

Research Report

Education for Democracy in Ukraine

Student Learning through
a United States – Ukraine
Civic Education Project



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International Democratic
Education Institute

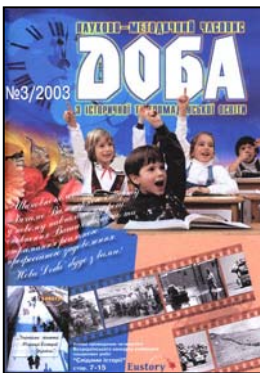
Introduction

We conducted research to examine whether Ukrainian students who participated in the “We are Citizens of Ukraine” (a course designed through a partnership of the All-Ukrainian Association of Teachers of History, Social Studies and Civic Education [Nova Doba], the Center for Citizenship Education in Poland, and university faculty from the United States¹) demonstrated any differences in their knowledge and application of democratic content and attitudes about democracy in their schools and societies. The results of this research provide powerful evidence that international curriculum development can have a significant impact on teaching and learning about democracy.

“We are Citizens of Ukraine”

The focus of the *Education for Democracy in Ukraine* project was the development of Ukrainian classroom materials for teaching democracy. The materials were designed to reflect the Ukrainian context in factual content with an understanding of two critical issues from Ukraine’s past that directly impact democratic citizenship in Ukraine today: the need to address the development of a national identity and the legacy of Soviet educational policies.

The lessons utilize active teaching-learning methodology to both counter the Soviet educational legacy, the past practice of passive, didactic lecture and to teach skills necessary for democratic citizenship such as group cooperation, compromise, decision-making and leadership. The developers also recognized that democratic education must take place in both the formal and informal curriculum of the schools. The course uses an expanding horizons model that focuses on student self-awareness of the skills for democratic citizenship and their application in a societal role. The end result of the course is to then apply this information to a real-life problem to extend the lesson through experiential learning.



The Ukrainian-developed textbook was intentionally designed to use active methods -- brainstorming, discussions, simulations, case studies, cooperative learning, role plays, etc. -- while the course itself culminates in a problem-based, social action learning activity. The need and importance of these active methods are so great that the

**Table of Contents of the
“We Are Citizens of Ukraine” Textbook**

Chapter Title	General Themes
Others and me - how to reach consent?	Tolerance, compromise, conflict resolution, mediation and negotiation as important citizenship skills.
On the path to democracy	Concept of democracy and the history of world democratic movements. Modern democracy and the values and priorities of humans. Democracy as a value of human beings.
Democracy and democratic state at present	Concept of civil society and its importance for democracy. Human and civil rights in the constitution of Ukraine. Citizen rights and responsibilities. System of state power in Ukraine and conflicts with civil society. Forms of democracy and their realization in Ukraine.
How can citizens influence the power?	Political and social activity of citizens including participation in community life. Self-governance at schools and its role in establishment of civic position.
An individual and economy in conditions of the democratic society	Main concepts of micro-and macroeconomics. State and Free Markets, taxes, budget, social aspects of the financial state system. The individual in the market economy.
Ukraine our common homeland	Social groups, roles and norms in civil society. Multiculturalism of social relations in Ukraine. Values and principles of Ukrainian society: humanism, tolerance and pluralism. Values common to all humans in the life of Ukrainian nation. Individual’s ability to find one’s place in life, to attain individual and social aims.
Project “Citizen”	An adaptation of the US program created by the Center for Civic Education is used as an optional ‘practicum’ for the course.

¹ The *Education for Democracy in Ukraine* project had broad impact on educational policy and practice in Ukraine. A summary of this impact is provided in Appendix A of this report.

Ukrainian partner in the project has devoted the past two years in conducting in-service workshops to retrain teachers in their use.

The Research Design

To assess the impact of the Ukrainian course, we conducted an empirical inquiry of student knowledge and beliefs. At the core of this research is the instrument developed and publicly released by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). This survey instrument uses a variety of items grouped roughly into three parts: student knowledge of democracy, demographic background items and attitudinal sections.² The results of the original 28 country study have been widely received as the best and most rigorous international research conducted on civic education. Ukraine was not one of the original IEA studied countries and thus data does not exist on Ukrainian student responses.

