

**EMBARGO: 28 November 2023 at 10:00am CET**

## **IEA Releases Latest Results of the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study, ICCS 2022**

### ***Results reveal upward trends in ICCS stalled in 2022***

On 28 November, in an event hosted in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science in the Netherlands, results of the third cycle of IEA's International Civic and Citizenship Education study (ICCS 2022) will be released.

Targeted at students enrolled in the eighth grade, ICCS investigates the changing ways in which young people are prepared for their roles as citizens. This round of the study set out to address aspects related to global citizenship, sustainable development, migration, changes to traditional political systems, and the use of digital technologies for civic engagement, while also continuing to monitor changes in civic knowledge, attitudes, and engagement over time.

### ***The largest international, and only dedicated, study of civic and citizenship education***

Countries around the world face persisting and new challenges in educating young people for citizenship. Over the years, promoting young people's civic knowledge and dispositions toward active participation has become an increasingly important topic in education policy across many countries, as it fundamentally underpins the ability of citizens to engage productively in society. ICCS is the only international study dedicated to collecting and analyzing information on students' knowledge and understanding of concepts and issues related to civics and citizenship. Importantly, ICCS also studies young people's attitudes to, and engagement with, aspects related to civic and citizenship education.

ICCS also collects rich contextual data on different aspects that help teachers to teach and students to learn. These include the organization and content of civic and citizenship education in the curriculum, teacher qualifications and experiences, teaching and classroom practices, school environment and climate, and home and community support.

### **Commenting on the results, Dr. Dirk Hastedt, IEA Executive Director, said:**

"These ICCS results come at a time when young people are facing unprecedented challenges. We have been seeing crises all around the world, including health and financial crises, war, and political turmoil.

The 2022 results reveal many decreases in civic knowledge and no increases across countries when comparing to 2016 results. This marks a clear contrast to trend results of the previous cycle, where between 2009 and 2016 we instead saw increases and no decreases. These data were collected during the pandemic, and these findings could suggest the relative status of civic and citizenship education as a learning area that receives less attention and support than other learning areas in times of crisis.

One invaluable aspect of ICCS, and all IEA studies, is their provision of open-access databases for secondary analyses. Reliable statistics are what X-rays are for doctors: they help us to shape important decisions. The data available from ICCS can facilitate additional research on specific issues that can help in planning national reforms and can support the development of research on civic and citizenship at both the national and international level. All in all, ICCS can support countries with improving CCE and to monitor achievement in comparison to other countries and across time".

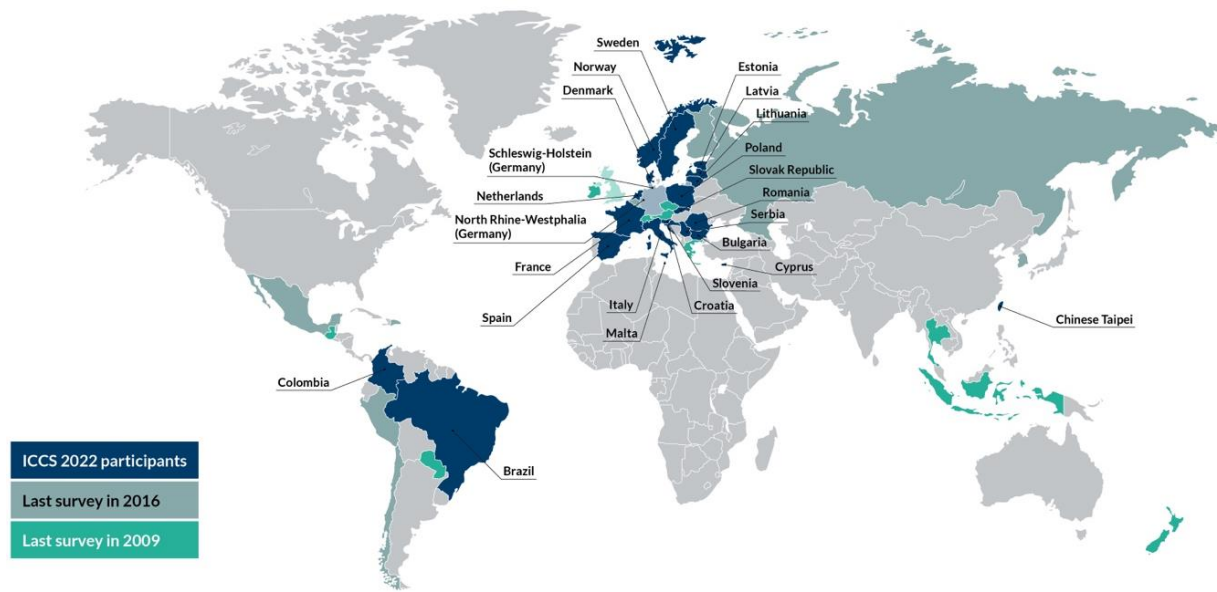
**Dr. Wolfram Schulz, ICCS 2022 International Study Director, added:**

“Looking at the overall results internationally, we observed considerable variations in civic knowledge within and across countries. The findings that young people’s civic knowledge decreased in many countries during times of educational disruptions, and global crises suggest that there is still considerable need for improvement in the ways of teaching content related to civic and citizenship education in many national contexts.

