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### Citizenship of young people

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## Chapter 3

### *Citizenship orientations and knowledge in primary and secondary education<sup>1</sup>*

Despite widespread attention to citizenship in educational practice, knowledge of the citizenship of students is still fragmented. We therefore present a comprehensive framework to integrate empirical data and theoretical insights into the citizenship of young people today. To develop and validate the framework exploratory and confirmative factor analyses were conducted on the measurements of citizenship attitudes, skills, reflections and knowledge of a sample of 7,768 students from grades 5-9 in 38 Dutch schools for primary and secondary education. The results were cross-validated on a different sample of 15,940 students from primary and secondary education. We distinguished four citizenship orientations of the students –societal interest, prosocial ability, reflective thinking and assertiveness– and two domains of citizenship knowledge –societal knowledge and interpersonal knowledge. Use of this framework might support large-scale empirically based evaluation of citizenship education on students competence and facilitate schools in formulating educational goals that supports the development of citizenship competences of their students.

#### 1 INTRODUCTION

Since citizenship education was introduced in the formal school curricula of most modern societies at the turn of the 21st century (Euridyce, 2005, 2012), the citizenship of students has been examined to enable profound understanding of the effects of schooling on citizenship (e.g. Cleaver, Ireland, Kerr, & Lopes, 2005; Geboers, Geijsel, Admiraal, & Ten Dam, 2012; Geijsel, Ledoux, Reumerman, & Ten Dam, 2012; Ireland, Kerr, Lopes, Nelson, & Cleaver, 2006; Schulz, Ainley, Fraillon, Kerr, & Losito, 2010; Torney-Purta, 2002). In these empirical studies, citizenship is usually unfolded in terms of specific knowledge, skills, attitudes and reflection that people basically need in order to be able to participate in a responsible and adequate way in a democratic society. These components form part of the broader concept of 'competences' (Rychen & Salganik, 2003; Ten Dam & Volman, 2007; cf. Eraut, 1994). While this line of research provides insight into the citizenship of students, it is nevertheless difficult to relate the findings to the pedagogical goals strived for in citizenship education. Pedagogical goals of citizenship education are mostly formulated in terms of general combinations of attitudes and behaviors needed for individuals to become competent and effective active citizens, with specific citizenship knowledge, skills, attitudes and values combined and integrated (Hoskins, Barber, Van Nijlen, & Villalba, 2011). For example, 'develop political literacy' or 'develop social responsibility'. This 'mismatch' of the integrated pedagogical goals of citizenship education with the separate components of citizenship competences coming to front in empirical research and measurements hinders to the opportunities to build upon empirical research and measurements in school practice. Put differently, it obstructs opportunities to give meaning to student measurements in light of educational goals and thus to evaluate education and adjust education based on results. Consequently, because of this mismatch, the question whether citizenship education -as taking place in schools- achieves its goals remains largely unanswered.

The aim of the present study was to develop and evaluate a framework for understanding the current theoretical insights and empirical data on the citizenship of the students, which should also be supportive for educational practice.

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<sup>1</sup> Geboers, E., Geijsel, F., Admiraal, W., & Ten Dam, G. (submitted). Citizenship orientations and knowledge in primary and secondary education.

### 1.1 Citizenship competences, goals of citizenship education and the Dutch context

A body of knowledge about the citizenship competences of students has gradually been built up over recent years. The focus in this research has been mainly on the relationships between citizenship competences and the background characteristics of young people. Citizenship knowledge has been found, for example, to generally increase over the years although students in adolescence have been found to have less positive attitudes towards citizenship than younger students (Amadeo, Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Husfeldt, & Nikolova, 2002; Cleaver, Ireland, Kerr, & Lopes, 2005; Geijssel et al., 2012; Ireland, et al., 2006; Kerr, Lopes, Nelson, White, Cleaver, & Benton, 2007; Torney-Purta & Amadeo, 2003). Girls outperform boys with regard to citizenship knowledge (Schulz et al., 2010), although gender differences in citizenship attitudes and skills are much smaller and appear to be topic-specific (Geijssel et al., 2012). Furthermore, students with a higher social economic status (Lopes, Benton, & Cleaver, 2009; Schulz et al., 2010; Torney-Purta, 2004; Torney-Purta & Barber, 2004) and with a majority background (Geijssel et al., 2012; Schulz et al., 2010; Torney-Purta, Barber, & Wilkenfeld, 2006) show more citizenship knowledge. And while majority students are more willing to vote than students from ethnic minorities (e.g. Lopez, 2003), minority students are more interested in politics (Cleaver et al., 2005; Schulz et al., 2010), show more positive attitudes towards citizenship, have greater citizenship skills and reflect more on citizenship issues (Geijssel et al., 2012).