By using the IEA survey, we hoped to discover if our course had any effect on student knowledge and attitudes on democracy, and how well our students compared to others previously surveyed in 28 other countries. The project designed by the partners had two goals:

- 1) discover whether students who participated in the “We Are Citizens of Ukraine” course demonstrated any statistical and substantive differences from students who did not have the course for the three domains of the IEA survey; and
- 2) compare the Ukrainian students’ responses to those who participated in the original IEA study.

Using random sampling we were able to identify forty-six classrooms to participate in the study, with 23 in the treatment group and the same number in the control group. With 509 students in the treatment group and 506 in the control group, we were able to involve 1,015 students as participants in the study, thus bolstering our confidence in our results. The samples represent all geographic regions of the country.³ The Ministry of Education of Ukraine fully supported this research and approval of its implementation greatly assisted our access to survey in schools across Ukraine.

The Effect of “We Are Citizens of Ukraine”

Applying ANCOVA analysis to the data reveals several statistical and substantive significant results.⁴ Most important of these results is that the treatment sample, those who had participated in the course “We Are Citizens of Ukraine,” significantly outperformed the control group on correct answers in the Knowledge section of the IEA survey. On the average, students who participated in the course answered 76% of the knowledge questions correctly versus only 67% of the students in the control group. Thus, the treatment group outperformed the control by 9%.

The most impressive part of the treatment group’s performance on this knowledge section is that their success can be attributed to the course and not because the survey itself was engineered to assess those areas that we know are present in the course. In other words, the students

Thus, participating in the curriculum was found to have a positive statistically significant effect on correctly answering questions in the knowledge section for both boys and girls.

² Details about the development of these items can be found in J. Torney-Purta, R. Lehmann, H. Oswald, and W. Schulz (2001), *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries: Civic Knowledge and Engagement at Age Fourteen* published by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA): Amsterdam.

³ List of regions surveyed can be found in Appendix B.

⁴ Statistical results of this analysis are found in Appendix C.

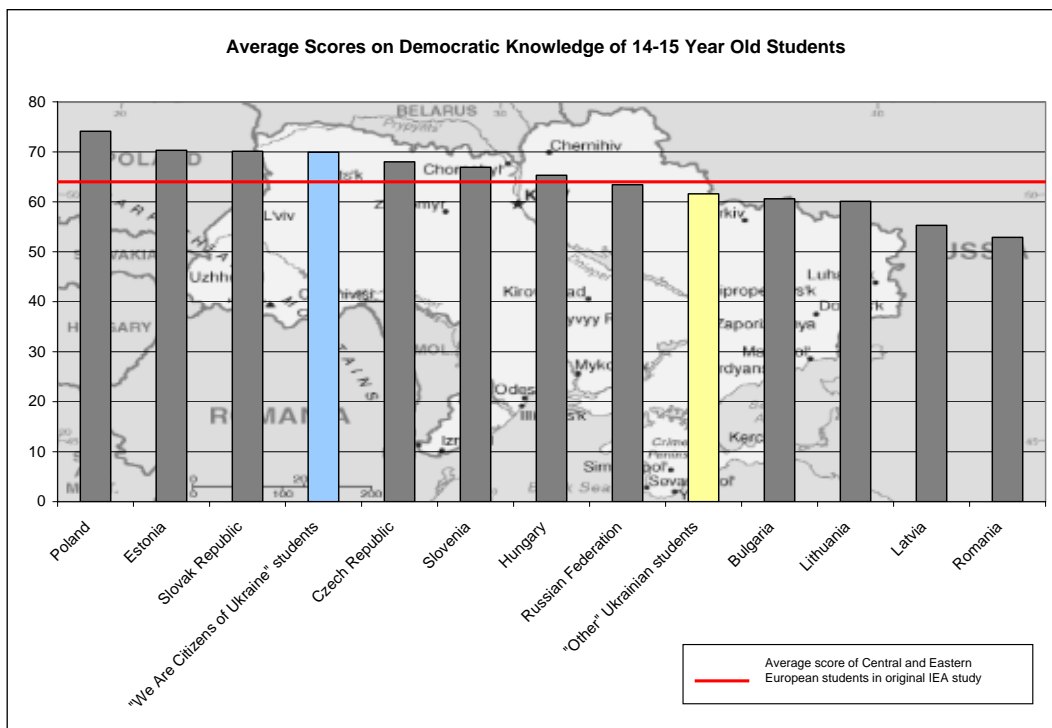
were not being prepared exclusively to do well on this survey but instead are demonstrating their general understanding of democratic content based on a neutral test. Thus, participating in the curriculum was found to have a positive statistically significant effect on correctly answering questions in the knowledge section for both boys and girls.

