Dr Dina Kiwan, Reader in Comparative Education, Department of Education and Social Justice, School of Education University of Birmingham – written evidence (CCE0033)

This evidence is based on various pieces of published research and policy contributions that I have conducted over the last 15 years:

i) Research that I conducted (2001-2005), which examined conceptions of citizenship in the policy and curriculum development process of citizenship education with its statutory introduction in the English secondary school contemporary context, from the perspectives of the key players who were involved. My particular focus was on the extent to which these conceptions addressed ethnic and religious diversity, in terms of their theoretical and practical implications. My methodology entailed interviewing thirty participants involved at different stages of the policymaking process, including David Blunkett, Sir Bernard Crick, and others both actively involved in the policy process, subsequent curriculum development stages and also related initiatives – including the Home Office community cohesion initiatives. In addition, I analysed key policy and curriculum documentation. (Kiwan, D. (2008). *Education for Inclusive Citizenship*. London and New York: Routledge.)


iii) Large-scale research project conducted on the process of integration and acquisition of citizenship, interviewing adult third country nationals applying for UK citizenship in 2010, in collaboration with COMPAS, University of Oxford (2010-11), funded by European Integration Fund, administered through the Home Office. (Gidley, B., Cangiano, A., Khor, Z. and Kiwan, D. (2012). *Citizenship and Integration in the UK*.)

iv) Research and policy consultation on naturalization and education policy in the UK:


vi) Research conducted on conceptions of citizenship in the Middle East context:


There is a long intellectual history to citizenship and civic engagement, from philosophical conceptions of citizenship in ancient Greece, to framings of citizenship in Western Europe in the Enlightenment period and the rise of the modern nation-state, to contemporary conceptions of citizenship against a backdrop of globalisation, immigration and social pluralism. In the UK, the government has made efforts to reassert the relevance and significance of ‘national’ (or state-level) citizenship, in the context of internal division from increased devolution, community cohesion and security threats (Kiwan, 2011). In exploring the various and contested conceptions of citizenship in my research, what emerged from the analysis of interviews I conducted with UK policymakers between 2002-2005, as well as the analysis of key policy and curriculum documentation, was that there were three ‘dominant’ conceptions of citizenship – which I refer to as ‘moral’, ‘legal’ and ‘participatory’ conceptions of citizenship, with the ‘participatory’ conception being the most dominant of these conceptions (Kiwan, 2008). In contrast, interviewees also referred to ‘underplayed’ conceptions of citizenship, supported by my analysis of key policy and curriculum documentation: what I have referred to as ‘identity-based conceptions’, as they are inherently concerned with ‘identity’, or forms of identification at different levels. These include national, European, and global framings of citizenship, as well as citizenship presented as a framework for anti-racist education, and ‘multicultural’ citizenship.

The emphasis of these conceptions of citizenship have shifted over the last decade towards a heightened focus on identity and values, especially since the London bombings in July 2005, and more recently with concerns relating to global terrorism, Brexit, and trends towards populist and nationalist understandings of citizenship. There have been attempts to engage with issues of diversity in relation to citizenship (eg. the DfES Ajebgo Report 2007, of which I was a co-author). In this report, we proposed an additional strand - ‘Identity and Diversity’, in addition to the original three strands of ‘social and moral responsibility’, ‘community involvement’ and ‘political literacy’ proposed in the initial Crick Report. This recommendation was accepted and incorporated in subsequent revised curriculum documentation. There has been a troubled engagement with ‘diversity’, where ‘shared values’ is often utilised to question and challenge the presumed cultural, economic and political threats of ‘diversity’, an important theme that emerged from my interviews over a decade ago, as well as continuing as a common theme in public debates today.

An increased focus on the conception of ‘global citizenship’ has been championed by UNESCO since the launch of the Global Education first initiative of the UN Secretary General in 2012. Global citizenship education is situated within this initiative, framed in terms of an emphasis on the importance of recognizing interdependency – socially, culturally, economically and politically, with local, national, regional and global connectedness. This initiative in its stressing of socio-emotional, as well as cognitive and behavioural dimensions illustrates an international trend recognising the importance of the so-called ‘soft skills’, as well as resonating with such initiatives as some forms of ‘character education’, sustainable development, human rights and peace education (Kiwan and Evans, 2015). In the developing world context in particular, however, there has been some resistance to such global conceptions, with the argument that where there are significant
local and national regional challenges, such conceptions are not relevant or helpful (Kiwan, 2017).