In addition to empirical studies of students' citizenship competences, there is a line of literature on citizenship education focusing on visions and goals in citizenship education. In the Dutch educational context, schools have substantial freedom in the design and implementation of citizenship education. The legal task of schools in the Netherlands only asks for the promotion of "active citizenship" and social integration in order to develop students' willingness and ability to be part of the community and to contribute actively to that community (Council of Education, 2012); Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2005). The goals outlined for citizenship education therefore differ between schools depending on the perspectives taken on citizenship, for example, the extent to which "the common" is emphasized versus "autonomy" (Veugelers, 2011). Emphasizing "the common" (shared moral goals) stems from a communitarian perspective on citizenship (Etzioni, 1993, 1996; Taylor, 1989), in which "bonding moral values" are viewed as the cement of a community (Etzioni 1996, pp. 90-91). The common is not about forced or external values but, rather, the inner acceptance of values, transferred by the family, neighbors and teachers (Etzioni, 1993). The citizenship competences which students should acquire from such a perspective on citizenship are thus primarily related to social adjustment and prosocial behaviour. In contrast, both a liberal and a critical-emancipatory perspective on citizenship emphasize the importance of "autonomy". The liberal point of view places the rights of the individual in the middle of the concept of citizenship and pleads for strict neutrality with respect to values and citizenship (cf. Rawls, 1993). The critical-emancipatory perspective on citizenship links autonomy to social concern and social justice (Giroux, 1989).

Next to the marked variation in citizenship education depending on different citizenship perspectives emerging in schools (Leenders, Veugelers, & De Kat, 2008), previous research has shown differences between school levels. In the Dutch educational system students are selected at the age of 12 for different tracks of secondary education. In the lower levels of secondary education (four pre-vocational tracks), the elementary rules of social interaction and adaptation are emphasized in particular, whereas in the higher levels of secondary education (three general secondary tracks) critical citizenship and societal knowledge are emphasized (Ten Dam & Volman, 2003; Leenders et al., 2008).

### 1.2 Citizenship orientations and the purpose of the present study

Citizenship orientations might form a framework which aligns better with the different perspectives and goals of schools, compared to citizenship attitudes, skills and behaviour. Citizenship orientations are combinations of knowledge, attitudes and skills and of the perspectives on citizenship underlying these attitudes (Almond & Verba, 1989; Janmaat, 2007; Qinghua, 2002; Van de Werfhorst & De Graaf, 2004). For example, such an orientation could involve the combination of attitudes reflecting the willingness to participate in a community, the skills needed for proper participation in that community and the critical reflection on issues of the social (in)equality of that participation in the community.

In the present study, we aim to derive relevant orientations from available self-assessments of specific citizenship attitudes, skills and reflections of students and relate these orientations to students' citizenship knowledge. By doing so we intend to contribute to the empirical knowledge on citizenship competences as daily practiced by students in schools on which schools and teachers can build upon in educational practice. We formulated the following research questions:

1. What are the citizenship orientations of students in primary and secondary education?
2. How do the citizenship orientations and citizenship knowledge of students in primary and secondary education relate?
3. Can certain student characteristics explain the differences found in the citizenship orientations and knowledge of students in primary and secondary education?

## 2 METHOD

### 2.1 Participants

Data was collected in 38 schools: 14 schools for primary education, 13 schools for prevocational education and 11 schools for general secondary education. These schools were part of the Dutch Citizenship Alliance in which schools, universities and institutes for curriculum development and testing cooperated with the Dutch Inspectorate of Education for the development and evaluation of citizenship education in the Netherlands. The schools varied with regard to denomination and were located throughout the country. Data was collected in the school year of 2007/2008, from 7,768 students (see Table 1).

*Table 1. Overview of measurements and number (N) of students*

School year	Primary education	Secondary education		Total
		Prevocational	General	
2007-2008	Grade 5 N = 390	Grade 7 N = 1926	Grade 7 N = 1840	N = 4156
	Grade 6 N = 360	Grade 9 N = 1812	Grade 9 N = 1440	N = 3612
Total				N = 7768

### 2.2 Citizenship competences

Students between 11 and 16 years of age completed the Citizenship Competences Questionnaire (CCQ) developed for measuring the citizenship competences (Ten Dam, Geijssel, Reumerman, & Ledoux, 2011). In this questionnaire, citizenship is situated in the daily social practice of young people and operation-

alized in terms of the competences which they need to adequately fulfil four categories of social tasks (i.e. acting democratically, acting in a socially responsible manner, dealing with conflicts and dealing with differences). The questionnaire consists of 85 items, divided across 17 scales measuring the core components of citizenship competence (i.e. knowledge, attitudes, skills and reflection) for the four categories of social tasks. See Table 2 for an overview of the scales, descriptive statistics and reliability coefficients.

Knowledge was measured using 27 multiple choice items within three response options and the instruction to indicate which option best answers the question. For example: 'All children have the right to: a) pocket money b) choose who they want to live with, c) education'. Option c is the correct answer here and assigned a score of 1, the other options are assigned a score of 0. The 27 items encompass four knowledge scales (i.e. categories of social tasks). For each scale, students received a score which was the proportion of correct answers.

Attitudes, skills and reflection were measured using four-point Likert type scales, with the higher the scores, the higher the frequency or applicability. The general question 'How well does this statement apply to you?' was opposed for the attitude items. A sample statement was then: 'I like to know something about different religions'. The skills items required the students to estimate their own skills on the four categories of social tasks and were introduced with the question: 'How good are you at' -for example-, 'finding a solution to a disagreement which everyone is satisfied with?'. The reflection items were introduced with 'How often do you think about -for instance- whether students are listened to at your school? A total of 67 items represented 5 attitude scales, 4 skill scales and 4 reflection scales.