By using the IEA survey we were able to compare Ukrainian students' knowledge of democracy to their counterparts in other Central and Eastern European countries who participated in the previous IEA study. To do so, we had to restrict our analysis to only 14-15 year olds to insure direct comparative results. Only 275 students surveyed in our study were in this age grouping.

The control group of Ukrainian 14-15 year olds, who did not participate in the course “We Are Citizens of Ukraine,” answered only 61.6% of the Knowledge questions correctly. This ranked these students eighth on the list. This finding puts the control group students in the bottom of the third quartile for the region. Thus, the average student in Ukraine, who has not participated in the course, has a more limited knowledge of democracy than students in seven other countries of the region.

Students who participated in the course demonstrated knowledge of democracy that was better than the students in eight other countries of the region.

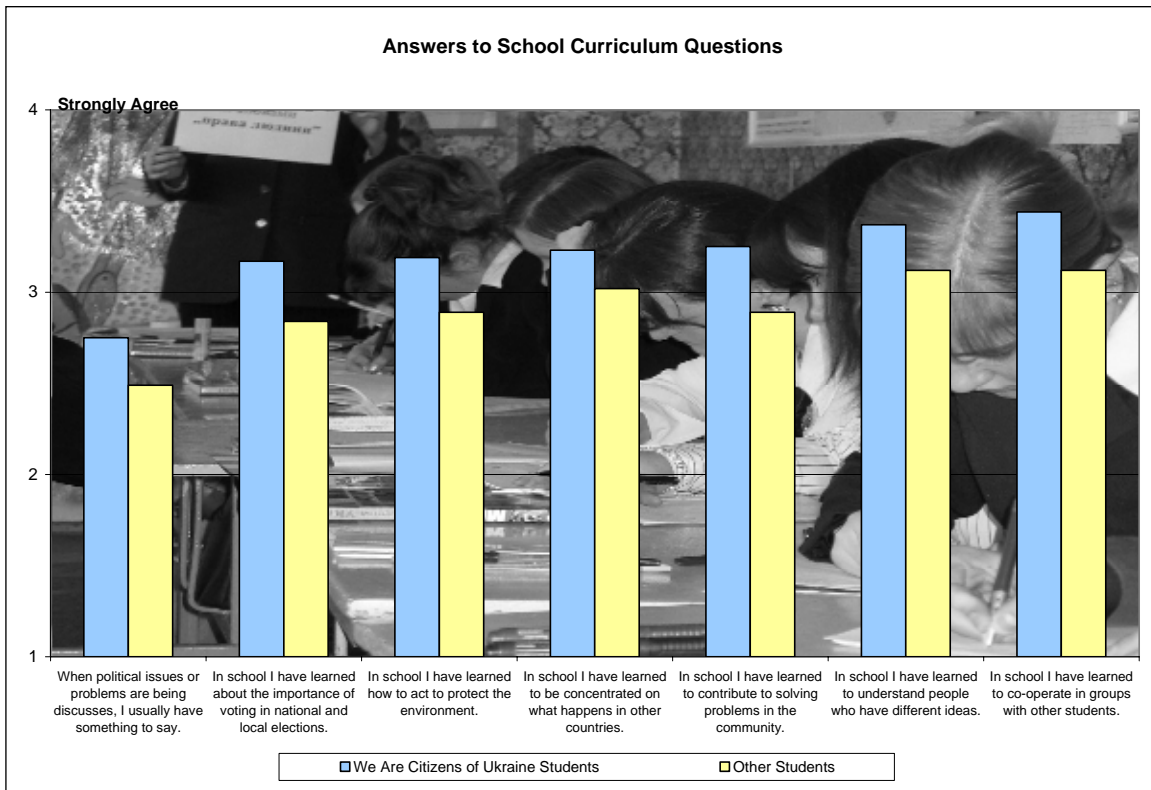
However, when we examine the Ukrainian 14-15 year olds who participated in the course “We Are Citizens of Ukraine,” we find that they answered 69.9% of the Knowledge questions correctly. This increase of 8.3% ranked these students fourth on the list, when compared to the other countries. Students who participated in the course demonstrated knowledge of democracy that was better than the students in eight other countries of the region. Only students from Poland, Estonia and the Slovak Republic answered a greater percentage correctly. Thus, having the students participate in the course not only improved their knowledge of democracy relative to other students in Ukraine but lifted them from near the bottom into the highest achievement quartile of the nations of Central and Eastern Europe.



