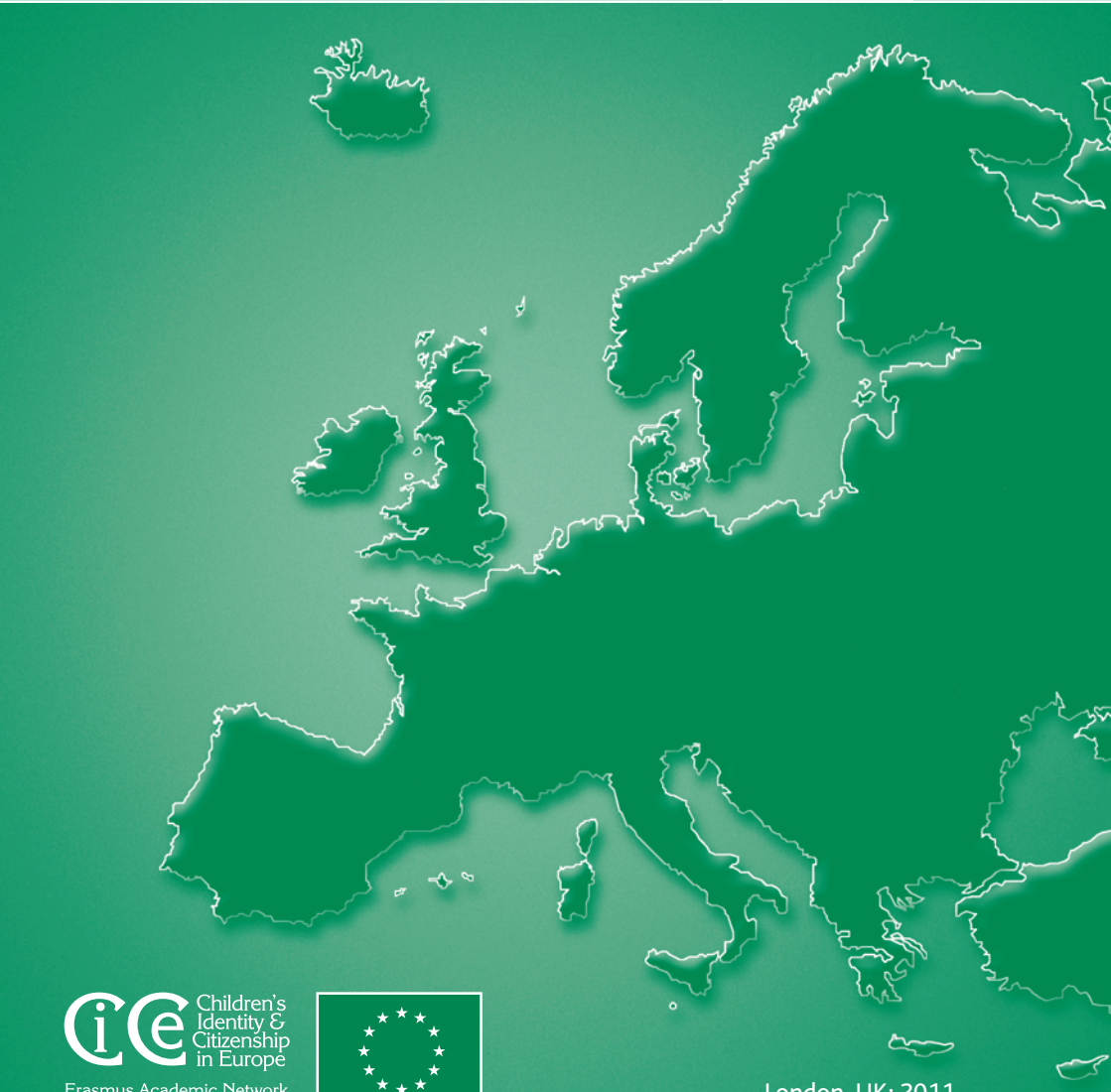
Active Citizenship and Contexts of Special Education

Anastasia Alevriadou and Lena Lang

CiCe Guidelines

12



Children's Identity & Citizenship in Europe
Erasmus Academic Network

London, UK: 2011

This Guide has been written and prepared by a CiCe Network Working Group
Anastasia Alevriadou, University of Western Macedonia, Greece
Lena Lang, Malmö University, Sweden

Series editor (2008-11): **Peter Cunningham**, Coordinator, CiCe Erasmus Academic Network

Education and Culture DG
Lifelong Learning Programme

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained herein.

ISBN: 978-1-907675-03-4

CiCe Guidelines: ISSN: 1741-6353

September 2011

CiCe Central Coordination Unit
Institute for Policy Studies in Education
London Metropolitan University
166 – 220 Holloway Road
London N7 8DB
UK

This publication is also available in electronic format at http://cice.londonmet.ac.uk

Active Citizenship and Contexts of Special Education

Education for the Inclusion of all Students

Anastasia Alevriadou
Lena Lang

Contents

Introduction

The overall aim of this booklet is to highlight how active citizenship could be related to a special educational context. As a part of the project "Special Educational Needs & Citizenship – Education for the Inclusion of all Students", different steps have been taken in order to identify and create an idea of how policy and practice variations relate to demand for developing inclusion of all students.

Although all children and young people are said to have a right to education, obstacles and limitations often appear. Barton (2003) draws attention to the importance of an education for all by emphasizing that it "is one of the most important and urgent issues facing all societies concerned with the education of their future citizens" (Barton 2003, p. 57).

The booklet draws attention to a need of a wider discussion that could both take place in praxis related discussions, in and between students in European Teacher Education, as well as in further research with respect to a deeper understanding of the meaning of how qualities and values in active citizenship could be related to the idea of inclusive education.

Special Education Research and the idea of Inclusive Education

In broad terms we see that the qualities and dimensions in special education theories fall into two main alignments. One is the individual-based alignment and the other an environmental-based alignment. These could be seen as two sides of a continuum and more recently there has also been an ambition to try to relate the elements in the two main alignments to each other. Such an ambition has led to developing new, qualitatively different alignments.

Individual-based alignments

This alignment could also be defined as traditional, taking place and growing in the twentieth century, supported by psychological and medical understanding. Within this the school system relates to a specific knowledge epistemology which provides a starting point from which to view individual deviation. Compensation for this deviation lies at the individual level and not with the system, and sees the solution as how to compensate for the individuals' difficulties (Haug, 1998; 2003).