**Table 2. Descriptive statistics for 17 citizenship scales: reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) and means (standard deviations).**

	Scale	$\alpha$	Mean (sd)
Attitudes	Acting democratically factor 1 (willingness to hear everyone's voice) (3 items)	.71	3.38 (0.51)
	Acting democratically factor 2 (willingness to contribute critically) (3 items)	.66	2.70 (0.67)
	Acting in a social responsible manner (6 items)	.69	3.04 (0.51)
	Dealing with conflicts (6 items)	.80	2.86 (0.58)
	Dealing with differences (6 items)	.87	2.84 (0.68)
Skills	Acting democratically factor 1 (come up for one's own opinion) (3 items)	.75	3.19 (0.58)
	Acting democratically factor 2 (listening to the opinions of others) (3 items)	.72	3.06 (0.56)
	Acting in a social responsible manner and dealing with conflicts (5 items)	.78	3.02 (0.52)
	Dealing with differences (4 items)	.71	3.10 (0.50)
Reflection	Acting democratically (6 items)	.82	2.28 (0.66)
	Acting in a social responsible manner (6 items)	.86	2.10 (0.70)
	Dealing with conflicts (8 items)	.91	2.51 (0.70)
	Dealing with differences (8 items)	.87	2.06 (0.70)
Knowledge	Acting democratically (8 items)	.65	0.79 (0.22)
	Acting in a social responsible manner (6 items)	.56	0.77 (0.23)
	Dealing with conflicts (7 items)	.63	0.67 (0.26)
	Dealing with differences (6 items)	.64	0.77 (0.25)

## 2.3 Student background, participation in school and society and school climate

Information on the background of the students was obtained by posing 9 questions following administration of the CCQ. Students were asked, for example, what grade they were in, what their age was and what the school level of their parents was. In addition, the students' participation in school and society and their perceptions of the school climate were collected (cf. Schulz, Ainly, Fraillon, Losito, & Kerr, 2008). The students were asked if they participated (yes/no) in societal activities such as scouting, multicultural organizations, human rights organizations, environmental organizations, the youth section of a political party, religious communities or volunteer work; in school activities such as the student council, the school paper, class representative, mediator or the organization of school celebrations; and about their engagement with the news as presented in newspapers or television programmes. In addition, the students were asked about their perceptions of the school climate in order to gain insight into the social safety of the school and the quality of teacher-student and student-student interaction as relevant features of the school context for the development of citizenship. Students were asked -for example-, 'Whether the teachers respect the students?', 'Whether the students bully each other?' or 'Whether the students are willing to help each other, even if they are not friends?'. In

Table 3, we summarize these variables.

**Table 3. Overview of student characteristics in percentages and means and standard deviations (N=7768; N of schools=38)**

Background characteristics									
Gender	51.8%	Boy	48.2%	Girl					
SES	5.3%	Low	38.7%	Middle	56.1%	High			
Ethnic origin	79.3%	Majority	20.7%	Minority					
Language spoken at home	87.4%	Dutch	2.4%	Dutch dialect	10.1%	Not Dutch			
Age	7.5%	10-11 years	49.0%	12-13 years	37.9%	14-15 years	5.7%	16 years or older	
Grade	5.0%	Grade 5	4.6%	Grade 6	48.3%	Grade 7	42.1%	Grade 9	
School level	9.6%	Primary	47.8%	Prevocational	42.6%	General secondary education			
<b>Students' citizenship participation:</b>							$\alpha$	Mean	Sd.
Societal participation (8 activities, mean activity)								0.11	.13
School participation (5 activities, mean activity)								0.05	.13
News engagement (4 items, judged using 4-point Likert scale)							.78	2.16	.73
<b>Students' perspective on school climate:</b>									
1: student-teacher relationships (6 items, 4-point Likert scale)							.94	2.94	.65
2: student relationships (5 items, 4-point Likert scale)							.92	2.70	.80
3: social behaviour between students (5 items, 4-point Likert scale)							.92	2.62	.63

## 2.4 Analysis

In order to construct and test our comprehensive framework for understanding citizenship orientations and knowledge of students in primary and secondary education, the following procedure was followed.

First, exploratory factor analyses with varimax rotation were conducted on the mean scores of the 13 CCQ subscales representing the students' citizenship attitudes, skills and reflection for the four categories of social tasks. The four knowledge subscales were analyzed separately as knowledge is understood as a conceptually different measurement than attitudes, skills and reflection. Three factors were extracted with an eigenvalue larger than 1 explaining 64.45% of the variance in the subscale means. We excluded the subscale skill acting democratically 1 (come up for one's own opinion) from the initial analysis because this scale showed to form a separate factor in all models. At the end of this analytic step, this subscale was included again as a separate factor without consequences for the formation of other factors and thus the model eventually contained four factors of citizenship orientations.

