



UNIVERSITY OF  
EASTERN FINLAND

# Global Citizenship Education promoting Social Sustainability

UEF/MOOC Adult Education Promoting Sustainable Development



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# What is citizenship?

- Citizenship perception and notion has changed throughout historical transformations
- From **civil rights** (enlightenment), **political rights** (democracy and equality) and **social rights** (welfare model)



A picture of the marina bay area of Singapore, one of the few existing city-states today.



# Free citizenship

- Medieval (and ancient, such as Greece) notions included concept of free citizenship in relation to social strata in a **city** or **city-state**
- “Citizenship is a status bestowed on all those who are full members of a community. All those who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed” (Marshall 1950)
- In a state, all citizens are meant to be free and equal persons (Rawls 1985), conceptualising citizenship through **justice**



# Development of nation-state citizenship

- In the 18th and 19th centuries (e.g. treaty of Westphalia), the role of cities and city-states as arenas for negotiating citizenship was replaced by **nation-states**
- Becoming a citizen depended on membership of a national community (e.g. French, German, Italian), a **citizen** was also a **national**, so regardless of the idea of being above cultural differences (e.g. French Statism), citizenship is based on cultural specificity

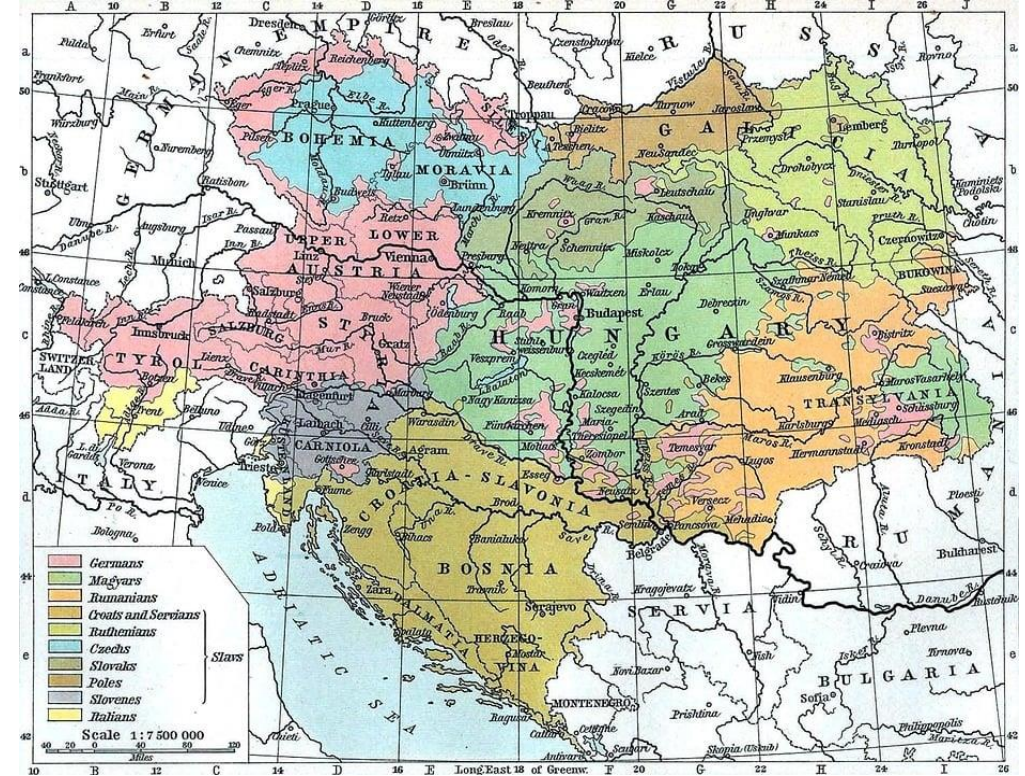
(Castles 2000.)



# The contradictions of democratic citizenship

- Democratic citizenship is a goal pursued by member states of the *United Nations*, however a majority are unable to deliver it.
- The goal of integrating all inhabitants into an equal, political **community** is contradicted by nationalism, molding varying and diverse cultural groups in a territory into one "**nation**".

(Castles 2000.)