Within the alignment Special Education can also be divided into a psycho-medical and a sociological/organisational paradigm each with different expectations and implications for solutions. The origin of the psycho-medical paradigm could be viewed as an individual based alignment when it has a micro level and contains a positivistic centre of gravity. In that learning difficulties are seen to arise from shortfalls within the individual and diagnostic testing is a proposed starting point for an individual-based solution (Skidmore, 1996; 1999; 2004).

From a functionalistic point of view, Special Education can be viewed at an organisational level. In professional bureaucracies an organisation can have one specialist for each problem. It means that an individual could meet different specialists in relation to different causes. Moreover, professional bureaucracies are often structured to fit the individuals need into some type of standard programme, with specialists working quite independently of each other (Skrtic, 1991; 1995).

Environmental-based alignments

The views of normal and deviance change across different social structures and with different time periods (Foucault, 1986). How we organise things in our culture at any given time limits and restricts what some of its members can do. To summarize the main qualities in the environmental based alignment, we can say that it will, to a greater extent, focus on the environment and relationships within it; the individual in its environment, as well as the environment with varying individuals. Also the process to find solutions could take place in dialogues between those concerned. Looking at individuals, or categorised groups in order to find methods, support and help, clearly raises questions about inclusion, normality and deviation (Ahlberg, 2007).

An environmental-based alignment may be seen as an alternative perspective, criticising compensatory and other traditional alignments, that states that the school system rather than individual is responsible for the educational difficulties (Nilholm, 2005).

An environmentally based alignment has instead of a psycho - medical understanding a sociological understanding. It views the world as socially constructed, having a macro focus, that sees the processes of sorting and tracking in society arising from the reproduction of structural inequalities as leading to learning difficulties. At an institutional meso-level, learning difficulties arise from the ways schools are organized (Skidmore, 1996; 2004).

How environmental based alignments can be related to education does not appear in a social vacuum, but is linked to the development of other related phenomena, such as links with the development of human rights and disability studies. The concept of inclusive education is part of a broader human rights model which supports the view that any kind of segregation is ethically wrong. Inclusion can be seen as an ethical issue involving personal rights and any society's will to recognize these rights in an effective way (Phtiaka, 2005). In addition to that the Convention on Human Rights includes all individual, it has been necessary to emphasize and strengthen the right for certain groups. Conventions on the Rights of the Child, CRC (United Nations, 1989), as well as Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2006) are both conventions which could strengthen rights for children and youths in special need and/or with disability.

From care to rights

Within both the individual and environmental alignments general focus is on deviation and not on concepts such as responsibility, participation and viewing students as resources, etc.

Parallels can be drawn between the development of special education and the development of the understanding of disability in society. Historically, disability rights advocates have used aspects in the social model of disability to fight for equal treatment. In the transition from a medical to a social model, the view of disability changed in a variety of ways; from a personal tragedy theory into a social oppression theory, from care to rights, from individual adaptation to social change, etc. This changing point of view was and remains very liberating for individuals with disabilities (Oliver, 1996). In the social model, the social environment plays a crucial role, and presents the view that it is society that disables people, that disability is a social construct. Dignity as a value has been a crucial factor in the switch to a human rights perspective. According to the environmental based alignment, disability is viewed as a socially caused problem in the social model. The social model replaced the traditional, 'medical model' view of disability, with focus on a persons' medical traits such as their specific impairments. In the medical model the problems arose from deficits in the body (Quinn, & Degener, 2002). On the contrary, in the social model view the problems arose from social oppression.

The understanding of an individual has changed over time. The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (WHO, 2001) replaced the previous classification system, International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps, ICIDH from 1980 (WHO, 1980). This change means that instead of classifying the consequences of a disease, now health components are classified instead. In contrast to the previous classification, this means that the newer system concerns everyone - and not only specific individuals. Furthermore, it also takes into account the environment in which people finds themselves. In addition to the need to be aware and reject invisible limitations, such us social barriers and restrictive attitudes, there also need to recognise visible limitations, such as architectural, technical and design related limitations. With respect to education, to emphasize that need is not necessary or solely due to qualities within a child, children *in* special needs/difficulties may be preferred to children *with* special need/ difficulties (such as in Börjesson, 1997).

Citizenship is closely connected to equal rights in society. According to Kjellberg (2002), three elements are included in citizenship. The first element, *civil citizenship,* is based on the idea that each person is equal before the law. It comprises personal integrity, freedom of speech, religious liberty, freedom of thought and right to property. The next element, *political citizenship,* includes the right to vote in general elections and the possibility to be elected to positions of

trust. The last element, *social citizenship,* covers the principle welfare for all, which means each human being's rights to a secure economic situation and the right to education, social service and health care (Marshall, 1964). All people with disabilities should receive the support they need within the ordinary structures of education, health, employment and social services, within the human rights framework.

Active Citizenship and Special Needs

The model of valuable citizenship is now the most important paradigm within the settings for persons in special needs. The objectives are full participation in society and optimalisation of contentment and well-being. This model is based on four pillars: quality of life, emancipation, support and coaching and empowerment. (Cappelle, Le Roy & Verkest, 2008; Van Gennep, 1997). These are their major points:

- "Quality of Life" refers to the possibility of the person to organize and guide his life on all areas. The focus is oriented on the "implementation" of normality and complementary specific support. The quality of life determines the physical, psychological and functional well-being and life-enjoying of the individual in special needs.
- "Emancipation" focuses on optimalisation of the individual's development and his equal position within the society.
- "Support" focus on the implementation of methods and strategies stimulating the development, functioning, well being and the rights of the individual in special needs. These objectives can be reached by offering support in different ways by the social network and additionally by the professional and services.
- In "Empowerment" the aspects of quality of life, emancipation and support are integrated. Empowerment strengthens the real possibility of the individual in special needs to succeed. Belief in his/her capabilities offers power and energy to become conscious of the situation and the need for social rights, to be assertive, to communicate, to participate, to live, to work and to spend free time together with others, to move within the broad society. On a personal or psychological level, empowerment refers to the enhancement of self-esteem and self-confidence, feelings of control and of owning one's own life, self-efficacy, a sense of coherence and vitality (zest) in life. It is the growth of power from within (Van Houten & Jacobs, 2005). On a social or community level, empowerment includes participation in community activities; the increase of a sense of community (belonging) and the strategic construction of a common identity; the creation of social networks and self-organisations; the enhancement of problem-identifying and problem-solving capabilities as a community or organisation (community competence) and of political efficacy. On this level, we find self-

help groups as strong actors in personal empowerment at one end of a spectrum and social movements as characterized by collective action to create changes on a societal and political level, at the other end of the spectrum.