Secondly, we conducted confirmatory factor analyses on the four factor model of citizenship orientations applied to a random half ( $N=3,825$ ) of the total sample of students. The fit of the model was considered acceptable with a RMSEA (root mean square error of approximation)  $\leq .08$ , SRMR (standardized root mean square residual)  $\leq .06$ , and CFI (comparative fit index)  $\geq .95$  (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The general fit of the initial model was quite satisfactory ( $\chi^2(60) = 2896.361, p = .001$ ; RMSEA = .078, SRMR = .047, CFI = .94, BIC = 143106.361), although three scales did not meet our standard of loading of  $>.30$  on one factor only. We optimized the model with four factors by excluding the following three scales: reflection dealing with conflicts, attitude acting democratically factor 1 (willingness to hear everyone's voice) and attitude acting socially responsible. Removing these scales significantly improved the fit of our model ( $\chi^2(30) = 960.702, p = .001$ ; RMSEA = .063, SRMR = .032, CFI = .969, BIC = 114667.886;  $\Delta \chi^2_{SB}(30) = 1935.659, p = .001$ ).

Thirdly, the stability of the final four factor model which included the mean scores of 10 subscales of the CCQ was checked on a random half of the total sample of students and found to produce again a good fit of the model ( $\chi^2(30) = 488.143, p = .001$ ; RMSEA = .063, SRMR = .032, CFI = .970, BIC = 56357.603).

Fourthly, the results were validated with confirmatory analysis on two datasets formed from the two random halves of a total representative sample of 15,940 sixth and ninth grade students from 80 primary and secondary schools in the Netherlands (COOL<sup>5-18</sup>, 2009 [Dutch National Cohort Study Educational Careers Students 5 to 18 years]). For both datasets the fit of the model was good (COOL-dataset 1:  $\chi^2(30) = 925.897, p = .001$ ; RMSEA = .061, SRMR = .029, CFI = .972, BIC = 107820.601; COOL-dataset 2:  $\chi^2(30) = 1148.957, p = .001$ ; RMSEA = .069, SRMR = .033, CFI = .965, BIC = 107278.144).

In a fifth step, separate exploratory factor analyses with varimax rotation were conducted on the mean scores of the four knowledge subscales from the CCQ. All of the factor results met our standard loading  $>.30$  on only one factor. Two factors were extracted with an eigenvalue larger than 1 explaining 77.38% of the variance in the mean scores.

In a sixth step, the fit of the resulting two factor model of citizenship knowledge was found to be good in a confirmatory factor analysis ( $\chi^2(1) = 27.788, p = .001$ ; RMSEA = .059, SRMR = .009, CFI = .997, BIC = -8453.069) and stable when conducted on the random half of the student sample ( $\chi^2(1) = 15.067, p = .001$ ; RMSEA = .061, SRMR = .008, CFI = .996, BIC = -3973.127).

In a seventh and last step, the validation of the results for citizenship knowledge in confirmatory analysis conducted on the two random halves of the large COOL dataset showed the fit of the two-factor model to be acceptable (COOL-dataset 1:  $\chi^2(1) = 35.213, p = .001$ ; RMSEA = .066, SRMR = .009, CFI = .996, BIC = -11156.534; COOL-dataset 2:  $\chi^2(1) = 50.631, p = .001$ ; RMSEA = .079, SRMR = .011, CFI = .994, BIC = -11180.303).

The scores on the six scales (four orientation and two knowledge scales) were calculated based

on the means of the subscales from the CCQ. In addition to descriptive statistics, multivariate analyses were performed with the four citizenship orientations and two citizenship knowledge scales as dependent variables, and student background, participation in school and society, news engagement and school climate as explanatory variables.

## 3 RESULTS

### 3.1 Citizenship orientations

The findings of the final four factor model for the mean scores on the 10 competence subscales of the CCQ, measuring specific citizenship attitudes, skills and reflection of the students in the sample are presented in Figure 1.