Other significant areas were those revealed in the thirty-three questions that had statistically significant differences in the answers between the treatment and control groups. These questions were found in nearly every subcategory of the 153 questions of the beliefs and attitudes section or 22% of the possible questions. The section that did not demonstrate a single significant difference in responses were Government, Trust in Institutions and Political Action 2.

The section that demonstrated the greatest difference between the students who participated in the Nova Doba curriculum and those who did not was **School Curriculum**. Every question in this section returned statistically significant results and the treatment group’s responses were higher than the control’s demonstrating greater agreement with the assertions made by the questions. In general, the treatment groups responses in this section demonstrates that the curriculum prepares students to be more understanding of other’s differences, more empowered to make change in society and more active and patriotic as citizens. This supports the effectiveness of the curriculum’s focus on teaching tolerance, citizenship involvement and democratic practice.

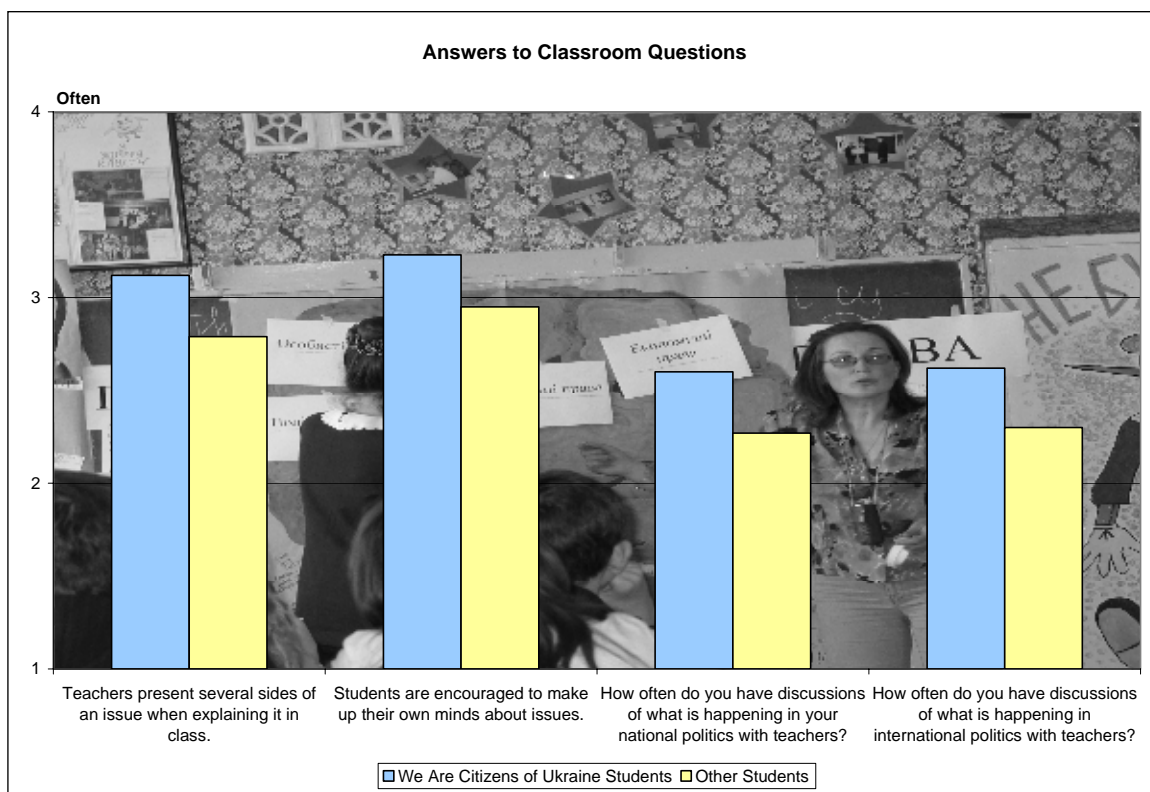
...the curriculum [We Are Citizens of Ukraine] prepares students to be more understanding of other’s differences, more empowered to make change in society and more active and patriotic as citizens.