All these constitute active citizenship.

According to Reiter and Schalock (2008), active citizenship for children and adolescents in special needs is a shift from dependence and passiveness to autonomy, self-awareness, and self-direction. There are three steps for the enhancement of citizenship education:

(i) Social Education – that is the capacity and readiness to be involved in meaningful interpersonal relationships (that includes free choice, the setting of goals, actions for fulfilling the goals, and evaluation of outcomes);

(ii) Career Education – the ability to develop specific vocational skills according to personal capabilities and inclinations, to enhance 'work personality', the wish and capacity to be engaged in productive and creative life;

(iii) Towards Leaving Home for Independent Living in the Community, as an important ingredient of autonomy. The success of the acquisition of active citizenship is expressed both at the students' level - as an enhanced sense of self-worth and self-confidence, as well as enhanced academic achievements and social skills - and at the educators' level - as a paradigm shift from a medical model of approach to students in special needs to a social and humanistic one.

In recent decades there has been an ambition in many Western countries to enable people in special needs fully realise their citizenship in terms of equal opportunities to participate in society. It has been argued for that people in special needs, with their knowledge and view of life, of course individually different as any others, can contribute to the development of society (Kjellberg, 2002). As mentioned before, citizenship is considered as having a number of dimensions - civil, political and social - then the status of people with disabilities as economic subjects (a contribution to their being granted social citizenship) has received some attention, in part stemming from a neo-liberal interpretation of 'social inclusion'. The most widespread issue inhibiting the achievement of equality of outcome, as Ross points (2009), is a neo-liberal reliance on policies of equality of opportunity. These seem to be very often used as an excuse to avoid action: it shifts responsibility for underachievement to the individual (often using such language as "*we* made the opportunities available, *they* failed to take advantage of them"). The rhetoric of offering choice and empowerment is unreal in such circumstances. In this neo-liberal discourse the full responsibility to be self-supporting is on the individual (Fraser, 1997). While assumptions about the responsibility

of the individual for the self are dominant (but not necessarily explicit), they act against policies and arguments that the school system (and other social structures) should compensate for structural and individual disadvantages, such as persons in special needs (Cederberg, Hartsmar & Lingärde, 2009). Their status as politically engaged citizens has received considerably less policy and research attention, arguably stemming from a continuing ambiguity about the appropriateness of recognizing 'the impaired body' as a candidate for full political citizenship.

The starting point for establishing citizenship for persons in special needs was the implementation of the normalisation principle during the 1960s. It declared that persons in special needs had the same right to have equal living conditions as everybody else in society (Nirje, 1969; 1994). The principle included the right to be respected and listened to and to have one's wishes considered, which is closely related to civil citizenship. The social part of the citizenship is represented by the right for persons in special needs to live under "normal" economic and housing standards as for other ordinary citizens.

Critical areas

Special education is a complex conception. A hard task seems to be how to go from an ideological vision to real actions. In addition, the focus of gravity and the complexity of reducing and changing conditions are problematic. In relation to this we see the following areas as being critical:

- incongruity between idea, policies and practice,
- whether to focus on needs and deviation or on participation,
- the understanding of complex problems,
- changing conditions in a normative world.

The critical areas could appear at different levels. Below is an example of how the critical areas *could* come to the surface at different levels, such as in and between a society, in an organisational, or at a closer professional or individual/student level.

A growing number of children are defined as in need of special education, at least in some European countries (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2008). Often built upon a growing use of diagnoses, some of the children are forced into permanent exclusive settings. At the same time, the ideological values in international conventions and statements (United Nations 1989; United Nations, 1993; UNESCO, 1994; United Nations 2006) and national control documents are expecting the school system to work for the values in inclusive education. This shows an incongruous view between the idea and the practice and raises questions about how to implement values in practice.

To catch a glimpse of critical elements at an organisational level one could for instance look at how the prevailing system in an organisation takes place. If it rests on values of children's needs and deviation, does it demand different specialists? In such a bureaucracy system (Skrtic, 1995), the need is made visible by the possibility of professional support, but it does not guarantee the individuals participation and responsibility, and so does not automatically cover the central values of inclusive education. It could be viewed as a critical area in the struggle between existing and expected values.

Another critical area could be seen in the circumstances where aspects related to a single paradigm are expected to reduce complex problems (Skidmore 1996; 2004). Professionals in school, as well as researchers, have to relate to theories of Special Education. The basic understanding of a paradigm also leads into a specific understanding of consequences of educational activities, organisation and understanding of educational theoretical issues. Dyson & Millward (1997) claim that there is no connection between different alignments, while Clark, Dyson & Millward, (1998) point out that is it time to move on. Nilholm (2005) shares the standpoint by highlighting closed positions between an undivided traditional and alternative paradigm. We also emphasize

that since special education in special settings, with special education teachers is no longer the norm, there is a growing qualitative demand for the students, real involvement and participation is claimed. Parallel with this there is also a growing education assessment discourse focusing on efficiency, performance and results. Individual competitive situations are expected to lead to good individual results, which furthermore are used in comparative evaluation processes between institutions in some contexts, and European countries, such as in PISA, TIMMS, etc. Incongruity may be viewed when individuals in a setting, on one hand depend on an inclusive culture setting, and on the other, on external assessment expectations.

From the point of view of active citizenship, the first critical point is the struggles of the movement towards active citizenship for people with disability. It has emphasised the practical significance of the insight that knowledge is not disembodied and abstract, but is produced in concrete social relations. Imrie and Thomas (2008) point out that the tricky problem is not one of reconciling abstract bodies of technical and experiential knowledge but, rather, one of re-shaping the social relations within which these kinds of knowledge arise and make sense. It is a social struggle, not just an epistemological one.

Another critical point is that professional approaches emphasise individual responsibility, greater control and transfer of power. The process by which skills are acquired is primarily perceived as a matter of technical and procedural competence. Empowerment in this sense focuses on acquiring skills and accessing resources and is in danger of becoming just another part of the service provider's toolkit. This conceptualisation obscures the dynamic interplay of the social, material, cultural, emotional and interpersonal context of lived experience for active citizenship (Dowse, 2009).