Nation-states such as Yugoslavia and Austria-Hungary had extreme assimilation doctrines

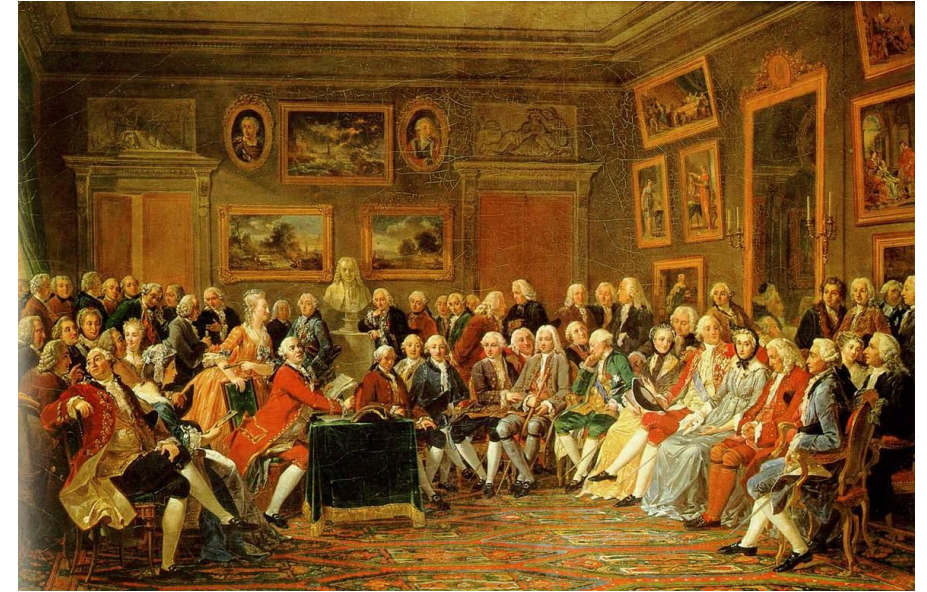


***What is the meaning of citizenship and what kinds of memberships are attached to it, from your perspective?***



# Cosmopolitanism

- Cosmopolitanism (**cosmos** –universal, **polites** –citizen) refers to the idea of a cosmopolitan identity, connected not to cultural specificity but cultural pluralism and membership in a global, single community
- Origins in **migration**, where specific groups were "cosmopolitan" in the way they migrated through cultures, cities and citizenship orders (e.g. traders, travellers)



The contemporary idea of cosmopolitanism has its roots in the Age of Enlightenment





# Cosmopolitanism (cont.)

- Globalisation and the formation of the United Nations boosted the modern notion of cosmopolitanism linked to **global citizenship** (which, strictly speaking, is not an official status, rather a misnomer)
- Also linked to the concept of **superdiversity** (Steven Vertovec), where diversity in large metropolitan "global cities" are so common that the meaning of difference and cultural specificity becomes less obvious
- "Cosmopolitanization" as inclusion and exclusion (Beck 2012)



# Global Citizenship Education

- “The concept of education for cosmopolitan citizenship [...] is based on a definition of citizenship as comprising feeling, status, practice and explicit commitments to human rights.”
- “Education can develop the capacity of people to identify with fellow human beings irrespective of national boundaries”
- GCE as an instrument for inclusion of a diversity of thought, belonging and agency

(Starkey 2017)



# GCE and sustainable development

- Global citizenship education does not only empower individuals to include to acknowledge specific **SDGs** in their daily lives, but to comprehend the idea around their **purpose** in the global context
- Through GCE, individuals may look at the world and make judgments or solve problems through reflection on universal **human rights**, struggles for **political and social justice** as well as **sustainability** (Starkey 2017)





# Towards glocal sustainability in education?

- Globalization and globalization as **double process** (Eriksen 2014)
- **Sustainability**, too, can be a double process
- Citizenship is defined on a national, and sometimes supranational level (e.g. European identity)
- Non-formal education, civic movements and active citizenship on a **local level** contribute to sustainability and may result in glocal and **global change**



# Links to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- **Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions:** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
- **Goal 17 Partnerships for the Goals:** Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development





# Key Points

- Citizenship, and the concept of global (cosmopolitan) citizenship, are **socially and culturally constructed** and thus their meaning reflects specific socio-cultural, political and economic **values of the time**
- Global citizenship education may construct sustainability in its different dimensions through engaging, in both formal and non-formal settings, individuals to reflect on **inclusiveness, social justice** and **critical thinking**
- Global citizenship education requires **glocal** applications and **critical reflection**



"Thus compressed between two forces, within and without, could humanity follow any other course than that which it has taken?"

Letters on Aesthetic Education  
(Friedrich Schiller, 1794)



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Slide 13: *The Weimar Court of the Muses* by Theobald von Oer, 1860.



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