Student answers to the **Classroom and Political Action** questions also demonstrated differences between the two groups. The students in the “We are Citizens of Ukraine” course felt that they discussed both national and international politics more often with their teachers. In addition, they were more likely to believe that teachers present several sides to an issue and encourage students to make up their own minds.

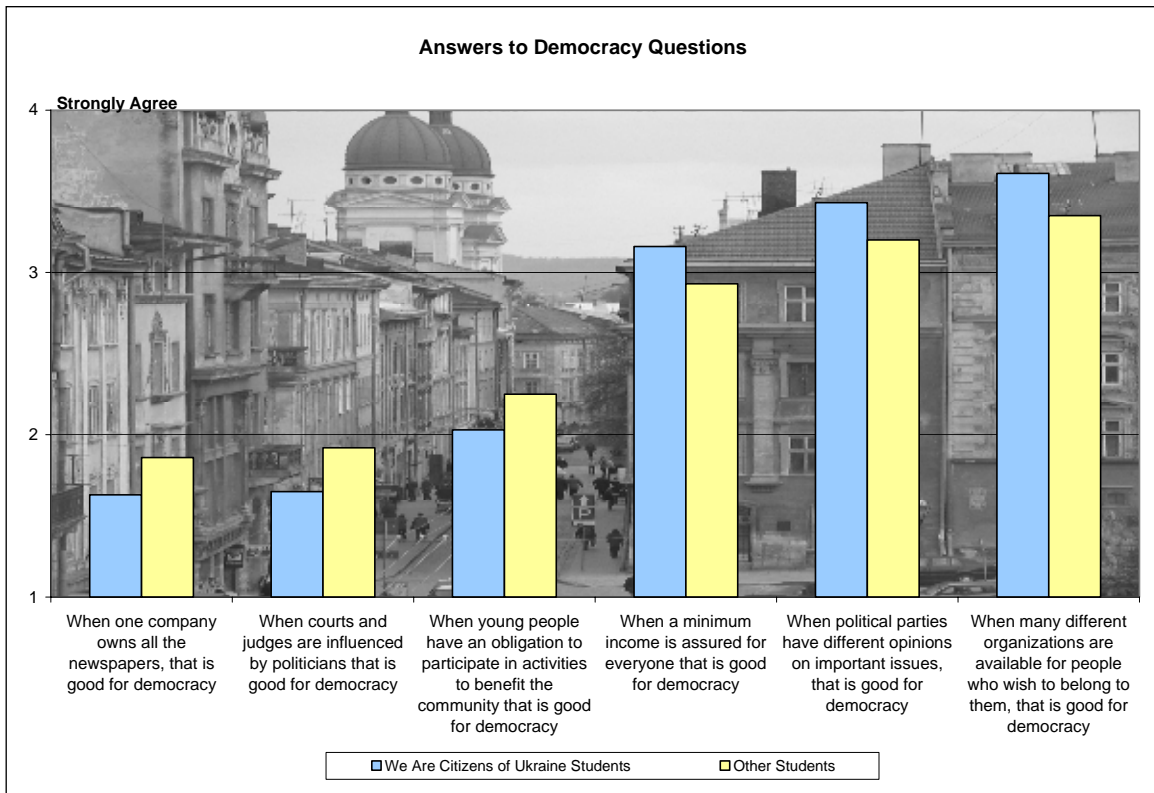
These answer reinforce those of the School Curriculum section and demonstrate that students in the course were being taught with methods that encouraged meaningful political discussion and with course materials that valued informed citizenship. These results once again demonstrate the importance of adopting new teaching methods along with new curriculum. The “We are Citizens of Ukraine” course materials require the use of these methods to conduct the lessons. From the student responses, it appears that these methods have encouraged students to be active political observers and citizens.