Finally, social changes at the global level have given rise to new forms of regulation and opportunities for people in special needs in the 21st century. The rise in political consciousness and action by people in special needs, seen in self-advocacy, has emerged as a direct response to the constraints embedded in social entities and practices in relation to them. Importantly, the ways in which rights are constructed and struggled over emerge from political logics, social processes and modes of thinking. Political action by people in special needs therefore faces new challenges in the global era, with the need to interrogate the way knowledge systems and socioeconomic structures combine to create expectations of individual competence and active citizenship (Dowse, 2009). The provision of information which is meaningful and supporting access to citizenship for people in special needs to have their say in the arenas where policy is formulated and services designed remains at the heart of these challenges. A critical concern is shown for how notions of 'disadvantage' and 'citizenship' are ideationally conceived and utilised within the modern policy context. Specifically, definitional problems prevail and apparent consensus appears ambiguous across government department, national/EU

agency, employer, trade union and institutional settings. We argue that it is essential to critically examine such concepts both conceptually and practically in current policy provision for persons in special needs. Specifically, in relation to educational policy measures, it is important to engage in 'policy paradigm' and 'governance' critiques. It is claimed that interventions are more likely to maintain the status quo than effect real meaningful change building active citizenship for persons in special needs (Popkewitz & Lindblad, 2000).

From the point of view of human rights, the first critical point is a quantitative question. The United Nations estimates that there are 500 million persons with disabilities in the world today. Moreover, the majority of persons with disabilities live in less developed countries where people lack access to essential services. Further, there is a clear relationship between poverty and disability. People with disabilities have a higher likelihood of experiencing poverty because of the institutional, environmental and attitudinal discrimination faced, from birth or the moment of disablement onward (Yeo & Moore, 2003). Girls with disabilities seems to be in a precarious situation and could be particulary excluded from school. Except a financial priority background, this could be related to a culture background, such as disabilities are seen as a curse, and therefore a girl with disability could be hidden from a wider community, education, etc. (Right to Education, 2010).

Finally, one of the discriminatory human rights barriers is the structure of education and the negative attitudes children in special needs face in general. For example, the right to education is both the most important right for children in special needs and the right most frequently denied. Moreover, the scale of violation is compounded by a number of factors. First, children especially with severe intellectual disabilities may be considered uneducable and denied any kind of education. Second, only 2 per cent of children in special needs in developing countries have access to an education system (Yeo & Moore, 2003). Last but not least, children in special needs continue to endure an approach that favours their segregation and marginalization from the mainstream education system on the ground that they are receiving "special education". But students in so called "special schools" frequently fail to enjoy the same range of academic and leisure activities as children in mainstream schools (Quinn & Degener, 2002). In addition to educational obstacles, negative attitudes and institutional discrimination against people with disabilities and misconceptions about their lives is still widespread. Institutional discrimination is the process by which people with disabilities are systematically marginalized by established laws, customs or practices. Discrimination against people with disability is rooted in widely shared attitudes, values and beliefs. The last discrimination act in most countries comes from the physical environment, which also excludes people with disabilities. This has been referred to as "apartheid by design" (Imrie, 1996). Buildings with steps and narrow entrances, inaccessible "public" transport complete the discrimination "map".

Inputs to active citizenship in practice

This section has focus on practices that show ambition, processes and/or results with central values of creating favorable conditions for the development of active citizenship in a special educational context. There is no claim to give comprehensive coverage, rather examples are presented to show possibilities in a range of contexts.

The European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education has found inclusive education settings related to different ages in Europe. A successful practice in early childhood could be to take an environmental/relational view of children, to build a cohesive and inclusive society aware of children and family rights. Some factors of value for educators in primary education settings (7-11 year) seem to be cooperative teaching and learning, collaborative problem-solving, heterogeneous grouping and a teaching approach within high expectations, direct instruction and feedback. In secondary education settings (11-14 year), two factors are added; the value of home areas in school and educators' awareness of alternative ways of learning. A main conclusion is: what is good for students in special educational needs is also good for all others (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2003; 2005; 2006).

Inclusive movements in Europe, started in UK by an inclusive school supporting material (Booth & Ainscow, 2002), have lead to adjacent projects in different parts of Europe. In one school in Norway, educators viewed the school's development as part of a societal change. Lack of time was not seen as a valid excuse and needs to be addressed, to be seen as a challenge, not as a problem. Educators found support in both their team and work management (Nes, Moen, & Strømstad, 2006). Nes (2009) also reflects on the need to support schools' self-evaluation and compare experiences with similar activities in Norway and other European countries. Drawing on research in the Danish context, Tetler (2000) points out the importance of creating space for all students' learning. She draws attention to the pedagogical dilemma between too much protection and not enough attention. By listening to all children's voices, Tetler & Baltzer, (2009), found similarities and differences between children in and without difficulties in school. Children in difficulties find for instance a successful learning situation may involve use of different material, of different ways of learning and an acceptance of a way to take part in a setting. In a study focusing on the voices in the transmission between upper secondary school and university students Lang (2008) used characters stories to illustrate qualities of participation, and responsibility.

At state level there are different approaches in policy and praxis, each with their strengths and limitations. Sweden is a developed country, a pioneer country, among others, in the inclusion of all individuals in special needs. Since the 1960s Sweden has striven, both ideologically and legally, to develop and extend citizenship to people in special needs. Specifically, with the Special Services Act (1967), normalisation

and integration became leading principles and here, integration means having the opportunity to live in society and to participate in the societal arena on the same terms as the general population. During the 1970s and 1980s most people in special needs lived in residential housing, which were often situated in rural areas, and moved to group homes and day activity centres situated in cities (see also Kjellberg, 2002). In 1989, the Declaration of Incapacity was removed from the legislation in Sweden and since then, even the people with learning disabilities (who were formerly classified as minors) have the right to vote in general elections. Thus, the third element in Marshall's view, political citizenship, was formally fulfilled (Marshall, 1964).

