Intercultural Citizenship education policy and practice in England

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Education for Democratic Citizenship: multiculturalism and national identity

ICEDC London

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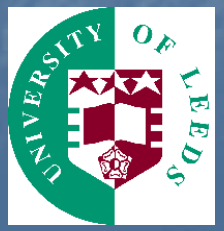


INTERACT research programme

- Intercultural active citizenship education
- European policies on education for: democratic citizenship, human rights, intercultural, antiracism
- UK policy makers
- Teacher education
- How teachers conceive their roles

Human rights and intercultural education: European policies

- The **Council of Europe** recommends:

'The understanding and experience of human rights …involves intercultural and international understanding' (1985).

- the centrality of *human rights* as *democratic values* for all citizens (1999b).
- **European Union** agrees that education plays 'an important role in building up social cohesion, in preventing discrimination, exclusion, racism and xenophobia and hence in promoting tolerance and the respect for human rights' (2004).

The INTERACT project in the context of England

- Multicultural not intercultural
- New citizenship education curriculum in 2002
- Europe seen as politically controversial concept
- Debates about whether multiculturalism has 'failed'

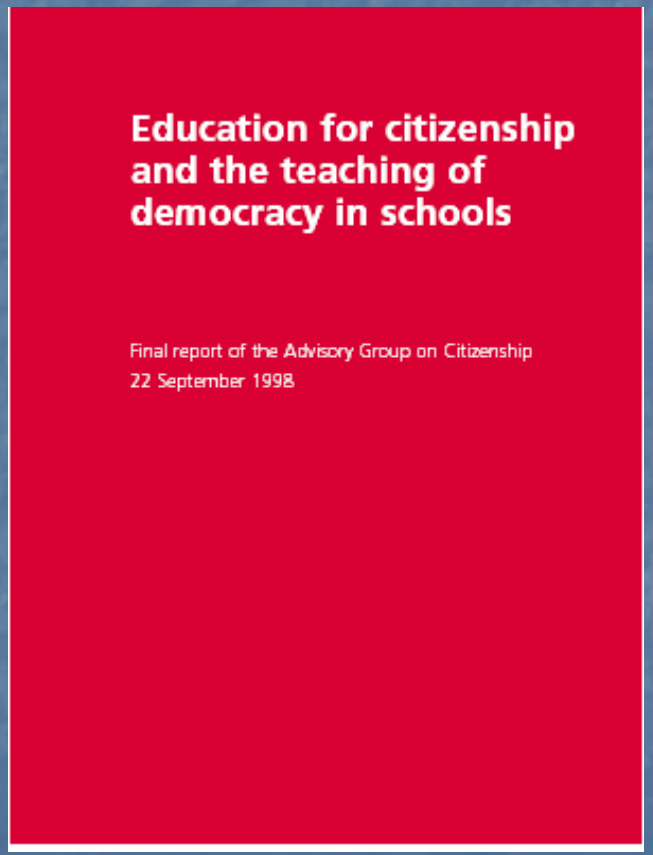
Five recent policy documents

- Citizenship education in schools
- Citizenship education post 16
- Citizenship education for migrants
- Social cohesion
- Citizenship education and diversity

Citizenship education for all 5-16

Crick Report (DfES,1998)

- Terms of reference include European context
- A frequently-expressed concern was that global, European and multicultural issues should be given sufficient emphasis in citizenship education
- Does not address European citizenship
- Refers to human rights as key concept and European Convention on Human Rights
- Deficit view of young people and double deficit of minorities



Citizenship education post-16

Play your Part post-16 citizenship

(QCA, 2004)

- Citizenship education content as Crick

Topics include:

- Respect for diversity
- Challenge prejudice
- Rights and responsibilities
- UK and Europe, the EU

BUT Colour blind. Omits multicultural context. No examples

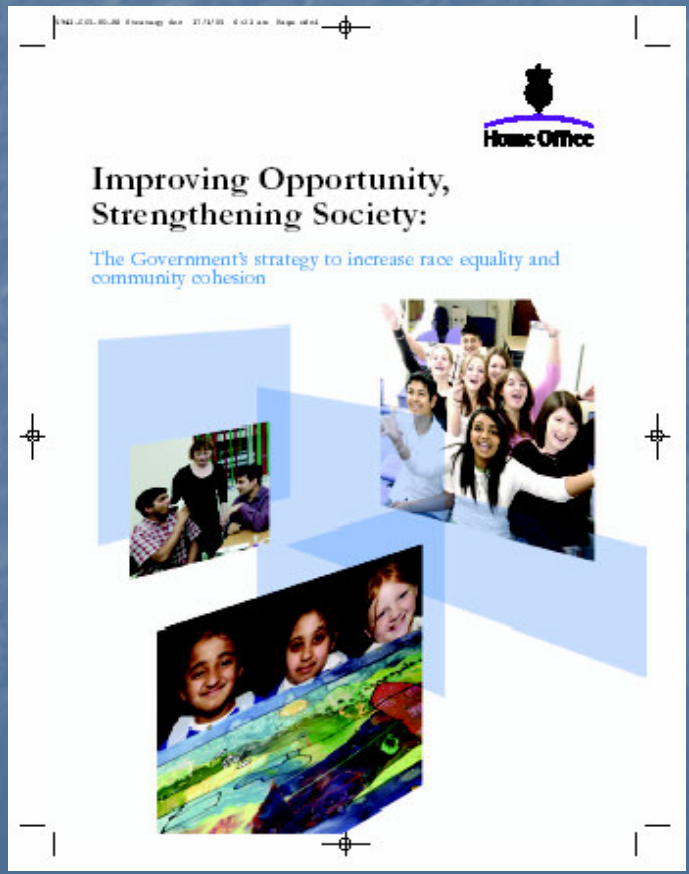
New citizens: citizenship knowledge and language skills

