 (1.6)	
Slovak Republic	75 (1.1)	
Slovenia	62 (1.1)	
Sweden	70 (1.5)	
Switzerland	68 (1.3)	
United States	78 (1.4)	
International Sample	69 (0.3)	

( ) Standard errors appear in parentheses.
* Correct answer.

Source: *IEA Civic Education Study,* Standard Population of 14-year-olds tested in 1999.

Figure B5.8: Sample Item : Function of having more than one political party

Country	Correct Answers (in %)	Example 8 (Item #11) Type 1: Knowledge of Content
Australia	75 (1.3)	**11. In democratic countries what is the function of having more than one political party?** A. To represent different opinions [interests] in the national legislature [e.g. Parliament, Congress]* B. To limit political corruption C. To prevent political demonstrations D. To encourage economic competition
Belgium (French)	67 (1.7)	
Bulgaria	70 (1.6)	
Chile	60 (1.2)	
Colombia	54 (1.6)	
Cyprus	88 (0.9)	
Czech Republic	79 (1.0)	
Denmark	84 (0.8)	
England	78 (1.0)	
Estonia	62 (1.2)	
Finland	80 (1.0)	
Germany	84 (0.9)	
Greece	85 (0.7)	
Hong Kong (SAR)	76 (1.1)	
Hungary	75 (1.2)	
Italy	86 (0.9)	
Latvia	57 (1.7)	
Lithuania	68 (1.2)	
Norway	83 (0.7)	
Poland	82 (1.1)	
Portugal	84 (0.8)	
Romania	67 (1.7)	
Russian Federation	71 (1.6)	
Slovak Republic	77 (1.0)	
Slovenia	81 (0.7)	
Sweden	75 (1.5)	
Switzerland	82 (0.9)	
United States	72 (1.5)	
International Sample	75 (0.2)	

( ) Standard errors appear in parentheses.
* Correct answer.

Source: *IEA Civic Education Study,* Standard Population of 14-year-olds tested in 1999.

Table B5.1: Domain IA: Democracy and its defining characteristics

Item #	Domain Content Category	Item type[1]	Short titles for items	% correct (Aust)	% correct (internat)[2]	Item parameter[2,3]
12	Identify defining characteristics of democracy	1	... who ought to govern in democracy	41	71	88
19		1	... necessary feature of democratic government	64	65	96
17	Identify limited and unlimited government, undemocratic regimes	1	... what makes a government non-democratic	51	53	106
14	Evaluate strengths and weaknesses of democratic systems	2	... main message of cartoon about democracy	67	61	100
9	Identify incentives to participate in the form of factors undermining democracy	1	... most serious threat to democracy	75	72	90
29	Identify problems in transitions of government from non-democratic to democratic	1	... most convincing action to promote democracy	44	54	106

Notes:

[1] Item type: 1= knowledge of content; 2 = skills in analysing civic-related information.

[2] Source: *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries:* Appendix A, Figure A.1.

[3] The item parameter is the point on the International Civic Knowledge Scale where students with that level of proficiency had a 65 per cent probability of getting the item right.

Table B5.2: Domain IB: Institutions and Practices in Democracy

Item #	Domain Content Category	Item type[1]	Short titles for items	% correct (Aust)	% correct (internat)[2]	Item parameter[2,3]
11	Identify characteristics and functions of elections and parties	1	... function of having more than one political party	75	75	88
22		1	... function of periodic elections	41	42	113
23	Identify qualifications of candidates for positions and making up one's mind during elections	2	... which party issued political leaflet	79	65	97
24		2	... what issuers of leaflet think about taxes	81	71	91
25		2	... which policy issuers of leaflet likely to favour	67	58	100
30	Identify a healthy critical attitude toward officials and their accountability	1	... example of corruption in national legislature	69	66	96
33		2	... main message of cartoon about political leader	83	77	84
2	Identify basic character of parliament, judicial system, law, police	1	... an accurate statement about laws	84	78	84
13		1	... main task of national legislature	72	67	94
28	Identify provisions of constitution	1	... what countries' constitutions contain	52	62	99
27	Understand basic economic issues and their political implications	1	... essential characteristic of market economy	41	47	110
38		2	... a fact (not an opinion) about taxes	59	49	109

Notes:
1. Item type: 1= knowledge of content; 2 = skills in analysing civic-related information.
2. Source: *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries:* Appendix A, Figure A.1.
3. The item parameter is the point on the International Civic Knowledge Scale where students with that level of proficiency had a 65 per cent probability of getting the item right.