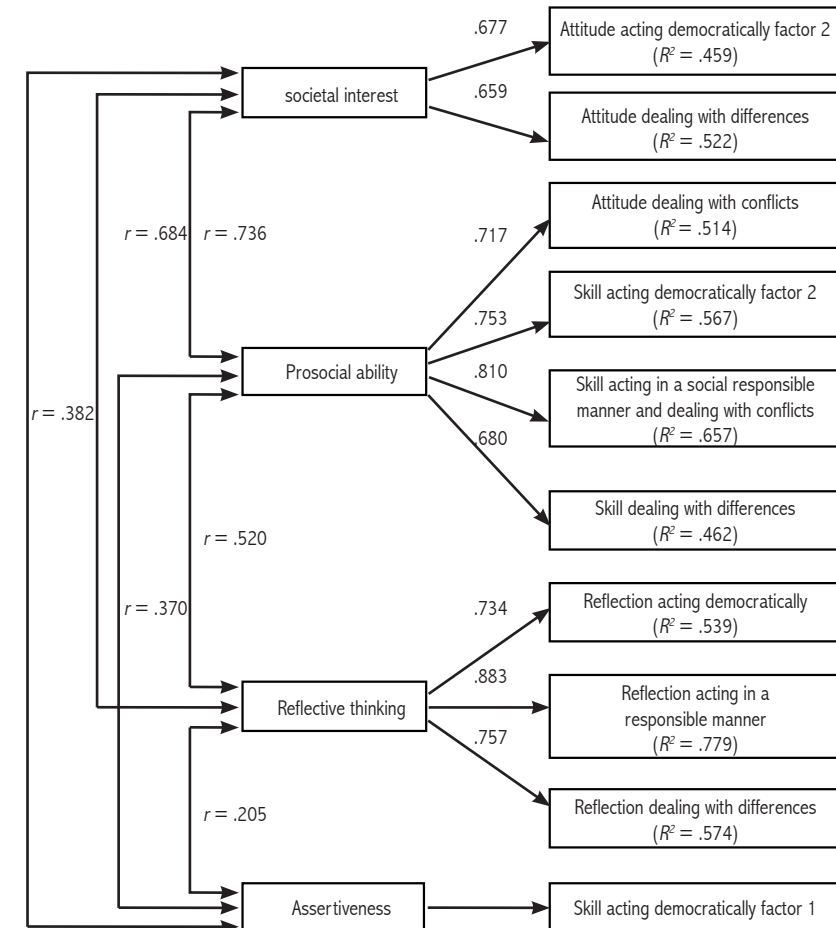


Figure 1. Final four factor model for the citizenship orientations with the factor loadings, the explained variances per subscale ( $R^2$ ), and the correlations ( $r$ ).

The four factors as distinguished can be seen to represent the following citizenship orientations of the students: societal interest, prosocial ability, reflective thinking and assertiveness. The societal interest orientation involves attitudes reflecting the willingness to be a part of a community and willingness to take responsibility for other people in the community, such as interest in social issues and other people, an interest in maintaining relationships, and respect for others with their differences. The prosocial ability orientation concerns the skills needed for proper communication and for adaptation to practices and habits of people in society, familiarity with social rules, like being polite, consideration for others, and the ability to converse and the ability to empathize with others. The reflective thinking orientation concerns critical reflection on social issues and social structures in society, discrimination, and trying to understand social relations. The assertiveness orientation concerns the skills needed to stand up for your own ideas and clearly formulate these.

Figure 1 shows that the correlations between the four factors which represent the citizenship orientations of students are moderate to relatively high. The reliability of the citizenship orientation scales along with the mean scale scores and standard deviations for the students are shown in Table 4. The results in Table 4 show the students to have relatively high scores on prosocial ability and assertiveness but rather low scores on reflective thinking.

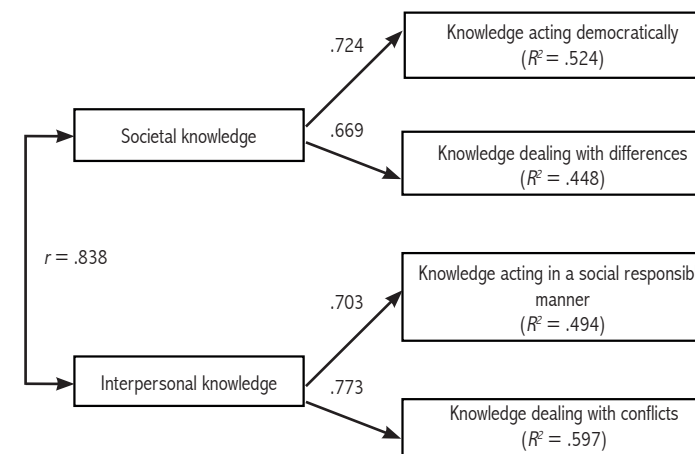
**Table 4. Overview of the means, standard deviations, and reliability (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ ) of the citizenship orientations (N=7644).**

Citizenship orientations	Mean	(sd.)	$\alpha$
Societal interest (2 competence scales)	2.77	(.58)	.85
Prosocial ability (5 competence scales)	3.01	(.44)	.88
Reflective thinking (3 competence scales)	2.14	(.59)	.91
Assertiveness (1 competence scale)	3.19	(.58)	.75

\*Note: To calculate Cronbach's alpha, the Spearman-Brown correction of test length up to 6 items was applied.

### 3.2 Citizenship knowledge

The findings of the final two factor model for the mean scores on the four knowledge scales of the students in the sample are presented in Figure 2.



**Figure 2. Final two factor model for the citizenship knowledge with the factor loadings, the explained variances per subscale ( $R^2$ ), and the correlations ( $r$ ).**

The two factors are found to represent two domains of knowledge; societal and interpersonal. Societal knowledge concerns knowledge of the democratic principles of society, the organization of society, and the norms that are at issue in society. Interpersonal knowledge concerns knowledge of prevailing social values, behavioural rules, and social everyday manners. Figure 2 shows that the correlation between the two factors which represent the two domains of citizenship knowledge of students is high.

In Table 5, the descriptive statistics and reliabilities for the two domains of citizenship knowledge are presented. As can be seen, the students between 11 and 16 years of age generally know more about democracy and societal structures than about social rules and social contact.

**Table 5. Overview of the means, standard deviations, and reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) for two domains of citizenship knowledge (N=7644)**

Citizenship knowledge	Mean	(sd.)	$\alpha$
Societal knowledge (2 scales)	.78	(.20)	.88
Interpersonal knowledge (2 scales)	.72	(.22)	.85

\*Note: To calculate Cronbach's alpha, the Spearman-Brown correction of test length up to 6 items was applied.