The New and the Old (Home Office, 2004)

- Citizenship for migrants
- Language test
- Understanding society and civic institutions: test
- Promotion of common principles
- Increase pride in becoming a citizen (ceremonies introduced)
- Practical studies of British institutions, multicultural society, law employment, information sources, everyday needs
- Mentions ‘Britain in Europe’

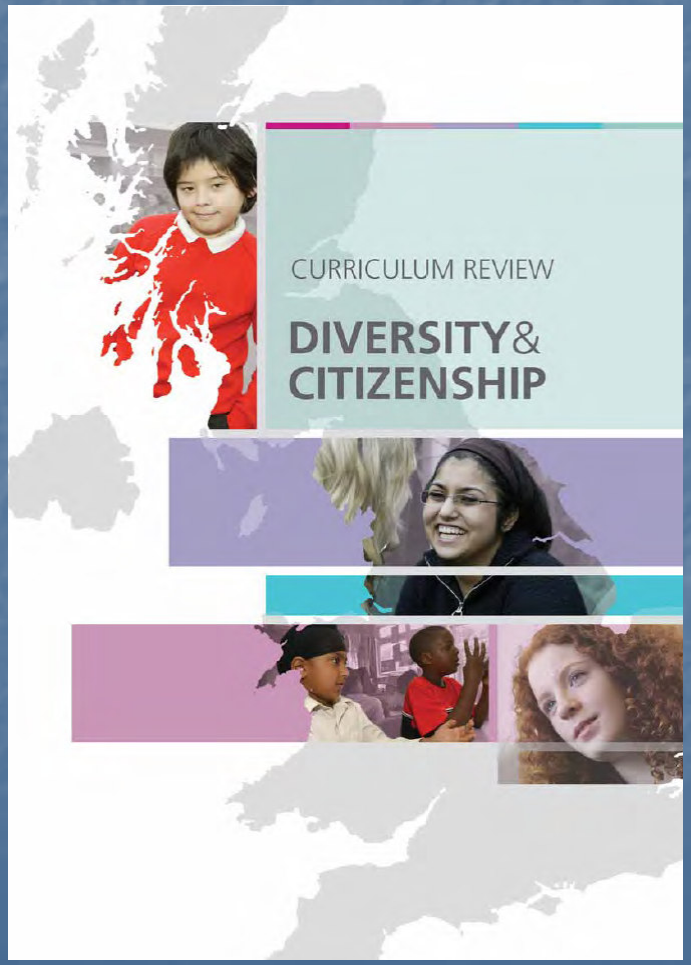
Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society: the government's strategy to increase race equality and community cohesion (Home Office, 2005)

- Citizenship education in schools to promote equality and community cohesion.
- Europe ignored



Curriculum Review Diversity and Citizenship

Ajegbo Review (QCA,2007)



Curriculum Review Diversity and Citizenship

Ajegbo Review (QCA,2007)

- Context of concern that citizenship education should contribute to national security
- Proposes new theme in citizenship education: *Identity and Diversity: living together in the UK*
- Cross references Home Office naturalisation: understanding history brings sense of belonging
- Asserts importance of "issues around 'race', identity, citizenship and living together in the UK"
- Concludes that schools can make a difference to perceptions

How teachers conceive their roles

- Multicultural as a descriptive term for a school
- Multicultural schools automatically provide multicultural education
- Teachers declare commitment to a multicultural society
- They feel it important for students to understand inequalities
- Citizenship education is where multicultural education happens
- Task of breaking down cultural barriers constructed within (and by) students' families

Citizenship and multiculturalism in England: some challenges

Problems with language and terminology

- Multicultural was okay politically …in the 80s, allowing multicultural but crossing out antiracism. But by the end of the 90s yes even multicultural had become, oh dear pejorative

  (Academic adviser to Government)

- I think there's a nervousness about talking about racism because …I think it can lead to a defensiveness amongst people in the system and I think that has created a nervousness about using the language of racism

  (Former education minister)

  The word multiculturalism …has come to be, in some circles, it's a pretty all purpose swear word, as it were … negatively loaded.

  (Trainer and former local government inspector)