

# LEARNING ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP THROUGH VOLUNTEERING IN COMPULSORY BASIC EDUCATION IN SLOVENIA

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*Today, the concept of citizenship is increasingly used to refer to volunteering. The article shows that the interconnection between volunteering and citizenship arises from the idea of active citizenship, which is becoming prevalent in formal education of the EU member states. While volunteering is encouraged in citizenship education programmes in the EU, the article presents an overview of involvement of volunteering themes in compulsory basic education in Slovenia and the results of the ICCS 2009 research about the attitudes of Slovenian students and teachers about the volunteering.*

**Keywords:** *volunteering, citizenship, education, Slovenia.*

*Koncept državljanstva se danes vedno pogosteje uporablja v povezavi s prostovoljstvom. Članek prikazuje, da povezava med državljanstvom in prostovoljstvom izhaja iz ideje aktivnega državljanstva, ki postaja prevladujoča v formalnem izobraževanju držav članic EU. Ker programi državljanske vzgoje v EU spodbujajo prostovoljstvo, članek predstavlja pregled vključenosti tematik prostovoljstva v obvezno osnovnošolsko izobraževanje v Sloveniji ter rezultate raziskave ICCS 2009 o odnosu slovenskih učencev in učiteljev do prostovoljstva.*

**Ključne besede:** *prostovoljstvo, državljanstvo, izobraževanje, Slovenija.*

## INTRODUCTION

The current debate on citizenship and citizenship education in the European context is defined by the idea of active citizenship. There are two tendencies in this development that are significantly challenging the traditional understanding of citizenship and citizenship education. The first is the change of focus from citizenship understood as a passive legal status to more of a process, participatory and society-oriented citizenship, which places an emphasis on citizens' responsibilities rather than rights. The second is the change of focus from political citizenship understood as a participation in public or political sphere to the citizen engaging in volunteering activities in civil society and community. This extension of citizenship practices from political participation to participation in the whole society, as well as the reorientation of citizenship discourse from human rights to citizens who are expected to be active in taking individual responsibility for charitable activities or functioning of the society, have a deep impact on the further development of the concept of European citizenship and the practices of citizenship education in the EU member states.

Within the EU official policy, the idea of active citizenship first emerged in the context of the Lisbon European Council in 2000 where the strategic goal was set for the EU to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion (Hoskins 2009). In the following years, much effort has been invested in promoting the learning for active citizenship, thus making the idea of active citizenship a central pillar in the European Union's approach to the development of citizenship (Biesta 2009). The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union have highlighted the importance of strengthening active citizenship through education in the 'Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning' in 2006. Here, selected key competences that should be given priority in all European Member States include the knowledge of social and political concepts and structures and a commitment to active and democratic participation in local and wider community (Milana 2008). In the last years, the idea of active citizenship has found great political support among decision makers in the EU. Consequently, the year 2013 has been designated as the European year of Citizens, and, what is even more important for our discussion, the year 2011 as the European Year of Voluntary Activities promoting Active Citizenship. The main argument supporting this decision at the EU level has been that volunteering is one of the key dimensions of active citizenship and democracy, and an expression of civic participation.

We should remember, however, the emphasis by Chantal Mouffe (1992: 225) that "the way we define citizenship is intimately linked to the kind of society and political community we want". There are several reasons why the key idea of active citizenship in the EU is that of participation, first and foremost, of political participation and participation in civil society, community and associational life (Biesta 2009; Hoskins et al. 2006; Milana 2008). Let us remember that the EU is faced with low political participation, a low level of interest in formal politics and the lively debate on democratic deficit perceived both as a lack of democracy at the EU level and as a cause of the indifference and nonparticipation of the European citizens in the European decision-making process. The EU has made great efforts in facing these problems and the idea of active citizenship is seen as a part of the solution.