In Table 6, the correlations between the four citizenship orientations of the students and their citizenship knowledge in the societal and interpersonal domains are considered.

**Table 6. Correlations between four citizenship orientations and two domains of citizenship knowledge**

Citizenship orientations	Citizenship knowledge	
	Societal knowledge	Interpersonal knowledge
Societal interest	.124	.245
Prosocial ability	.101	.283
Reflective thinking	-.105	.069
Assertiveness	.090	.049

The correlations between the citizenship orientations of the students and their citizenship knowledge were significant but generally low. This shows the citizenship orientations to relate marginally to the citizenship knowledge in either the societal or the interpersonal domain.

### 3.3 Background characteristics of students and their citizenship orientations

Table 7 shows the results of the MANOVA analyses that were conducted in order to obtain an overview of the relations between the four citizenship orientations and the backgrounds of the students.

**Table 7. Overview of significant differences in citizenship orientations of students according to background characteristic together with means (and standard deviations)\***

Student characteristics		Citizenship orientations			
		Societal interest	Prosocial ability	Reflective thinking	Assertiveness
Gender	Boy	2.68 (.59)	2.92 (.44)	2.07 (.59)	n.s.
	Girl	2.86 (.56)	3.11 (.41)	2.22 (.59)	
SES	Low	2.87 (.68)	3.00 (.52)	2.31 (.67)	3.21 (.62)
	Medium	2.72 (.58)	2.98 (.43)	2.10 (.57)	3.15 (.58)
	High	2.82 (.57)	3.04 (.43)	2.16 (.58)	3.23 (.57)
Ethnic origin	Majority	2.71 (.57)	2.99 (.43)	2.09 (.58)	3.16 (.58)
	Minority	3.01 (.56)	3.09 (.46)	2.34 (.61)	3.29 (.57)
Language spoken at home	Dutch	n.s.	n.s.	2.11 (.58)	n.s.
	Dutch dialect			2.09 (.67)	
	Other language			2.36 (.63)	
Age	10-11 years	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
	12-13 years				
	14-15 years				
	16 years and older				

Grade	Grade 5	2.94 (.58)	3.16 (.47)	2.31 (.57)	n.s.	
	Grade 6	2.91 (.52)	3.06 (.48)	2.09 (.55)		
	Grade 7	2.84 (.57)	3.05 (.43)	2.25 (.60)		
	Grade 9	2.65 (.59)	2.94 (.42)	2.00 (.56)		
School level	Primary education	2.93 (.55)			3.22 (.57)	
	Prevocational education	2.70 (.60)	n.s.	n.s.	3.16 (.59)	
	General secondary education		2.81 (.56)			3.21 (.56)

\*Note: Results significant at 5% level; non-significant results indicated with n.s.

The results of the MANOVAs show that the citizenship orientations of the students to differ significantly depending on background characteristics. Gender appears to be significantly related to the differences in the citizenship orientations of the students ( $\Lambda = .945$ ,  $F(4, 5095) = 74.01$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .055$ ). Compared to boys, girls generally showed more societal interest ( $F(1) = 104.85$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .020$ ), prosocial ability ( $F(1) = 233.65$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .044$ ) and reflective thinking ( $F(1) = 86.16$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .017$ ). Differences in the social economic statuses of their families appears also to be related to the differences in the citizenship orientations of the students ( $\Lambda = .988$ ,  $F(8, 10190) = 7.86$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .006$ ). Students with the lowest social economic backgrounds reported the most societal interest ( $F(2) = 20.33$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .008$ ) and reflective thinking ( $F(2) = 12.06$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .005$ ). Students with the highest economic background showed higher scores on prosocial ability ( $F(2) = 16.34$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .006$ ) and assertiveness ( $F(2) = 10.02$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .004$ ), compared to students with medium or low social economic background. The ethnic origins of the students also appears to be significantly related to the citizenship orientations of students ( $\Lambda = .974$ ,  $F(4, 5095) = 34.21$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .026$ ). Minority students showed higher scores on all four citizenship orientations than majority students (societal interest:  $F(1) = 130.55$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .025$ ; prosocial ability:  $F(1) = 28.96$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .006$ ; reflective thinking:  $F(1) = 47.88$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .009$ ; assertiveness:  $F(1) = 21.64$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .004$ ).

The language spoken at home only relates significantly to differences in the reflective thinking orientation of students, with speakers of Dutch at home being less reflective than speakers of a language other than Dutch at home ( $\Lambda = .996$ ,  $F(8, 10190) = 2.38$ ,  $p = .015$ ,  $\eta^2 = .002$ ;  $F(2) = 4.95$ ,  $p = .007$ ,  $\eta^2 = .002$ ). Grade significantly relates to some of the differences in the citizenship orientations of the students ( $\Lambda = .995$ ,  $F(8, 10190) = 3.46$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .003$ ). The students in fifth grade showed more of an orientation towards societal interest ( $F(2) = 5.81$ ,  $p = .003$ ,  $\eta^2 = .002$ ), prosocial ability ( $F(2) = 7.12$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .003$ ), and reflective thinking ( $F(2) = 7.49$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .003$ ) than the students in the higher grades. Finally, school level appears to significantly relate to differences in the citizenship orientations of the students ( $\Lambda = .986$ ,  $F(4, 5095) = 18.64$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .014$ ). Students in prevocational education showed less societal interest ( $F(1) = 49.74$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .010$ ) and assertiveness ( $F(1) = 16.51$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .003$ ) than students in primary education and general secondary education. The MANOVAs showed that student age is not related to the citizenship orientations of the students.