2. Since 1997, citizenship has been a high policy priority across government. In addition to the introduction of citizenship education as a statutory subject in England in 2002, the Life in the UK Advisory Group – of which I was a member, was set up in 2002, with the remit to advise the Home Secretary on the ‘method, conduct and implementation’ of a ‘Life in the UK’ naturalisation test. Both these initiatives - in education policy and naturalisation policy were concerned fundamentally with promoting membership and belonging. There have been debates about what content best serves the purposes of strengthening people’s identification and active participation. One debate relates to whether this is better achieved through equipping people with critical skills of language and practical information, or whether it is through a more academic engagement with the country’s history. The recommendations of the Life in the UK advisory group reflected a support for the former position. There have also been debates as to the length of time before qualifying for naturalisation, as well as distinctions between such statuses as ‘permanent leave to remain’, and being a ‘citizen’. In addition, the role of symbolic markers of recognition of achieving citizenship status can be considered to have an important emotive value, as evidenced in research findings on the integration and naturalisation process that I conducted in collaboration with COMPAS, University of Oxford (2010-11). The naturalisation process was viewed in general positively, with more positive reviews for the course route as opposed to the test route, which allowed for increased social contact. Applicants noted both instrumental (eg. security of residence, freedom of movement) as well as non-instrumental benefits of citizenship - namely a sense of belonging to the UK. Half of the applicants in the sample had friendships outside of their ethnic group, with a greater level of inter-ethnic interaction than the UK-born population. Education, faith and sport were the main sites for such socialisation. New citizens were also more active in terms of civic participation than the UK-born population. With regards to identity, the majority had a strong sense of local identity to their neighbourhoods, and to the UK, but less so to the separate four nations of the UK (Gidley, Cangiano, Khor and Kiwan, 2012).

5. In my research on citizenship and inclusion - studied both through education and naturalisation policy – both in the UK and in international context, I have proposed that the construct of ‘citizenship’ is not a static one – a badge of honour, but one that is continually in process through learning – both through formal education, but also very importantly through non-formal means – through the community, family and peers. As such, we are learning what it means to be members of our communities from an early age, and so it is appropriate that formal education supports this learning process from primary school onwards. However, citizenship education has been presented primarily in terms of knowledge and skills of participation, based on ‘cognitive engagement theory’, which hypothesizes that participation depends of access to information (Kiwan, 2011). There is a further implicit assumption that equipping pupils with ‘skills’ for participation will somehow translate into active participation of all students. Whilst this is necessary, it is not sufficient for a model of inclusive active citizenship. What is missing is an understanding that identification with the social context will necessarily influence an individual’s motivation to participate. There is an important role of ‘emotional’ learning that has been neglected in dominant models (Kiwan, 2007; Kiwan, 2011).
I have also written about how the naturalisation process can be conceived of as a learning process (Kiwan, 2007; Kiwan, 2011; Kiwan, 2013). The advantage of making such learning compulsory is a practical one – in that it both signals the importance of this learning, as well structurally requiring ‘space’ to be made in the curriculum for this learning. In order to answer the questions of relative emphasis of ‘political participation’ (and what this refers to) inside and outside classes, effectiveness of current teaching and assessing the current curriculum offering, I would propose that a national comprehensive review be commissioned. There is certainly evidence that there are examples of excellent teaching, although due to resource limitations, this is patchy on the national scale.