The interconnection between citizenship and volunteering is, of course, not only an invention of the EU policy. The education for active citizenship, that placed emphasis on community volunteering, had been promoted by the UK Conservative government already in the early 1990s (McCowan 2009: 8). Also in the USA, where community-based learning has been popular already in the 1960s (Jerome 2012: 60), today, over 12 million secondary students and 6 million university students are engaged in some sort of citizenship learning through volunteering and community involvement (McCowan 2009: 18). However, the traditions of understanding and learning citizenship differ in various countries, although there is a common trend, particularly encouraged by the globalisation processes, toward greater similarity in educational systems. In other words, there is a global tendency for citizenship education to become more focused on various forms of participation in society and less on political participation since there is an assumption that volunteering and similar community actions

encourage people to become politically active. The question is to know what practical implications this new conception might have for the citizenship activities and citizenship education.

The purpose of this article is to show that in the case of Slovenia, the formal citizenship education is (still) primarily focused on political participation and political literacy rather than engagement in civil society and community volunteering. In the first part of the article, we present a theoretical interconnection between the two, traditionally contradictory concepts of citizenship and volunteering. In the second part, we investigate the involvement of volunteering themes in citizenship education in Slovenia, especially in compulsory basic education where citizenship education is taught as a separate subject. In the analysis, we focus particularly on three syllabuses for social sciences subjects. The article continues with an analysis of the four questions on volunteering from the international ICCS 2009 research on citizenship education, answered by pupils and teachers in Slovenia.

### VOLUNTEERING AS A NEW DIMENSION OF CITIZENSHIP

The idea of active citizenship promoted by the EU involves both formal political participation such as the exercise of universal suffrage and informal political practices such as the participation in social movements and protests. In addition, it also includes the engagement in the activities traditionally linked to the non-political private sphere. What is new in the idea of active citizenship is the emphasis on volunteering and other activities that have been associated to the private realm, such as social care or family involvement. According to European Commission Institute for the Protection and Security of the Citizen, active citizenship is mainly located at the individual level and it ranges from cultural to environmental activities and includes new and less conventional forms of citizenship, such as responsible consumptions, as well as more traditional forms of voting and membership in parties and non-governmental organisations (Hoskins et al. 2006: 11). It follows from this that active citizenship is explicitly not restricted to the political dimensions (Biesta 2009: 148) or to the right to participate in processes of popular self-governance – the oldest and perhaps the most familiar meaning of citizenship (Smith 2002: 103).

The idea of active citizenship brings a significant shift from the traditional view of citizenship that has been conceptually associated with the public sphere and political governance from the famous Aristotle's formulation 'man is a political animal' onwards. The same logic about the division of the public and private sphere, which sees the citizen first and foremost as an active participant in the public affairs of the *polis* (Smith 2002), gives rise to the modern idea of citizenship as a reciprocal contract between the state and the citizen regarded as a member of a political community who enjoys the rights and assumes the responsibilities of this membership in both Rousseau's and Hobbes's versions. Also in the theoretical line of the understanding of citizenship as an agency that goes back to Rousseau and Arendt, the preferred setting for the active citizenship is the political community. In particular Hannah Arendt was

concerned to demonstrate that the practice of citizenship is closely linked to the existence of a public sphere where members of civil society can exist as citizens and act collectively to resolve democratically the issues concerning their life in the political community (d'Entrèves 1994). Her important remark is that our public interests as citizens are quite distinct from our private interests as individuals (d'Entrèves 1994: 149). In contrast with this, the European active citizen participates at many various levels of society without any necessary reference to a polity or political community.

Of course, one could say that citizenship has always been a contested concept in Koselleck's (2004) meaning of the word. There have always been at least three dominant traditions in the modern history of citizenship with views differing on whether citizenship refers to a purely legal relation between the individual and the political community, on both individual and group rights or an active participation in civil society as a precondition for the cohesion and the proper functioning of democracy. Although these three understandings of citizenship that correspond to the liberal, republican and communitarian traditions differ (Isin and Turner 2002; McCowan 2009), they share the assumption that citizenship entails membership of a political community and the participation in political life, and therefore can not be conceptualised and practiced without the reference to a political.