In the Swedish election of 1994, 31% of the people in special needs voted, compared to 86% of the total Swedish population. Such a low voting figure is critical for persons in special needs since they are one of the most dependent groups of people in relation to political decisions (Tideman, 2000). In 1993, the member states of the United Nations agreed on a new international document to focus worldwide attention on the need for equal rights and opportunities for people in special needs – the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. These have been a cornerstone of Swedish disability policy ever since. According to Swedish legislation, Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments (SFS, 1993:387) was implemented. The objective of this law for persons in special needs is the right to have full participation in community and equal living conditions to other citizens. In the political discussion there has been an emphasis on participation for persons in special needs. In Sweden, this has led to legislation, for example, the Act concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments (SFS, 1993:387) had a goal to strengthen the persons' citizenship. Since the adoption of the Standard Rules, Sweden has supported participation for people in special needs in societal life (Kjellberg, 2002; Michailakis, 1997). The Swedish government ratified the UN's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2008. Unlike the Standard Rules, the Convention is legally binding. As a result Sweden, along with other countries that have ratified the Convention, has committed itself to ensuring that national legislation does not discriminate against people in special need. A phenomenon in the Swedish school system (6-19 years) - which shows that it still is in conflict with an inclusive intention - is that it still has two parallel educational systems, one for students with and one without intellectual disabilities.

In general, the greatest strengths of the Swedish system for persons in special needs are (a) national policy is clearly stated and supported by legislation and (b) there is political consensus concerning the policy. The delivery system encompasses all residents, regardless of the cause of disability or financial status. Both assistive technology and home modifications are considered essential elements of health care and important for providing opportunities for persons in special

needs to participate in society (Lilja et al., 2003). However, there are weaknesses in the Swedish services system that have had an impact on the services provided. There is a growing concern about society's ability to cope with their needs at a time of restricted national economic resources. These circumstances are leading to an increasing gap between needs and resources. In Sweden there has been ongoing discussion about shifting some of the costs from society as a whole to the individual user in the form of increasing the small fees some county councils and local authorities require and possibly reducing subsidies. In the future, these policy discussions about resources, allocation, and costs will influence the provision of assistive technology and home modifications (see also Swedish Institute, 2000).

Now let us describe the active citizenship movement (through the role of community based rehabilitation projects – CBR) in a developing country – Palestine - where the disability movement is still week and struggles to find its role. The economic and political situation makes the situation difficult and creates additional psychological problems and poverty. It has been widely argued that community based programmes offer considerable advantages to the classical institutional forms of health and rehabilitation services delivery (Giacaman, 2001). With about 10 years of experience in operating CBR for individuals in special needs, the Palestinian experience points to potentially serious problems relating to the conception and operationalization of such programmes in real life situations. Caretaking in the Palestinian context, especially of persons with disability, elderly and sick, is a pre-defined sex linked role dictated by a patriarchal society and system of policy making that excludes women from economic and social life. The voluntary care aspect entailed in the CBR conception and practice, can and does contribute further to the exclusion of women not only from the labour force, but from most other aspects of life as well. This represents an apparent contradiction between the needs of two excluded groups, persons with disability and women. The other problematic entailed in the communal model of caring for people with disability is the strategic and operational bias focusing on community, to the exclusion of the notion of social rights of all citizens, and the role and duty of state structures in the fulfilment of the basic needs a persons disability may require. Such an approach can only relegate the rights of children in special needs back to their original place as charity.

On the other hand, when CBR projects are operated holistically, in the context of social movements existing with a broader democratic agenda engaging different groups - including a disability movement - as is currently taking place in Palestine, CBR projects can also turn into a mobilizing force for the social rights of all excluded groups. According to Nilsson & Qutteina (2005), these projects have empowered individuals and parents on various aspects of active citizenship, such as improved basic daily living skills and coping

mechanisms, reduced stigma and isolation and increased social inclusion. People in special needs are more respected in their families and have become more visible and more vocal. Thus the question is not merely one of governmental involvement as opposed to the involvement of non-governmental organisations and charitable societies in community based projects. Rather, it is a question of the right to a decent life for all, in dignity and security, that citizenship and statehood promise, but has yet to deliver in many developing countries, such as Palestine.

There have been dramatic legal and policy developments, and strong academic and practical interest, in the area of American and international disability civil rights law in the last 50 years. The Universal Human Rights, Conventions and Declarations were applied in order to create social protection, education, housing and goods and services as well as employment for individuals in special needs (Blanck, Hill, Siegal, & Waterstone, 2004). Countries are therefore responsible to consider measures aimed at combating disability discrimination in the name of human rights.

The United States, for example, made a significant contribution to protect the rights of people with disability by enacting laws or policies primarily in education and then civil rights (Stein & Stein, 2007). Beginning in the 1970s, the disability civil rights agenda progressively influenced United States legislation towards the social model of disability. A primary example is the Rehabilitation Act in 1973, which prohibits recipients of federal funds from discriminating against persons with disability. The American disability rights movement has strongly influenced its international counterparts to mobilize for equality as expressed through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This is a civil rights law, which was enacted in 1990 (changes made by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, which became effective on January 1, 2009). In short it guarantees equal opportunity for people with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, State or Local Government services and telecommunications.

Yet despite its laudable achievements, the ADA contains design and implementation shortcomings. The legislation is unable to adequately protect Americans with disabilities in many aspects of the live situation. Even ADA proponents admit that the statute has not engendered noteworthy improvements in the employment sphere. Consequently, people with disabilities remain socially marginalized and mired in poverty. Based on the view that life-chances are included in the transition between (special) education and work seems the entrance to employment of special interest. One group of Americans, people with disabilities, have a high level of unemployment. 30 percent are not employed - the same percentage as when the ADA became law. Perhaps most trenchantly, as a practical matter, Americans with disabilities continue to be excluded from the fundamental right of voting. In sum, despite many positive affects American disability

civil rights legislation has not - and structurally cannot - bring about equality on their own (Stein & Stein, 2007).

As for the European countries, they have taken significant steps by officially empowering their efforts to proactively identify, establish and update national policies that directly or indirectly related to disability issues (Lawson, 2006). Equal treatment and human rights are the most developed components of the social dimension of European integration. In the area of disability, both juridical and programmatic methods have created a relatively integrated sphere of European social law and policy (Mabbett, 2005). Special provisions have been adopted to ensure that EU people in special needs can enjoy to the greatest extent possible the human rights, including educational, social and economic rights. The Council of the European acknowledges that discrimination against people in special needs still prevails, often as a result of lack of information and attitude problems. By declaring 2003 as the year of people with disabilities, the Council sought to increase society's understanding of the rights, needs and potential of persons in special needs, as well as to encourage synergies among all partners in order to promote a flow of information and an exchange of good practice. On the other hand and despite the progress made, European Community approach to human rights of people in special needs has been 'excessively judicially-focused' and that 'too much faith is placed by the Community in the power of legal prohibitions and judicial enforcement'. It also recognizes that "there are 37 million disabled people in the European Union who do not enjoy full civil and human rights" and reminds member states of their responsibility to implement disability protection laws on the national level (Mabbett, 2005).