Table B5.3: Domain IC: Citizenship: Rights and Duties

Item #	Domain Content Category	Item type[1]	Short titles for items	% correct (Aust)	% correct (internat)[2]	Item parameter[2,3]
3	Identify general rights, qualifications, and obligations of citizens in democracies	1	... a political right	82	78	85
10	Identify citizens' rights to participate and express criticism and their limits	1	... illegal activity for a political organisation	64	59	101
15		1	... violation of civil liberties in democracy	48	53	107
1	Identify obligations, civic duties of citizens in democracy	1	... role of citizen in democratic country	84	79	83
4	Understand the role of mass media in democracy	1	... which of a reporter's rights was violated	54	70	92
18		1	... result if large publisher buys many newspapers	60	57	103
7	Identify network of associations and differences of political opinion	1	... why organisations are important in democracy	79	69	93
34		2	... main point of article about factory being shut	43	35	121
6	Identify the human rights defined in international documents	1	... purpose of Universal Declaration of Human Rights	80	77	86
20		1	... what is in Convention on Rights of the Child	80	77	84
8	Identify rights in the economic sphere	1	... purpose of labour unions	46	64	98
35	Demonstrate awareness of tradeoffs	2	... economic objections to factory being shut	67	67	93

Notes:
1. Item type: 1= knowledge of content; 2 = skills in analysing civic-related information.
2. Source: *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries:* Appendix A, Figure A.1.
3. The item parameter is the point on the International Civic Knowledge Scale where students with that level of proficiency had a 65 per cent probability of getting the item right.

Table B5.4: Domain II A: National Identity

Item #	Domain Content Category	Item type[1]	Short titles for items	% correct (Aust)	% correct (internat)[2]	Item parameter[2,3]
32	Recognises sense of collective activity	2	... an opinion (not a fact) about flags	74	66	95
36	Recognise that every nation has events in its history of which it is not proud	2	... main message of cartoon about history textbooks	76	58	102

Notes:
1. Item type: 1= knowledge of content; 2 = skills in analysing civic-related information.
2. Source: Appendix A, Figure A.1.
3. The item parameter is the point on the International Civic Knowledge Scale where students with that level of proficiency had a 65 per cent probability of getting the item right.

Table B5.5: Domain II B: International relations

Item #	Domain Content Category	Item type[1]	Short titles for items	% correct (Aust)	% correct (internat)[2]	Item parameter[2,3]
21	Recognise international economic issues and organisations (other than intergovernmental) active in dealing with matters with economic implications	1	... who owns multinational businesses	52	47	110
31		2	... an opinion (not a fact) about the environment	64	53	106
16	Recognise major intergovernmental organisations	1	... major purpose of United Nations	79	85	77

Notes:
1. Item type: 1= knowledge of content; 2 = skills in analysing civic-related information.
2. Source: *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries:* Appendix A, Figure A.1.
3. The item parameter is the point on the International Civic Knowledge Scale where students with that level of proficiency had a 65 per cent probability of getting the item right.

Table B5.6: Domain III A: International Relations

Item #	Domain Content Category	Item type[1]	Short titles for items	% correct (Aust)	% correct (internat)[2]	Item parameter[2,3]
5	Recognise groups subject to discrimination	1	... an example of discrimination in employment	81	65	97
26		2	... an example of discrimination in pay equity	67	50	108
37		2	... a fact (not an opinion) about women and politics	79	72	89

Notes:
1. Item type: 1= knowledge of content; 2 = skills in analysing civic-related information.
2. Source: *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries:* Appendix A, Figure A.1.
3. The item parameter is the point on the International Civic Knowledge Scale where students with that level of proficiency had a 65 per cent probability of getting the item right.