However, on the other hand, there is no doubt that especially in the second half of the twentieth century, all modern conceptions of citizenship have been contested by various struggles based primarily upon identity and difference (whether sexual, racial, ethnic, migrant, ecological or cosmopolitan) that have found new ways of articulating their claims as claims to citizenship understood not simply as a legal status but as political and social recognition and economic redistribution (Isin and Turner 2002: 2). Moreover, it has become increasingly customary to use the term citizen as referring to those who belong to almost any human association, whether political or not. Accordingly, it can be said to be a citizen of my neighbourhood, my sport club, or my university as well as my broader political community (Smith 2002: 105). This sort of non-political citizenship is historical rooted in Augustine's fifth-century masterpiece, *City of God*, premised on the idea that the saved are 'citizens of the heavenly City', rather than simply citizens of earthly cities or indeed of, 'the world community' (Smith 2002: 105–106). As a result of, especially, this sort of partly metaphorical deployment of the term citizenship combined with the republican conception of participatory citizenship; today the term citizenship is often used for those who contribute to the well-being of their local community, church, lunch club, or any other human association, and do so frequently, valuably and at some cost to themselves (Smith 2002: 106). This line of thinking about citizenship, within which we can find the genealogy of the idea of active citizenship, is the basis for Putnam's (2000: 132) famous thesis that volunteering is an integral part of the good citizenship and political involvement, not an alternative to it.

## LEARNING CITIZENSHIP THROUGH VOLUNTEERING

To most people, a volunteer is someone who contributes time to helping others with no expectation of pay or other material benefit to herself (Wilson and Musick 2000: 141). Today, volunteering is, for a number of reasons, but particularly on the basis of this positive and appealing message, widely recognised and supported by the academic and the politicians, both the left and the right, as an efficient strategy for fostering citizenship engagement. We speak of efforts to get citizens to join the voluntary organizations, to band together with acquaintances and neighbours for whatever purpose they might choose (Theiss-Morse and Hibbing 2005: 228). As we have already seen, to be *active*, the “citizens would not need to do anything particularly distasteful in the process, such as becoming involved in politics” (Theiss-Morse and Hibbing 2005: 228). Although, there is still the question why this sort of activities should be conceived as citizenship.

In the recent literature there are three prevalent claims about the interconnection between volunteering and citizenship. Namely, volunteering is said to develop civic values, enhance political participation, and improve democracy (Theiss-Morse and Hibbing 2005: 230). It is argued that people are more likely to vote, to join political parties, and to participate in the political processes if they have been involved in volunteering (Rochester et al. 2010: 164). Several studies also indicate that young people, while having an antipathy to politicians and formal politics, do see volunteering as a meaningful political activity (Annette 2000: 80). But, on the other side, the studies have demonstrated that volunteering and helping others is a good way to gain mostly the individual benefits such as a personal development, an increase in confidence, greater life satisfaction and self-fulfilment (Janoski et al. 1998; Rochester et al. 2010; Wilson and Musick 2000). While volunteering can further social cohesion, solidarity, social responsibility and community involvement, it does not encourage young people towards political participation. Learning citizenship through volunteering is limited to social concerns, moral engagement and the idea that one should care about other human beings, the environment etc. In other words, volunteering is a way of learning and developing personally responsible citizens, who help the community and others in need, and not participatory citizens.

Thus, at the centre of the idea of learning citizenship through volunteering stands a dynamic and committed individual who is self-reliant and takes responsibility for his or her own actions by following the strategy of blaming individuals rather than paying attention to the broader structures (Biesta 2011: 9–10). Consequently, the explanation of society’s problems is couched in individualistic, psychological and moralistic terms – as a result of a lack of individual responsibility, rather than an outcome of more structural causes (Biesta 2011: 10). The problem here is that volunteering usually starts from private and individual motivations, altruistic and egoistic alike. Political participation, in contrast, is actually motivated by the public interest and the idea of the common good (Biesta 2009: 150).

Therefore, there are two interrelated difficulties arising from the equation of citizenship and voluntary activities. The first is related to the degree to which these private worries or

individual interests can be translated into collective or political issues. An additional problem here is that volunteering is not universalistic in the sense of seeking to incorporate the whole population. Rather, the profile of the typical volunteer is well known: they are likely to be above average in education and income, there is a good chance that they will be a parent and active in the church (Janoski et al. 1998: 496). The second difficulty with the individualistic tendency in the idea of active citizenship is that citizenship actions, after all, does not simply depend on what individuals decide to do or not to do, as is the case in volunteering actions (Biesta 2009: 150–151).