Discrimination against people with disabilities is, unfortunately, alive and well, despite the legal prohibitions against discrimination in hiring people with disabilities. 79 percent of people with disabilities who are unemployed cite discrimination in the workplace and lack of transportation as major factors that prevent them from working. Studies have also shown that people with disabilities who find jobs earn less than their co-workers, and are less likely to be promoted. The new millennium has raised the prospect of combining disability-related antidiscrimination norms and equality measures through a human rights approach. All countries have to address within their specific cultural and socioeconomic contexts how (rather than if) positive and negative rights will be combined in a manner that ensures the equality of their citizens with disabilities (Stein & Stein, 2007).

Concluding discussion

In the project "Special Educational Needs & Citizenship – Education for the inclusion of all students", different steps have been taken in order to identify and create a picture of variations found in policy and practice around the keywords: special education, active citizenship and human rights (Alevriadou, Lang, & Akbuyur, 2010). An ulterior question in the booklet has been; how to educate an educator to educate active citizenship to all students, including students whom seldom are heard. How to find perspectives and associated adequate educating tools against low expectations, ie "learned helplessness", etc? How to instead mediate expectations of an active live, and how could educators and other professionals be role models and show good awareness about active citizenship?

From the map of the theories of Special Education emphasized in the booklet, we have highlighted some differences between the individual and the environmental alignments' understanding of values in the idea of inclusive education. A clear difference is especially evident on questions such as participation and having the students' voice in mind. Over time, the environment alignment has more and more come to strive for the individual's participation. In addition to individual and environmental oriented alignments, new dimensions are coming up and the period become characterized by *different and parallel* special educational paradigms and theoretical dimensions. If we look into a single aspect in this multifaceted period, we wonder what a long time perspective might imply. At the moment Europe is in a growing measure, documenting and assessment based phase (Haug, 2003). Does it mean that individual educational careers, as in the way they could be understood in assessment documents, also influence the European organisation of educational settings in a more exclusive way? Or has the development, by values of international conventions etc, already come to influence in a way that participation and active citizenship still goes through? Researchers (such as Clark, Dyson & Millward, 1998; Haug, 2003, Nilholm 2005; Skidmore 1996; 2004) acknowledge the need for more debate within and between researchers and practice along the different values in theories of Special Education.

Special Education in practice is to a large extent dependent on the educational situation in general and it could be reasonable to assume that the special education development also in the future becomes context-dependent. When special educational questions are dependent on the actual context, it is difficult to compare, share or lift a solution from one context to another. Clark, Dyson and Millward (1998) pointed out a risk when the energy of the critique of special education seems to take over and leave less space to develop alternative concepts related to individual differences. I addition to disability studies related critique to elements in the social model (Oliver, 1992),

have social model related projects been criticized for commonly being based on a non empirical connection. Thomas and Loxley (2001) argue for a renewal of confidence from educational praxis, such as built on educators understanding of failure in schools. In the light of that we do not have any verified knowledge at the moment, the dilemma perspective (Nilholm, 2005) draws attention to a wider opening within and between researchers and practice, with regards to how dilemmas will be expressed in practice.

Both active citizenship and inclusive education involves hard defined topics/concepts. There are differences which we have not been able to clarify within the limits of this booklet, before we try to link the overall active citizenship theme into an educational context. An entrance has been that values in active citizenship, transferred to values in an educational context, are that active citizenship and the inclusive education have roots in same earth. Values which tend to be argued in relation to inclusion - community, equity, entitlement, variation and participation - are considerations for all students'. It seems feasible to assume that how we understand people in difficulties and inclusive education could also be a way of how to understand the application and practice of active citizenship. Despite the similarities between active citizenship and inclusive education, there are differences. For instance, value of active citizenship seems to concentrate on a more individual developing approach and ambitions such as the value of an individual responsibility, whilst the value of inclusive education are aimed to more holistic, environmental and relational issues.

"Persons in special needs must be full participants in the bodies and procedures by which both general laws and policies, as well as disability-specific ones are formulated. This is essential for ensuring the responsiveness, legitimacy and effectiveness of such laws and policies, as well as reflecting the rights of persons in special needs to full participation in the life of the community, including all forms of public decision-making." (UNESCO, 1995). Even at the neoliberal environment, preparation for citizenship skills and competences for children in special needs, at the very least, should be an explicit part of inclusive education. This is especially important in a time when governments worldwide are attempting to shift emphasis from state welfare provision and responsibility towards community and individual responsibility. Education for Citizenship should however not be separated or isolated from life's learning processes. It should be an essential part of the formal education system for persons in special needs, from pre-school to university level and beyond as part of informal adult education for lifelong learning. Thus, disability represents an important terrain for the theoretical challenge of addressing the tension between citizenship's universalist promise and the recognition of difference (Lister, 2007).

Education *as* citizenship, rather than *about* it, would challenge the school effectiveness paradigm of educational change requiring it to take on board a complimentary paradigm of children's social inclusion or *children's* effectiveness (Edwards, & Usher, 2000). Inclusive education put emphasis on young people in special needs as currently active citizens in interaction with each other, with adults and with the community. Approaches to all aspects of education for citizenship in the classroom, or the wider life of the school or community should be informed by the awareness that citizenship is best learnt through experience and interaction with others, as inclusive education imposes. We would add that a fully inclusive school milieu provides the opportunity for educators and school administrators to develop an environment that reflects societal ideals – equality without discrimination, which the key elements for active citizenship for children and youth in special needs (Pivik, Mccomas & Laflamme, 2002).