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Six questions in the **Democracy** section returned statistically significant differences between the two groups. Three of these questions asked the students' beliefs about the effect of having a monopoly in newspapers, political influence over courts and obligatory participation of young people. The We Are Citizens of Ukraine students found these to be more “bad” for democracy than did the control group. However, the students who participated in the curriculum found it to be more “good” for democracy when the government insures a minimum income, to have ‘many different organizations available’ and also ‘different opinion on important issues’ from political parties. From the responses on these questions it can be inferred that the students participating in the course were more supportive of the idea that healthy democracies should have multiple sources of information, opportunities for assembly and political differences among parties. They were more likely to consider the practices that characterized the Soviet Union, such as media control, one party rule and obligatory service as “bad” for democracy.

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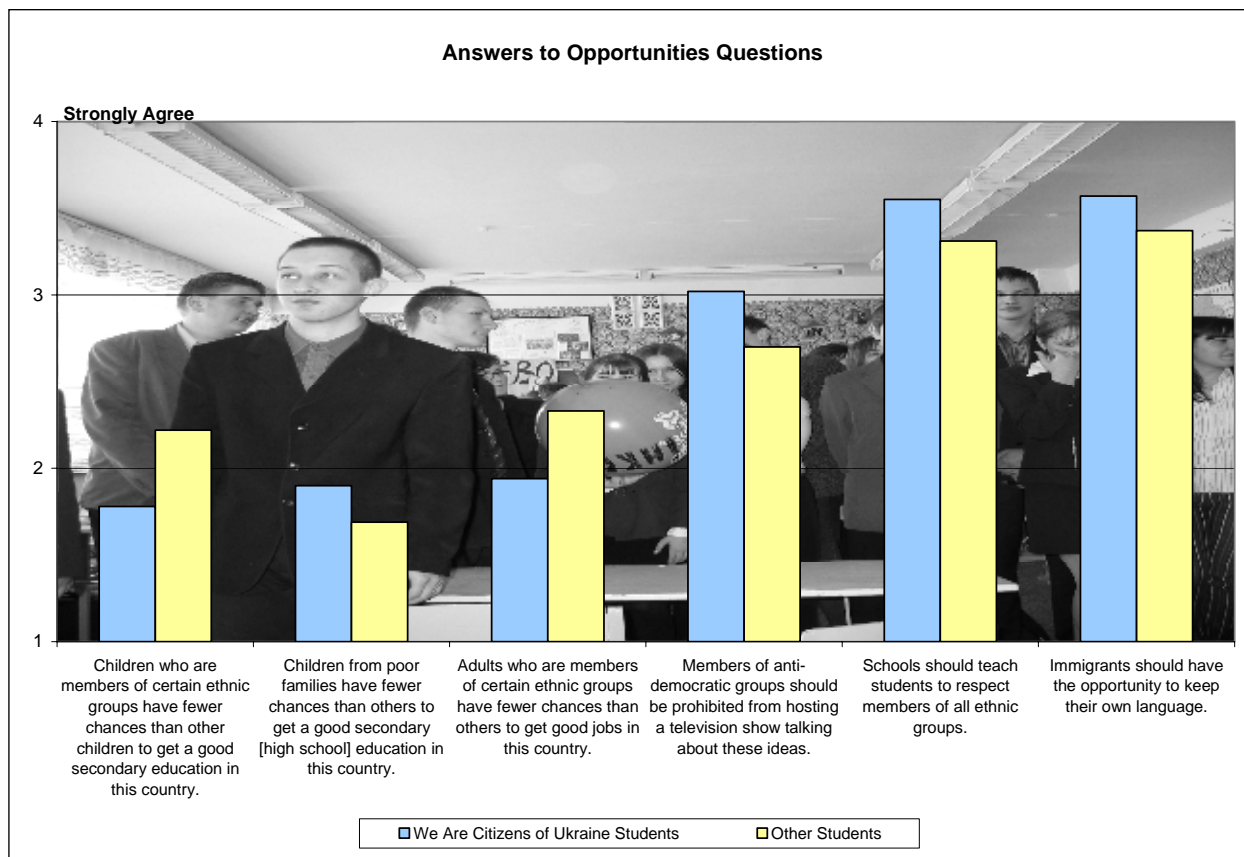


Another area of great impact is revealed by the number of significant questions in the **Opportunities** sections. These sections examine the student’s understanding of inequalities in Ukrainian society and tolerance of other groups. The treatment group’s answers revealed that they disagreed that their educational system discriminated against disadvantaged or minority groups in Ukraine. From these results, we can infer that participating in the course seems to have had a positive impact on student perception of their educational system’s ability to meet the needs of all students in the country and increased optimism about the ability of all people to improve their condition. In addition,

...students in the We are Citizens of Ukraine course were more optimistic about opportunities, confident in their educational system and tolerant of other ethnic and linguistic groups.