Before we draw the practical consequences of these theoretical difficulties of equation of citizenship and volunteering activities for citizenship education, we will focus on the situation in Slovenian education system.

### VOLUNTEERING THEMES IN COMPULSORY BASIC EDUCATION IN SLOVENIA

In Slovenia, compulsory basic education is organised in a single-structure, attended by pupils aged six to fifteen years. The nine-year basic education is divided into 3 three-year cycles – the first six years as primary education and the final 3 years as lower secondary education. Elementary schools provide a compulsory and extended curriculum. The compulsory curriculum must be provided by schools and studied by all pupils. Schools must provide also the optional or extended curriculum, but pupils are free to decide whether they will participate.

The analysis of three social science syllabuses<sup>1</sup> for elementary and lower secondary schools shows that volunteering and community learning are not essential parts of the curriculum. But each school can decide to participate in volunteering – on a project base and cooperation with non-governmental organisations in this field.

The first analysed syllabus for compulsory subject *Society* for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders is focused on learning about the relationship between individuals, society and the natural environment. In the prescribed objectives for 5<sup>th</sup> grade, we can indicate the thematic of volunteering. Volunteering is one of the basic concepts that should be theoretically thought of with the aim of learning different types of cooperation and mutual assistance. In this regard, the intended contents to be learned are: social issues, voluntary work, caring for the elderly and the sick, the role / influence of the media and social problems (unemployment, poverty, marginalized groups, etc.).

The second analysed syllabus for the compulsory subject *Patriotic and Citizenship Culture and Ethics*<sup>2</sup> is thought of in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The general objectives of teaching in this

<sup>1</sup> All syllabuses are retrieved from: [http://www.mizs.gov.si/si/delovna\\_podrocja/direktorat\\_za\\_pedsolsko\\_vzgojo\\_in\\_osnovno\\_solstvo/osnovno\\_solstvo/ucni\\_nacrti/posodobljeni\\_ucni\\_nacrti\\_za\\_obvezne\\_predmete/](http://www.mizs.gov.si/si/delovna_podrocja/direktorat_za_pedsolsko_vzgojo_in_osnovno_solstvo/osnovno_solstvo/ucni_nacrti/posodobljeni_ucni_nacrti_za_obvezne_predmete/)

<sup>2</sup> The name changed with 2013/2014 school year. More about the relationship between patriotic and

subject are developing political literacy and the development of critical thinking and certain attitudes and values as well as the active involvement of students in social life. Volunteering as one of the basic concepts that should be examined is not introduced or required, but additionally we could draw some links with other close concepts – especially the concept of solidarity (which is introduced in relation to human rights and natural catastrophes). Therefore, we could assume that volunteering is likely to be present in the school work of the subject, although not mentioned in the syllabus.

The third analysed syllabus *Citizenship Culture* is an elective subject in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. It relates to the compulsory subject Patriotic and Citizenship Culture and Ethics and represents a deepening and expansion of skills and knowledge in this subject. In the syllabus the theme of volunteering is not represented.

Qualitative analysis shows that the formal citizenship education is (still) primarily focused on political participation and political literacy rather than engaging in civil society and community volunteering, which is especially true for our core compulsory and elective subjects in the field of citizenship education. The opposite is true for the subject Society, but it is not surprising regarding the developmental-psychological attributes of the age of those pupils taking it.