### 3.4 Background characteristics of students and their citizenship knowledge

In Table 8, we present an overview of the differences in citizenship knowledge of the students according to their background characteristics, again based on MANOVA analyses.

**Table 8. Overview of significant differences in citizenship knowledge of students according to background characteristic together with means (and standard deviations) \***

Student characteristics		Citizenship knowledge	
		Societal knowledge	Interpersonal knowledge
Gender	Boy	.75 (.21)	.67 (.23)
	Girl	.82 (.17)	.77 (.18)
SES	Low	.65 (.24)	.62 (.24)
	Medium	.79 (.19)	.72 (.21)
	High	.82 (.19)	.74 (.21)
Ethnic origin	Majority	n.s.	n.s.
	Minority		
Language spoken at home	Dutch	.80 (.19)	.73 (.21)
	Dutch dialect	.75 (.23)	.67 (.24)
	Other language	.69 (.22)	.63 (.22)
Age	10-11 years	.72 (.19)	.74 (.20)
	12-13 years	.76 (.19)	.74 (.20)
	14-15 years	.83 (.20)	.71 (.22)
	16 years and older	.76 (.22)	.64 (.23)
Grade	Grade 5	.65 (.18)	.71 (.19)
	Grade 6	.80 (.18)	.79 (.18)
	Grade 7	.75 (.20)	.73 (.21)
	Grade 9	.83 (.20)	.70 (.23)
School level	Primary education	.72 (.19)	.75 (.19)
	Prevocational education	.73 (.21)	.67 (.22)
	General secondary education	.85 (.17)	.77 (.21)

\*Note: Results significant at 5% level; non-significant results indicated with n.s.

Gender appears to relate significantly to the differences in their citizenship knowledge ( $\Lambda = .945$ ,  $F(2,5134) = 150.83$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .055$ ). Girls scored higher than boys in both knowledge domains (societal knowledge:  $F(1) = 138.23$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .026$ ; interpersonal knowledge:  $F(1) = 288.90$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .053$ ). Social economic status relates significantly to the differences in the citizenship knowledge of the students as well ( $\Lambda = .984$ ,  $F(4,10268) = 20.65$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .008$ ). The higher the social economic background, the higher the scores on both societal knowledge ( $F(2) = 41.14$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .016$ ) and interpersonal knowledge ( $F(2) = 11.47$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .004$ ). The language spoken at home appears to be slightly related to the differences observed in citizenship knowledge ( $\Lambda = .989$ ,  $F(4, 10268) = 13.84$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .005$ ). Students who spoke Dutch at home showed more knowledge in both domains than students who spoke a Dutch dialect or a language another than Dutch at home (societal

knowledge:  $F(2) = 22.19$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .009$ ; interpersonal knowledge:  $F(2) = 19.65$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .008$ ).

The age of the students explains a significant part of the differences in citizenship knowledge but, differently depending on the knowledge domain ( $\Lambda = .955$ ,  $F(6, 10268) = 4.62$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .003$ ). Students in the range of 14-15 years of age showed the highest scores on societal knowledge ( $F(3) = 7.33$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .004$ ) while students in the younger ranges of 10-11 years and 12-13 years showed the highest scores on interpersonal knowledge. Students of 16 years and older even showed the lowest scores on interpersonal knowledge ( $F(3) = 5.76$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .003$ ). Grade also appears to relate significantly to the observed differences in citizenship knowledge but, again differently depending on the knowledge domain ( $\Lambda = .971$ ,  $F(4,10268) = 37.98$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .015$ ). Ninth grade students showed the highest societal knowledge ( $F(2) = 72.31$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .027$ ) while sixth grade students showed the highest interpersonal knowledge ( $F(2) = 6.95$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .003$ ). Finally, school level was related similarly and with a relatively large effect size to the differences in both domains of citizenship knowledge ( $\Lambda = .920$ ,  $F(2,5134) = 221.72$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .080$ ). Students in general secondary education (i.e. highest level of school) produced significantly the highest societal knowledge scores ( $F(1) = 430.06$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .077$ ) while the students in prevocational education (i.e. lower level of school) produced the lowest interpersonal knowledge ( $F(1) = 188.89$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .035$ ). The ethnic origin of the students did not explain differences between students in their citizenship knowledge.

### 3.5 Citizenship orientations and knowledge and citizenship participation of students and their perceptions of school climate

In Table 9 and Table 10 we present the multivariate outcomes on the relationships of citizenship participation, perceptions of the school climate and news engagement with the citizenship orientations (Table 9) and with the citizenship knowledge (Table 10) of the students.