8. As noted in my response to 1, the issue of ‘shared values’ has often been raised as an antidote to the dangers of diversity. Of note, is that the policy preoccupation with promoting ‘Britishness’ – both in education and naturalisation policy – has been predominantly a focus in England, rather than in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland. Indeed, research analysing conceptions of citizenship in citizenship education in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales illustrate varying conceptions across the four nations, given the devolved nature of education policy in the UK: England presents a predominantly state-level, yet multicultural, framing; Scotland presents a relatively more national (although predominantly civic) framing, coupled with a relatively more global outlook; Wales presents a national framing (both in cultural but increasingly also in civic terms), coupled with a relatively more global outlook; Northern Ireland presents a ‘glocal’ framing with the focus on the local, explicit avoidance of the national and state-level, and an orientation to the global through the lens of human rights (Kiwan, 2013). Furthermore, even though naturalisation policy is a function of central government, my research has shown tensions between a top-down state discourses on ‘Britishness’ in contrast to regional discourses on ‘Welshness’, ‘Scottishness’, ‘Northern Irishness’ and ‘Englishness’ (Kiwan, 2013).

The concern with promoting shared values in the face of diversity typically reflects a concern with perceived divisiveness of ‘multicultural’ diversity arising from the UK’s minorities, as opposed to concerns with ‘multi-nation’ diversity (the four nations – England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales). Yet, as remarked upon by the Canadian political philosopher, Will Kymlicka (2011) reflecting on the Canadian context as well as other multi-nation states, although many nation-states are concerned with potential threats from multicultural diversity, in fact the greatest ‘threats’ to the integrity of the nation-state come from its constituent nations.

There are also problems in the teaching and practical application of any kind of prescriptive approach to what values count as ‘British’. Certainly, I would advocate learning about values and discussing controversial issues, where students are supported in learning to develop skills of logic, debate, clarity of informed expression, as well as listening to opposing perspectives. Since Brexit, and the rise in populism in the US context as well as in parts of Europe, members of minority groups have come under increased verbal and physical attack, by those who have been emboldened to express and act in ways previously deemed to be unacceptable in an egalitarian and democratic society. In some discourses, unfettered ‘freedom of expression’ has sometimes been used as way to legitimise the expression of hate speech, racism, sexism, other forms of discrimination, and acts of violence. There is much public misunderstanding regarding how freedom of expression
relates to justice and inclusion, and a public initiative to address this would be an important step towards addressing these issues.

9. In recent analyses of why there has been a rise in nationalist and populist movements worldwide – for example, the forces leading to the voting for Trump as President, the forces leading to the result of the Brexit referendum, it has been suggested that certain communities have felt ‘left behind’ or not heard by the political elite / establishment. It has also been suggested that these groups tend to be demographically poor, White and relatively uneducated. In the context of Brexit, statistical analysis has also show the importance of age in this demographic, where relatively more older voters supported Brexit, alluding to more ideological rather than economic drivers for these decisions, with a nostalgia for a ‘stronger’ UK as in the days of the British Empire. However, it is also important - that whilst recognising these factors, it is also recognised that such sentiments are predicated on a strong sense of entitlement, positioned in relation to those ‘minorities’ and ‘newcomers’ perceived to have less entitlement. This is not only the case in the UK and US, but also evident in other contexts worldwide. For example, in research on Syrian and Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, the same concerns are articulated by poor, marginalised local Lebanese communities. One strategy used by international humanitarian agencies, such as the UNHCR has been to support those local deprived communities and their local inhabitants where there have been large influxes of refugees (Kiwan, 2016).

11. Language proficiency has been shown to be strongly positively correlated with employment rates and with earnings, and so is important in promoting equality (Gidley, Cangiano, Khor and Kiwan, 2012). In addition, language is critically important in cultural integration. Some European countries have language programmes specifically for new migrants, but in the UK provision has been either within schools for the under-16s or at FE colleges for over-16s. There have been reductions in free provision since 2007, and women, the low-paid and part-time workers are particularly adversely affected by such reductions, with 26% in our interview sample stating that the courses were too expensive (ibid, 2012). In addition, from our interviews, it was noted that a significant minority (13%) had to travel more than 10 miles for an ESOL class, and 17% had to wait more than 6 months to access a place on a course (ibid, 2012). In the Lord Goldsmith QC Review of Citizenship, I also made a number of recommendations in relation to supporting the integration of first and second generation immigrants through adequate and free provision of English language at the earliest possible opportunity (Kiwan, 2007).

22 August 2017