Much more attention to volunteering is paid in the Slovenian general upper secondary education (called *gimnazija*). Voluntary social work is represented in Slovenian compulsory curriculum for general upper secondary schools as an elective theme – a free choice for students, but for schools it is obligatory to offer it. The overall objective is to help people in difficult situations. Objectives can be identified at several levels: the student (volunteer), the recipient, the school and the wider society. Voluntary social work can be carried out with different people of all ages who are experiencing a variety of human distress or have certain basic needs: support for learning, socialising and friendship, various social games, sports and other recreational activities, workshops, various hand-crafts and artistic creativity, help therapies, interviews, help with small chores and light work, hiking (including wheelchairs), tea parties, music and singing and participation in events. The voluntary social work can be done individually or collectively, to the extent of at least 15 hours. In the gymnasium curriculum, all elective themes (not just Voluntary social work) represent approximately 6 % of the total curriculum.<sup>3</sup>

The exact number of youth involved in volunteering activities as a part of post-compulsory education is not known or systematically measured. It is known, however, that the voluntary work organised by schools is done exclusively in the areas of social work, intergenerational cooperation and caring for others. We can say that this kind of volunteering has very little to do with citizenship. Although only knowledge of volunteering is included in compulsory basic education, the results from International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS 2009)

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citizenship education in Slovene school system interested can be found in article Državlanska in domovinska vzgoja danes (Patriotic and Citizenship Education Today) (Klemenčič 2012).

<sup>3</sup> [http://portal.mss.edus.si/msswww/programi2010/programi/gimnazija/obvezne\\_izbirne\\_vsebine.htm#1.3](http://portal.mss.edus.si/msswww/programi2010/programi/gimnazija/obvezne_izbirne_vsebine.htm#1.3)

presented below show that pupils in Slovenia at the end of the compulsory education are also practically involved in volunteering and that means that there is a great possibility that they will be involved in volunteering activities offered by upper secondary schools.

## ATTITUDES OF PUPILS AND TEACHERS ON VOLUNTEERING

There were four questions about volunteering in the last international IEA ICCS <sup>4</sup> in 2009. The study reported on pupils' achievements and conceptual understanding in a cognitive test, as well as pupils' dispositions and attitudes relating to civics and citizenship. Teacher and school questionnaires gathered information about the contexts in which pupils learn about civics and citizenship, including teaching and classroom management practices, and school governance and climate. The main data collection was conducted in 2008–2009. ICCS 2009 assessed pupils enrolled in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade (provided that the mean age at the time of testing was at least 13.5 years).

ICCS assessment framework consisted of 4 content domains, made up of a set of sub-domains. The domain of civic participation consisted of 3 sub-domains, one of them was the sub-domain community participation (volunteering, participating in organizations, keeping informed) (Schulz et al. 2010: 27). Topics less frequently nominated as a major emphasis across national curricula were legal systems and courts (14 countries), communications studies (13 countries), the economy and economics (12 countries), regional institutions and organizations (11 countries), and resolving conflict (11 countries). Only six countries nominated participation in voluntary groups as a major emphasis (Schulz et al. 2010: 53). Those countries were Chile, England, Estonia, Italy, Luxembourg and Malta.

Our analysis is focused on data for Slovenia, regarding the themes that exposed volunteering. The analysis used information from the ICCS Student Questionnaire (ISG), and Teacher Questionnaire (ITG) data files. The analyses included only Grade 8 student data<sup>5</sup> and used IDB Analyzer.<sup>6</sup> The Slovenian sample in ICCS 2009 was as follows: 163 schools participated in student survey (and 164 in teacher survey), 3070 students and 2755 teachers were assessed (Kerr et al. 2010: 150–151).

## STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

In the questionnaire, which was used to obtain the perceptions about civic and citizenship education, pupils were asked those three questions on volunteering:

<sup>4</sup> IEA is the world leading institution in conducting international study in the area of civic and citizenship education. It is also important that number of participating educational systems in testing civic and citizenship student outcomes is growing. From eight in the first (1971) study, twenty-eight in the second (1999) data collection to thirty-eight in the third (2009) study.

<sup>5</sup> The student data cannot be analyzed together with the teacher one by design. For more details see Brese et al. 2011.

<sup>6</sup> <http://rms.iea-dpc.org/>



*Have you ever been involved in a voluntary group doing something to help community?*

**Table 1: Pupils involvement in a voluntary group**

Slovenia: IS2P14D	N	Pct (se)
YES, within the last 12 months	267	8,73 (0,61)
YES, more than a year ago	455	15,28 (0,76)
NO, I have never done this	2.299	75,99 (1,01)

Almost 76% of pupils answered that they were never involved in a voluntary group, which is significantly below international average (ICCS average is 34% (0,2) of pupils reported that they have been involved in volunteering).