As an answer to the critique of the distanced view from giving any ideas of solutions and professionals activities in the inclusive educational process, we try to think of the critical areas in the booklet as good reasons for searching possibilities for changes. In good circumstances could an increasing awareness about the elements in a critical area lead to new phases within better and good practices? As a consequence of the work with the booklet, we want to stress and promote the need for further research. Primarily we want to lift up the need for voices of-oriented research. The outcome of this can in turn build a knowledge background about how to relate the field of active citizenship in educators further infinite encounters with different student life and learning situations. As already mentioned the topic of the booklet - active citizenship in the special education area - has not been analysed to great extent in the past. It will imply that also research outcome from other areas (such as intercultural education) could be of interest to try to relate to a special education context.

> *... if the goal for citizenship education is to educate Europeans that are capable of participating in a democratic society, the most fundamental measure is to give pupils opportunities to practice participation in democratic dialogues. It seems that all teachers, in all lessons, must offer all pupils a horizontal classroom dialogue (Sandström, Kjellin & Stier, 2008, p. 49).*

References

Ahlberg, A. (2007). Specialpedagogik – ett kunskapsområde i utveckling. In C. Nilholm & E. Björk-Åkesson (Eds.), *Reflektioner kring specialpedagogik – sex professorer om forskningsområdet och forskningsfronterna* (pp 66-78). Stockholm: Vetenskapsrådets rapportserie. [In Swedish.]

Alevriadou, A., Lang, L. & Akbuyur, S. (2010, May). *Special educational needs & citizenship: Education for the inclusion of all students*. Poster session presented at the CiCe Twelfth European Conference, Lifelong Learning and Active Citizenship, Barcelona, Spain.

Barton, L. (2003). The politics of education for all. In M. Nind, J. Rix, K. Sheehy, & K. Simmons (Eds.), *Inclusive education: Diverse perspectives* (pp. 55-64). London: The Open University.

Barriga, S. R. (2010). Available at http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/06/28/un-include-disabilities-development-agenda

Blanck, P., Hill, E., Siegal, C. D., & Waterstone, M. (2004). *Disability civil rights law and policy* [Hornbook Series]. St. Paul: Thomson West.

Booth, T. & Ainscow, M. (2002). *Index for inclusion: Developing learning and participation in schools*. Bristol, UK: Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education.

Börjesson, M. (1997). *Om skolbarns olikheter. Diskurser kring "särskilda behov" i skolan – med historiska jämförelsepunkter.* Stockholm: Skolverket. [In Swedish.]

Cappelle, G., Le Roy, E. & Verkest, H. (2008). How to introduce citizenship in a special world? In A. Ross, & P. Cunningham (Eds.), *Reflecting on identities: Research, practice and innovation* (pp. 631 – 642). London: CiCe.

Cederberg, M., Hartsmar, N. & Lingärde, S. (2009). *Socioeconomic disadvantage thematic report. Educational policies that address social inequality* (EACEA Action 6.6.2). London: IPSE. Available at http://www.epasi.eu/ThematicReportSOC.pdf

Clark, C., Dyson, A., Millward, A. (1998). *Theorizing special education.* London: Routledge.

Dowse, L. (2009). 'Some people are never going to be able to do that'. Challenges for people with intellectual disability in the 21st century. *Disability and Society,* 24(5), 571-584.

Dyson, A. & Millward, A. (1997, May). *Theory and practice in special needs education*. Paper presented at the International seminar "Theoretical perspectives on special education", Ålesund, Norway.

Edwards, R. & Usher, R. (2000). *Globalisation and pedagogy: Space, place and identity.* London: Routledge.

European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2003). *Inclusive education and effective classroom practices,* Vol 1. Available at www.european-agency.org

European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2005). *Early childhood intervention.* Available at www.european-agency.org

European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2006). *Inclusive education and classroom practice in secondary education.* Vol 2. Available at: www.european-agency.org

European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2008). *Special education needs country report*. Available at www.european-agency.org

Foucault, M. (1986). *Vansinnets historia under den klassiska epoken*. Lund: Arkiv Förlag. [In Swedish.]

Fraser, N. (1997). *Justice Interruptus: Critical reflections on the 'post-socialist' condition*. London: Routledge.

Giacaman, R. (2001). A community of citizens: Disability rehabilitation in the Palestinian transition to statehood. *Disability & Rehabilitation,* 23(14), 639-644.

Hartsmar, N. (2008). *Educational policies that address social Inequality. Country report,* Sweden. Malmö University & EPASI. Available at http://www.epasi.eu/CountryReport.se.pdf

Haug, P. (2003). Regimer i forskning om spesialundervisning i Norge. *Psykologisk Pædagogisk Rådgivning*. No. 2. [In Norwegian.]

Haug, P. & Tøssebro, J. (1998). *Theoretical perspectives on special education*. Kristiansand: HøyskoleForlaget.

Imrie, R. (1996). *Disability and the city: International perspectives*. London: Chapman Publishers.

Imrie, R. & Thomas, H. (2008). The interrelationships between environment and disability. *Local Environment,* 13(6), 477-483.

Kjellberg, A. (2002). Being a citizen. *Disability and Society,* 17(2), 187-203.

Lang, L. (2008). Ungas röster om övergången till *högskole-och universitetsstudier. Ungdomsforskning,* 7(4), 39-44. [In Danish and Swedish.]

Lawson, A. (2006). *The EU rights based approach to disability: Some strategies for shaping an inclusive society*. University of Leeds. Available at http//digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/glanetcollection

Lilja, M. M nsson, I., Jahlenius, L., & Sacco-Peterson M. (2003). Disability policy in Sweden: Policies cconcerning assistive technology and home modification services. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies,* 14(3), 130-135.

Lister, R. (2007). Inclusive citizenship: Realizing the potential. *Citizenship Studies,* 11(1), 49-61.

Mabbett, D. (2005). The development of rights-based social policy in the European Union: The example of disability rights. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 43(1), 97-120.

Marshall, T.H. (1964). *Class, citizenship, and social development*. New York: Doubleday.

Michailakis, D. (1997). *Government action on disability policy: A global survey*. Sweden: Office of the United Nations Special Reporters on Disability.

Nes, K. (2009). The role of the index for inclusion in supporting school development in Norway: A comparative perspective. *Research in Comparative and International Education,* 4(3), 305-320.

Nes, K., Moen, K. & Strømstad, M. (2006). *Inkluderende skoleutvikling. erfaringer med Inkluderingshåndboka i Lillehammer kommune*. No 9. Høgskolen i Hedmark. Raport about inclusive education in Lillehammer. [In Norwegian.]