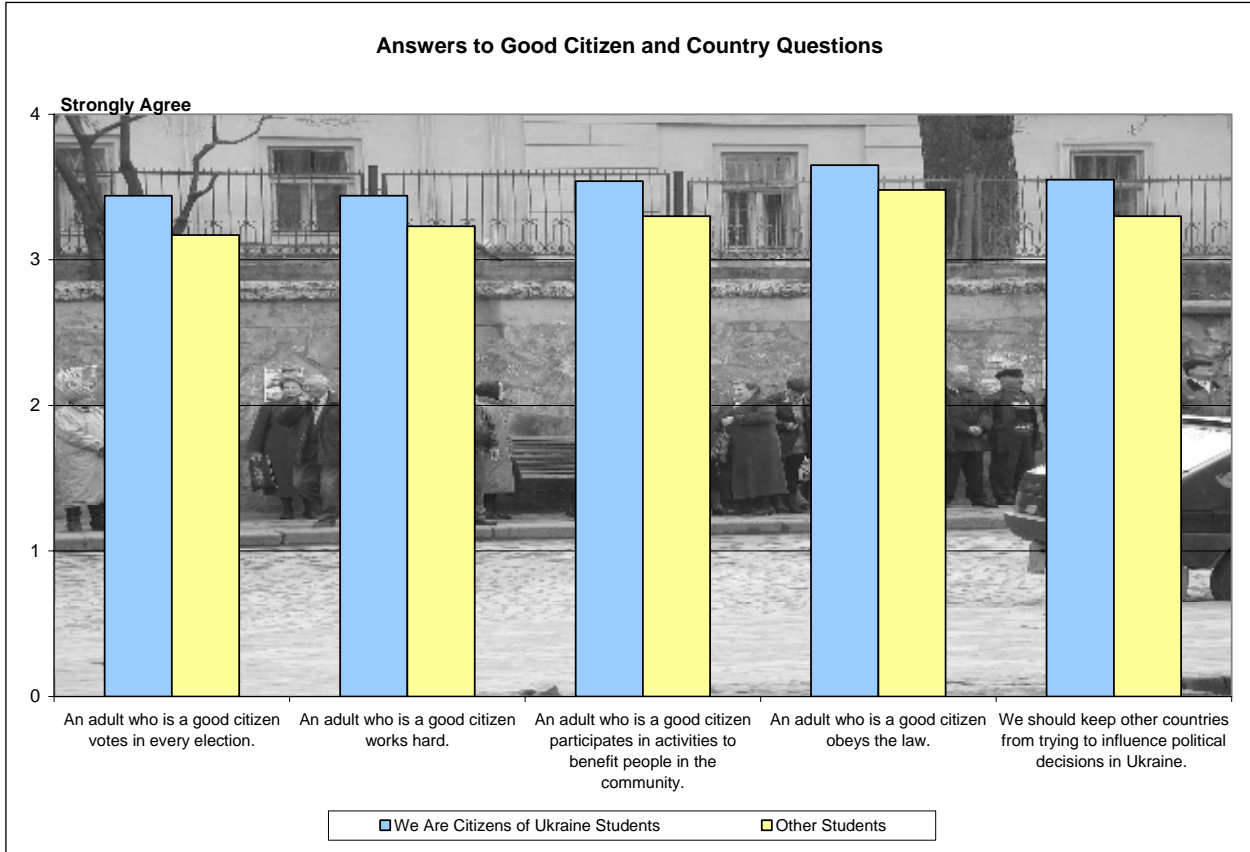
the treatment group demonstrated a greater sense of tolerance of ethnic groups and an intolerance of anti-democratic groups. This bias against anti-democratic groups may actually be a reaction to the lack of tolerance of such organizations in their authoritarian doctrine. In sum, students in the We are Citizens of Ukraine course were more optimistic about opportunities, confident in their educational system and tolerant of other ethnic and linguistic groups.