*At school have you ever done voluntary participation in school-based music or drama activities outside of regular lessons?*

**Table 2: Pupils involvement in a school voluntary activity**

Slovenia: IS2G15A	N	Pct (se)
YES, within the last 12 months	1.045	33,94 (1,30)
YES, more than a year ago	936	30,73 (1,16)
NO, I have never done this	1.055	35,33 (1,26)

In this question on participation in school voluntary activities, the distribution between different answers is more equally distributed. Regardless, more than 35% of pupils reported that they were never involved in a school voluntary activity. Others were involved either within the last 12 months or more than a year ago. Across participated countries, on average 61% (0,2) of pupils participated in school voluntary activities, which means that Slovenian pupils participated in school voluntary activities significantly above the international average.

*Do you expect that you will volunteer time to help people in the local community?*

**Table 3: Future volunteering to help people in the local community**

Slovenia: IS2P33A	N	Pct (se)
I will certainly do this	631	20,80 (0,99)
I will probably do this	1.559	51,61 (1,07)
I will probably not do this	689	22,83 (1,02)
I will certainly not do this	144	4,75 (0,45)

The proportion of pupils who expect volunteering to help people in the local community is more than 70%, which is significantly above ICCS international average (for 5%). On the contrary, still a large proportion of pupils who do not expect to participate in volunteering was indicated.

In Bulgaria, Colombia, Cyprus, the Dominican Republic, Greece, Guatemala, Indonesia, Paraguay, the Russian Federation, and Thailand, the percentages were more than 10 percentage points above the international average. In Austria, Belgium (Flemish), the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland, the rates were more than 10 percentage points below the international average. These differences may be linked to differences in sociocultural contexts, differences in the diffusion of volunteer activities, and the presence of infrastructures and public activities designed to support disadvantaged

people. We note, with interest, that the lowest percentages were found mainly in European countries with comparatively high socioeconomic levels and, in some cases, a widespread public welfare system. In almost all of the ICCS countries, females were statistically significantly more likely than males to say they anticipated volunteering their time to help others (Schulz et al. 2010: 156). The gender differences for Slovenia also showed statistically gender differences ( $p < .05$ ); difference between girls and boys was 7 %).

### TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

With the ICCS 2009 questionnaire also teachers were asked to give their perceptions on civic and citizenship education in their schools, and provide information about their school organization and school culture, their teaching assignments etc. There was only one question on volunteering.

*How confident do you feel about teaching the topic of volunteering?*

**Table 4: Confidence in teaching of volunteering**

Slovenia: IT2G28M	N	Pct (se)
Very confident	127	21,13 (2,12)
Quite confident	338	51,58 (2,63)
Not very confident	153	25,49 (1,78)
Not confident	10	1,80 (0,60)

Most of the teachers reported that they feel very or quite confident when the teaching topic is volunteering. In comparisons to international ICCS average where teachers feel very or quite confident in teaching volunteering in 69% (0,8), our teachers feels even more confident (app. 73%), but the difference is not statistically significant. Seven countries recorded percentages higher than 80% for volunteering. Those countries were Chinese Taipei, Cyprus, the Dominican Republic, Ireland, Malta, Paraguay, and Poland.

## CONCLUSION

Our findings revealed that volunteering is not systematically assured in compulsory education in Slovenia, the schools do not require their pupils to volunteer in their community, but paradoxically pupils are more involved especially in a school volunteering activity than their peers around from ICCS participating countries. Surprisingly the analysis showed significantly higher future volunteering to help people in at the local community in Slovenia. On the contrary, the past volunteering activities in general (not just offered by schools) were below international average.