**Table 9. Overview of significant differences in citizenship orientations of students according to their citizenship participation, news engagement and perceptions of school climate \***

	Citizenship orientations			
	Societal interest	Prosocial ability	Reflective thinking	Assertiveness
Societal participation	+	+	+	n.s.
School participation	+	+	+	n.s.
News engagement	+	+	+	+
School climate 1: student-teacher relationships	+	+	+	+
School climate 2: student relationships	n.s.	n.s.	-	-
School climate 3: social behaviour between students	+	+	+	+

\*Note: Results significant at 5% level; non-significant results indicated with n.s.

**Table 10. Overview of significant differences in citizenship knowledge of students according to their citizenship participation, news engagement and perceptions of school climate \***

	Citizenship knowledge	
	Societal knowledge	Interpersonal knowledge
Societal participation	-	-
School participation	-	-
News engagement	+	+
School climate 1: student-teacher relationships	+	+
School climate 2: student relationships	+	+
School climate 3: social behaviour between students	-	n.s.

\*Note: Results significant at 5% level; non-significant results indicated with n.s.

Citizenship participation and perceptions of the school climate together explained less than 3% of the variance in the citizenship orientations and citizenship knowledge of students respectively. This means that student participation and students' perceptions of the school climate appear to have only little relation with the outcome variables. Only news engagement appears to relate somewhat higher to the citizenship orientations of the students (see Table 9;  $\Lambda = .846$ ,  $F(72, 28566) = 17.30$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .041$ ). This holds for all four of the citizenship orientations: The more students were engaged with the news, the higher the scores (societal interest:  $F(18) = 53.25$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .120$ ; prosocial ability:  $F(18) = 19.68$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .046$ ; reflective thinking:  $F(18) = 37.58$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .085$ ; assertiveness:  $F(18) = 10.86$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .026$ ).

#### 4 CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

A framework for integrating the theoretical insights and empirical data on the citizenship competences of young people was developed and evaluated. The aim of this endeavour was to integrate the separate components of the student competences (attitudes, skills, knowledge and reflection) and to find a way towards more systematic research in citizenship. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses on the measurements of the attitudes, skills, knowledge and reflection of a large sample of students provided an appropriate framework for the citizenship of the students. The framework distinguishes four citizenship orientations and two domains of citizenship knowledge- of students. The citizenship orientations of students can differ with respect to interest (i.e. societal interest orientation), adjustment and social behaviour (i.e. prosocial ability orientation), reflections and attention to social issues (i.e. reflective thinking orientation) and formulating one's own opinion (assertiveness orientation). Besides, their citizenship knowledge can differ with respect to political and democratic knowledge (i.e. societal knowledge) and social- behavioural knowledge (i.e. interpersonal knowledge). This framework facilitates the large-scale empirically based evaluation of educational goals on the students' citizenship and could enable schools to formulate educational goals that are directly related to the development of students' citizenship in a particular area. It might be that school formulate different goals and perform

different activities when they want to development students' citizenship in different areas (such as societal interest, prosocial abilities, reflective thinking or assertiveness).

The four citizenship orientations of the students showed a weak relationship with students' citizenship knowledge. This position of the citizenship knowledge of young people's as separate aspects of students' citizenship aligns with the results of the study of Ten Dam et al. (2011) on the construct validity of the Citizenship Competences Questionnaire. Strong interrelations were found between young people's attitudes, skills, and reflection but not with knowledge. With our framework of orientations and knowledge, it therefore seems relevant to conclude that both citizenship knowledge and citizenship orientations of the students need distinctive attention in educational goals concerning the development of citizenship. While the framework is based on information from a large sample of students and has been cross validated using a nation-wide representative sample of students in the Netherlands, an important point of discussion considers the international validation of our framework. Only further research can answer the question of just how culture-specific the citizenship orientations and knowledge domains of students may be. The way students' citizenship is conceptualized could be different across countries for example, due to social structures in a society (Banks, 1993), which is not taken into account in the empirical literature yet. So, we recommend to test the present framework in international research.

The Dutch educational system is characterized by a large degree of differentiation (Van de Werfhorst & Mijs, 2010). After primary school, students are selected for admission to different types of schools (i.e. educational tracks). Our finding of differences in the citizenship knowledge of students from different school tracks confirms the results of other empirical research in the Netherlands (Geijsel et al., 2012; Maslowski, Naayer, Isac, Oonk, & Van der Werf, 2010). The higher the educational track, the greater students' citizenship knowledge. We developed the framework of citizenship to better understand the citizenship competences of young people, however, we were also able to highlight differences between the citizenship orientations of students: after controlling for students' SES and origin, students from prevocational education are less oriented towards societal interest and assertiveness than students in higher general secondary education. This finding supports the findings of earlier research in the field of citizenship education in the Netherlands showing teachers in prevocational education to primarily teach students how to behave appropriately and emphasize the elementary rules of social interaction and adaptation, while teachers in the higher general secondary education tracks focus more on the competences needed for active and critical citizenship (Ten Dam & Volman, 2003; Leenders et al., 2008). To gain greater insight into the inequalities in citizenship education as a result of different educational institutions and different levels of education, further research is required.