APPENDIX C: ADDITIONAL TABLES REFERENCED IN CHAPTER 6

Table C6.1: Australian Students' Responses to Social Movement Citizenship Scale, by Gender

An adult who is a good citizen ...	Totally unimportant		Fairly unimportant		Fairly important		Very important	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
would participate in a peaceful protest against a law believed to be unjust	9	14	33	30	43	37	15	19
participates in activities to benefit people in the community	2	5	16	18	57	54	25	23
takes part in activities promoting human rights	5	8	24	26	46	43	25	23
takes part in activities to protect the environment	4	8	19	20	47	45	30	27

Note: The figures in each response category are percentages.

Table C6.2: Australian Students' Responses to Confidence in Participating at School Scale, by Gender

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Electing student representatives, to suggest changes to help solve school problems, makes schools better	4	11	11	12	55	50	30	27
Lots of positive changes happen in this school when students work together	2	6	9	15	57	55	32	24
Organising groups of students to state their opinions could help solve problems in this school	2	5	11	15	61	57	26	23
Students acting together in groups can have more influence on what happens in this school than students acting by themselves	2	5	8	11	50	50	40	34

Note: The figures in each response category are percentages.

Table C6.3: Australian Students' Responses to Society-related Government Responsibilities Scale, by Gender

What responsibilities should the government have?	Definitely should not be		Probably should not be		Probably should be		Definitely should be	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
To provide basic health care for everyone	3	7	5	6	25	25	67	62
To provide a decent standard of living for old people	2	3	5	8	33	35	60	54
To provide free basic education for all	3	4	9	11	26	26	62	59
To ensure equal political opportunities for men and women	3	6	4	9	20	24	73	61
To control pollution of the environment	6	7	17	14	32	31	45	48
To guarantee peace and order within the country	4	4	5	7	21	20	70	69
To promote honesty and moral behaviour among people in the country	5	7	13	13	32	32	50	48

Note: The figures in each response category are percentages.

Table C6.4: Australian Students' Responses to Positive Attitudes toward Immigrants Scale, by Gender

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Immigrants should have the opportunity to continue speaking their own language	7	17	14	19	51	45	28	19
Immigrants' children should have the same opportunities for education that other children in the country have	2	7	5	10	49	53	44	30
Immigrants who live in a country for several years should have the opportunity to vote in elections	2	9	8	15	58	52	32	24
Immigrants should have the opportunity to continue their own customs and lifestyle	5	11	13	17	52	48	30	24
Immigrants should have all the same rights that everyone else in a country has	3	9	10	15	48	46	39	30

Note: The figures in each response category are percentages.

Table C6.5: Australian Students' Responses to Support for Women's Political Rights Scale, by Gender

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Women should stand for a seat in parliament and take part in the government just as men do	2	7	3	5	36	51	59	37
Women should have the same rights as men in every way	2	5	4	10	21	38	73	47
Women should stay out of politics	79	50	17	35	2	8	2	7
When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women	74	35	19	41	4	16	3	8
Men and women should get equal pay when they are in the same jobs	1	5	3	7	18	40	78	48
Men are better qualified to be political leaders than women	71	33	22	42	4	16	3	9

Note: The figures in each response category are percentages.

Table C6.6: Australian Students' Open Climate for Classroom Discussion Scale, by Gender

	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Students feel free to disagree openly with their teachers about political and social issues during class	7	15	16	20	39	34	38	31
Students are encouraged to make up their own minds about issues	2	7	10	16	33	33	55	44
Teachers respect our opinions and encourage us to express them during class	7	14	15	19	37	35	41	32
Students feel free to express opinions in class even when their opinions are different from most of the other students	5	9	16	21	42	40	37	30
Teachers encourage us to discuss political or social issues about which people have different opinions	11	17	32	30	43	41	14	12
Teachers present several sides of an issue when explaining it in class	7	9	19	21	43	47	31	23

Note: The figures in each response category are percentages.