Simultaneously, the teachers in Slovenia feel very confident when teaching volunteering. Despite the fact that citizenship education in Slovenia is not focused on volunteering. In teaching volunteering, we should take into the consideration that there is a great difference in the approach when teaching political participation and volunteering. Any talk of political

engagement, either of voting or explaining democracy to pupils could always involve some sort of controversy. From this point of view, for most teachers volunteering is a friendly and morally pure alternative to messy, conflict and inefficient politics (Theiss-Morse and Hibbing 2005: 236–7). It is well known that, particularly from this reason, the strong emphasis on volunteering and civic participation could actually make people less likely to become politically involved (Theiss-Morse and Hibbing 2005: 236–7). Similarly, the data from the educational systems with well-established interconnection between volunteering and citizenship education shows that when schools offer the possibility of choice, teachers very often focus on volunteering rather than political action and encouragement of more political forms of participation (McCowan 2009: 26). Hence, in school practice, it is very difficult to combine these two approaches without giving preference to one over the other – in most cases to the volunteering over the political participation. The observation from USA and Australia, where community volunteering was strongly encouraged in schools reveals that there was little reluctance to deal with controversial issues in the classroom (McCowan 2009: 30).

Furthermore, the findings of researches on both, teachers and youngsters in USA regarding the meaning of the term ‘good citizen’ suggest that the long-term focus on volunteering has an impact on the understanding of the concept of citizenship. More than 58% of elementary teachers in the USA who were asked to answer the question ‘What is a good citizen?’ mentioned some aspect of community involvement as in volunteering and helping others. Only 31.7% of them thought that political participation and voting are an essential component of good citizenship (O’Brien and Smith 2011). The same question was asked to secondary education students. More than 68% of students answered that helping others, especially in the community is the most important aspect of being a good citizen. Most students mentioned that they acted as a good citizen by participating in activities such as picking up trash, recycling, helping the elderly, volunteering, donating money, assisting in church and working in the community doing good things for people (Chiodo and Martin 2005).

So far, we can draw two conclusions from these difficulties from equation of volunteering and citizenship. The first is that an important distinction needs to be made between citizenship participation in forms of political activity and community volunteering. The activities in the community can be divided into those that involve voluntary work and those that involve political participation or efforts to influence government and policy (McCowan 2009: 27). While volunteering can sometimes have political motivations or consequences, often it is aimed at bringing localised change for the good, while leaving the underlying structures of society intact (McCowan 2009: 26). Thus, participation in voluntary organisation cannot be a substitute for political participation. In other words, to be active as a volunteer but to not address the political issues of power, equality and structures has very little to do with the participatory citizenship.

The second conclusion is that volunteering will not in some automatic way become an inspiration for a political participation. Each voluntary work or active participation of individuals in society could not be understood as a citizenship activity. For example, “volunteering in

a soup kitchen will help hungry individuals in a town but will do nothing to address broader problems of homelessness and poverty” (Theiss-Morse and Hibbing 2005: 237–8). Therefore, doing something that is good in itself is not necessarily a citizenship act. While volunteering is undoubtedly a commendable activity through which much can be gained – both for those volunteering and those receiving support – it is not strictly speaking part of citizenship, which always involves entitlements that are not dependent on the inconsistencies and unreliability of charity (McCowan 2009: 198). Or, as Crick (2007: 247), one of the leading figures of active citizenship and citizenship education in the UK claims: “All citizenship must involve at some stage volunteering, but not all volunteering involves citizenship”.

From this point of view, it is important for the future development of both, the concept of European citizenship and citizenship education in the EU and Slovenia, not to reduce the debate on citizenship into a debate on volunteering. The contradictions of the equation of volunteering and citizenship addressed in this article show that learning and teaching citizenship through volunteering could be a way of avoiding ‘more complicated’ issues of political participation and other political issues related to structural causes of poverty, hunger, homelessness, discrimination, inequality, social exclusion etc. It is true that all these issues can be addressed also through volunteering but what is important here is that the pedagogical approach is totally different. In short, there are no shortcuts to increase political participation of European citizens in democratic processes at the national and EU levels. Thus, we agree with Theiss-Morse and Hibbing (2005) that citizenship participation cannot be increased with volunteering. Rather, the solution lies in letting people know that becoming active in their favourite clubs does not fulfil their citizenship obligations since the people are not politically engaged because politics is fun and easy, but because it is dreary and difficult (Theiss-Morse and Hibbing 2005: 245).