Nilholm, C. (2005). Specialpedagogik: Vilka är de grundläggande perspektiven? *Pedagogisk forskning i Sverige. No. 2.* Göteborg: Göteborgs Universitet.

Nilsson, A. & Qutteina, M. (2005). *Evaluation of the CBR program in Palestine – from the perspective of persons with disabilities themselves*. Palestine: Atlas Alliance.

Nirje, B. (1969). The normalization principle and its human management implications. In R. Kugel, & W. Wolfensberger (Eds.), *Changing patterns in residential services for the mentally retarded* (pp. 179-195). Washington, D.C.: President's Committee on Mental Retardation.

Nirje, B. (1994). The normalization principle and its human management implications. SRV-VRS: *The International Social Role Valorization Journal,* 1(2), 19-23.

Oliver, M. (1992). Intellectual masturbation. A rejoinder to Söder and Booth. *European Journal of Special Needs Education,* 1(1), 20-28.

Oliver, M. (Ed.). (1996). *Understanding disability.* London: Macmillan Press.

Phtiaka, H. (2005, August). *Children with special needs in the ordinary classroom:teachers' and peers' views*. Paper presented at the Inclusive and Supportive Education Congress International Special Education Conference "Inclusion: Celebrating Diversity?", Glasgow, Scotland.

Pivik, J., Mccomas, J., & Laflamme, M. (2002). *Barriers and facilitators to inclusive education. Exceptional Children,* 69(1), 97-107.

Popkewitz, T. & Lindblad, S. (2000). Educational governance and social inclusion: Some conceptual difficulties and problematics in policy and research. *Discourse Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education,* 21(1), 5-44.

Quinn, G. & Degener, T. (2002). The current use and future potential of United Nations human rights instruments in the context of disability. OHCHR, United Nations, New York and Geneva (U.N. Sales No: E.02.XIV.6).

Reiter, S., & Schalock, R. L. (2008). Applying the concept of quality of life to Israeli special education programs: A national curriculum for enhanced autonomy in students with special needs. *International Journal of Rehabilitation Research,* 31 (1), 13-21.

Right to Education (2010). Available at http://www.right-to-education.org/node

Ross, A. (2009). *Educational policies that address social inequality.* London: IPSE. Available at http://www.epasi.eu/

Sandström Kjellin, M. & Stier, J. (2008). Citizenship in the classroom: Transferring and transforming transcultural values. *Intercultural Education,* 19(1), 41-51.

Skidmore, D. (1996). Towards an integrated theoretical framework for research into special educational needs. *European Journal of special needs education,* 11(1), 33-47.

Skidmore, D. (1999). *Divergent discourses of learning difficulty. British Educational Research Journal,* 25(5), 651-663.

Skidmore, D. (2004). *Inclusion: The dynamic of school development*. Berkshire, UK: Open University Press.

SFS 1993:387. Lagen om stöd och service till vissa funktionshindrade (The Act concerning support and service for persons with certain functional impairments). [In Swedish.]

SHIA (2010). Available at http://www.shia.se/index

Skrtic, T. (1991). Students with special educational needs: Artifacts of the traditional curriculum. In M. Ainscow (Ed.), *Effective schools for all*. London: David Fulton Publ.

Skrtic, T. (1995). *Disability and democracy: Reconstructing (special) education for postmodernity*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Stein, M. A. & Stein, P. J. S. (2007). Beyond disability civil rights. *Hastings Law Journal,* 58, 1202–1240.

Stratford, B. & Ng, H. (2000). People with disabilities in China: Changing outlook- new solutions-growing problems. *International Journal of Disability, Development & Education,* 47(1), 7-14.

Swedish Institute (2000). *Disability policies in Sweden* (Fact sheets on Sweden). Stockholm: Author.

Tetler, S. (2000). *Den inkluderende skole – fra vision til verkelighed*. København: Nordisk Forlag. [In Danish.]

Tetler, S. & Baltzer, K. (2009). Elevernes perspektiv. In N. Egelund & S. Tetler (Eds.), *Effekter af specialundervisningen* (pp. 167–190). København: Danish School of Education Press. [In Danish.]

The American Disability Act (1990). Available at http://www.wikipedia.org/Aericans_with_Disabilities_Act_of_1990

The Rehabilitation Act (Section 504) (1973). Available at http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Section_504_of_the_Rehabilitation_Act

Thomas, G. & Loxley, A. (2001). *Deconstruction special education and constructing inclusion*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Tideman, M. (2000). *Normalization and categorization on disability ideology and welfare policy in theory and practice for intellectually Disabled persons,* Doctoral dissertation (Department of Social Work, Goteborg University). [In Swedish.]

UNESCO. (1994). *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*. Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

UNESCO. (1995). *Review of the present situation in special needs education*. Paris: UNESCO.

United Nations. (1989). *The convention on the rights of the child*. Available at http://www.boes.org/un

United Nations. (1993). *Standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities*. New York: United Nations Department of Public Information.

United Nations. (2006). Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. Available at www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=259

United Nations. (2010). Web Page available at http://www.un.org/en

Yeo, R. & Moore, K. (2003). Including disabled people in poverty reduction work: "Nothing about us, without us". *World Development* 31(3), 571–590.

Van Gennep, A. (1997). Beperkte Burgers, Over volwaardig burgerschap voor mensen met verstandelijke beperkingen. Nederlands Instituut voor Zorg en Welzijn.

Van Houten, D., & Jacobs, G. (2005). 'The empowerment of marginals: Strategic paradoxes'. *Disability & Society,* 20(6), 641-654.

WHO. (1980). *International classification of impairments, disabilities and handicaps, ICIDH*. Geneva: WHO.

WHO. (2001). *International classification of functioning, disability and health, ICF*. Available at http://www.who.int/icidh.

The Children's Identity and Citizenship in Europe (CiCe) Academic Network links 28 European states and some 80 universities and college departments which are engaged in educating students about how children and young people learn about and understand their society, their identity and citizenship.

A cross-disciplinary group, we include lecturers in social psychology, pedagogy, psychology, sociology and curriculum studies, and those who educate various professions such as teachers, social pedagogues, psychologists, early childhood workers and youth workers.

Active Citizenship and Contexts of Special Education

ISBN: 978-1-907675-03-4

CiCe Guidelines: ISSN 1741-6353

Published by the CiCe Academic Network Project

Institute for Policy Studies in Education, London Metropolitan University