There has been an impressive history of IEA studies of civic and citizenship education and with each cycle ICCS aims to extend the regional and thematic scope to reflect emerging issues. ICCS 2022 included content related to new developments such as increased globalization and migration, the implications of growing social diversity, the roles of digital technologies in civic engagement and exchanging information, changing attitudes to traditional political systems, and the disruptions to schooling associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, for the first time, ICCS 2022 offered the option of a computer-based delivery, which was chosen by about two thirds of participating countries and included specifically designed test items that used the possibilities of a digital assessment to enhance measurement of students’ civic knowledge and understanding”.

**ICCS Participating Countries**



Participating countries					
Bulgaria	Croatia	France	Malta	Poland	Slovak Republic
Brazil	Cyprus	Italy	Netherlands	Romania	Slovenia
Chinese Taipei	Denmark	Latvia	North Rhine-Westphalia*	Schleswig-Holstein*	Spain
Colombia	Estonia	Lithuania	Norway	Serbia	Sweden

*\*German benchmarking participants*



## ICCS 2022 International Key Findings

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### **Civic knowledge did not increase across countries that participated in 2016 and 2022.**

- Between 2016 and 2022, there were decreases in civic knowledge in six countries while **no increases were recorded**. By comparison, between 2009 and 2016 increases were observed in many countries while no decreases were recorded.
- ICCS 2022 shows relatively more variation within than between countries, and results suggest that **there are persistent gaps across as well as within education systems**, which are also associated with background factors such as gender or socioeconomic status.

### **Female students demonstrated higher civic knowledge than male students.**

- Female students had higher average achievement in **18 countries**, while there were no differences between the averages of female and male students in two countries. There were no countries in which male students had higher average achievement.
- Across the three cycles of ICCS, the achievement of female students has been **consistently higher** than that of male students.

### **Students from homes with a higher socioeconomic status demonstrated higher average civic knowledge than students with a lower socioeconomic background.**

- Socio-economic status of students and the socioeconomic compositions of schools remain **important predictors of civic knowledge**.
- Comparisons with the results from the previous survey showed that this effect was of **similar strength as in 2016**.

### **Civic knowledge tended to be positively associated with a broad range of attitudes and engagement indicators.**

- Students with **higher levels of civic knowledge** tended to be more supportive of gender equality, equal rights for immigrants and all ethnic groups in society, and they were more supportive of environmental protection and more likely to expect to vote in elections.
- However, more knowledgeable students were less likely to consider conventional **active political participation** as adults, such as joining a political party or standing as a candidate in a local election.

### **Civic Engagement**

- On average, around **one third of students** reported being quite or very interested in political and social issues.
- This proportion was much higher among those students who also reported that their **parents or guardians were more interested** in civic issues.
- The most common **source of information about political or social issues** was watching television, followed by accessing internet sources, and then by reading a newspaper in print or online formats.
- Even though television and newspapers have declined as sources of information over the 13 years since the first ICCS survey, they remain relevant to students as sources of information. Interestingly, internationally, there were **no increases in students' use of the internet** as a weekly source of information about social and political issues since the last cycle.
- While only relatively few students expected future participation in illegal protest activities or conventional political activities, **most young people** expected to vote as adults and become involved in environmental protection activities.



## Civic Attitudes

- Most young people viewed globally oriented citizenship behavior as important and **endorsed environmental protection** activities. Concerns about climate change as a global threat increased since 2016, while we observed considerable variation in the extent of these concerns across countries.
- ICCS 2022 revealed considerable variation in students' views of the political system across countries. While most young people tended to view democracy as the best form of government (on average around **three quarters of students internationally**), many students also expressed critical views of how the democratic system works.
- On average across countries, a little over **one half of students** agreed that their elected representatives represent the interests of people in their country well.
- ICCS 2022 showed considerable differences across countries in the level of students' agreement with the imposition of restrictions in a national emergency such as the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Further interesting findings in the context of the recent global COVID-19 pandemic were that nearly **three quarters of the students** agreed that “political decisions should more often be based on advice from scientific experts”, and that, compared to 2016, there were fewer students who viewed infectious diseases as a threat to the world's future.

## National, school, and classroom contexts

- ICCS 2022 results indicate that **teachers and school principals** placed high emphasis on the importance of civic learning about the environment and critical thinking but put less emphasis on promoting knowledge of “classic” civic-related topics, like voting/elections and institutions/systems.
- Student perceptions of an **open classroom climate** for discussions are positively associated with civic knowledge.
- Student involvement in **civic-related activities at school** are positively associated with expected engagement.

ICCS 2022 studied civic and citizenship education in 22 countries and 2 states in a twenty-third country. Overall, about 82,000 lower-secondary school students from about 3,400 schools in those countries participated along with about 40,000 teachers in those schools.

[Link to the full ICCS 2022 International Report](#)

[Link to ICCS 2022 infographics](#)

[Link to ICCS 2022 Assessment Framework](#)

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