To sum up, the article shows that the equation between voluntary and citizenship activities as defined by the idea of European active citizenship, brings a significant transformation of the concept of citizenship traditionally linked to political engagement. The article concludes with the thesis that volunteering, understood as the active participation of individuals in society can not be a substitute for political citizenship and political participation since getting people involved in volunteering will not lead to their increased political participation.

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## UČENJE O AKTIVNEM DRŽAVLJANSTVU S POMOČJO PROSTOVOLJSTVA V SLOVENSKEM OBVEZNEM OSNOVNOŠOLSKEM IZOBRAŽEVANJU

Sodobna razprava o državljanstvu in državljanski vzgoji je v evropskem kontekstu opredeljena z idejo aktivnega državljanstva. Gre za tendenco, da državljanska vzgoja postane bolj osredotočena na različne oblike participacije v družbi in manj na politično participacijo, pri čemer izhajajo iz predpostavke, da prostovoljske in podobne aktivnosti v skupnosti spodbujajo politično aktivnost pri ljudeh. Sodobna literatura prostovoljstvo povezuje z razvijanjem državljanskih vrednot, krepi politične participacije, večanjem vključenosti v demokratične procese in celo izboljšanjem demokracije. Po drugi strani pa so študije pokazale, da sta prostovoljstvo in pomoč drugim dober način za rast posameznikovih vrednot, kot so osebni razvoj, povečanje samozavesti, večje zadovoljstvo z življenjem in samoizpolnitev. Članek v prvem delu predstavlja teoretsko povezavo med dvema, tradicionalno nasprotujočima si konceptoma državljanstva in prostovoljstva. V tem delu prikaže, da lahko prostovoljstvo krepi družbeno kohezijo, solidarnost, družbeno odgovornost in vključenost v skupnostne teme, a da ne spodbuja mladih k politični participaciji. Učenje državljanstva ob prostovoljskih dejavnostih je omejeno na socialno skrb, moralno angažiranost in pojmovanje, da je treba skrbeti za druge ljudi, okolje itd. Z drugimi besedami, prostovoljstvo je način učenja in razvoja osebno odgovornih državljanov, ki pomagajo skupnosti in pomoči potrebnim, ne pa tudi participativnih državljanov.

V drugem delu prispevek obravnava državljansko vzgojo v Sloveniji, pri čemer pokaže, da je formalna državljanska vzgoja (še vedno) bolj osredotočena na politično participacijo in politično pismenost kot na angažiranost v civilni družbi in prostovoljstvo v skupnosti. Pri tem smo uporabili kvalitativno analizo učnih načrtov o vključenosti tematik o prostovoljstvu v obvezno osnovnošolsko izobraževanje, kjer se državljanska vzgoja poučuje kot ločeni predmet. Članek

se nadaljuje s kvantitativno analizo štirih vprašanj o prostovoljstvu, na katera so odgovarjali učenci in učitelji iz Slovenije v okviru Mednarodne raziskave državljskega izobraževanja in vzgoje (ICCS 2009). Naše ugotovitve so pokazale, da v Sloveniji prostovoljstvo ni sistematično vključeno v obvezno izobraževanje. Šole od učencev ne zahtevajo prostovoljskih aktivnosti v njihovi lokalni skupnosti, učenci pa so – paradoksalno – bolj vključeni v šolske prostovoljske aktivnosti kot njihovi vrstniki v drugih državah, ki sodelujejo v raziskavi ICCS. Analiza je presenetljivo pokazala znatno višjo pripravljenost učencev za prostovoljstvo in pomoč ljudem v lokalni skupnosti v prihodnosti. V nasprotju s tem so bile pretekle prostovoljske aktivnosti na splošno (ne le tiste, ki jih ponujajo šole) pod mednarodnim povprečjem, hkrati pa se učitelji v Sloveniji počutijo zelo samozavestne pri poučevanju prostovoljstva.

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