The treatment group's answers differed significantly from the control groups' in the **Good Citizen** and **Country** categories. In these sections, the students are asked to identify qualities and actions of hypothetical good citizens. Students were asked to respond to 15 different questions about habits of adults that make them "Good Citizens". Five of these questions demonstrated statistical differences between the treatment and control groups. In each of these questions, the students who participated in the "We are Citizens of Ukraine" course were more likely to identify a "Good Citizen" as a person who was lawful, a regular voter, a hard worker, informed on political issues and participatory in beneficial community activities.

Lastly, student answers to a question in the Country section revealed significant differences between the treatment and control groups. "We are Citizens of Ukraine" students were more likely to believe that other countries should not influence political decision making in Ukraine. Given the great influence of Russia in imperial, communist and post-communist Ukraine, this finding is quite significant. In a nation that has long been divided by powerful neighbors from the West and East, that students who participated in the course had an increased national identity is a strong indicator that the curriculum may serve as a tool for increasing a sense of Ukrainian identity among the next generation of citizens. This national identity will be crucial if the nation is to continue its development as an independent, sovereign power of the region.

...the students who participated in the "We are Citizens of Ukraine" course were more likely to identify a "Good Citizen" as a person who was lawful, a regular voter, a hard worker, informed on political issues and participatory in beneficial community activities.



Conclusions

The study set out to achieve two goals: determine the impact of the course, “We are Citizens of Ukraine” on students’ democratic knowledge, attitudes and skills and compare these students responses to others in the region who were surveyed using the same instrument. In both instances, the study found significant and positive impact of the course on Ukrainian students.

Statistically significant differences were found between Ukrainian students who participated in the course and those who did not. These differences appeared in nearly every area of the survey instrument and provide us with a general impression of the impact of the course on student democratic knowledge, attitudes and skills. In particular, from this analysis we found statistical evidence that students who participated in the “We are Citizens of Ukraine” course were more likely to:

- 1) correctly answer democracy knowledge questions better than Ukrainian students who had not participated in the course.
- 2) outperform their peers in eight out of eleven other countries of Central and Eastern Europe in knowledge of democracy. Ukrainian students who did not participate in the course outperformed only four of eleven other countries.

- 3) be more understanding of other's differences, more empowered to make change in society and more active and patriotic as citizens.
- 4) have been taught with methods that encourage meaningful political discussion and with course materials that valued informed citizenship.
- 5) be supportive of the idea that healthy democracies should have multiple sources of information, opportunities for assembly and political differences among parties.
- 6) be optimistic about opportunities, confident in their educational system and tolerant of other ethnic and linguistic groups.
- 7) to identify a "Good Citizen" as a person who was lawful, a regular voter, a hard worker, informed on political issues and participatory in beneficial community activities.
- 8) demonstrate a stronger belief in the sovereignty of their nation.

Through the conduct of this research project, we have been able to resolve the central questions of this study. In the first place, we have been able to demonstrate empirically that the Ukrainian students who participated in the "We Are Citizens of Ukraine" course outperformed similar Ukrainian students on democratic knowledge, attitudes and beliefs. Given that this course is the result of an international collaboration and that the survey instrument was independently developed and verified, and that data were collected and analyzed using rigorous scientific practice, these findings are positive, significant and rewarding for all who participated in the course design and conduct. These results should serve as justification for continuing to support such efforts in the future.

Secondly, we have found that one of the principal areas of difference between the beliefs of the students who participated in the course compared to those who did not, is in reinforcing their belief in their education system in preparing them for democracy. They believed their system to be more open, accessible and free to all students and encouraging of their own empowerment. In addition, they identified Good Citizens with fulfilling multiple roles in their society and being of good character. By their significant answers, these students demonstrate the dramatic impact of the course's active teaching-learning methods, which encourages student questioning and empowerment and the positive benefits it has had on their perception of the qualities of good citizenship.



Thirdly, the research has demonstrated not only the benefits of the course for Ukrainian students but also how it improves their knowledge of democracy in comparison to other students of the region. Students who participated in the course increased the rank of their percentage correct from 8th in the region to 4th. This increase in rank catapulted the treatment sample students into the top quartile of the countries ahead of even those in the more prosperous Czech Republic. Such dramatic improvement demonstrates the real need for further implementation of the course in Ukraine so that a greater number of students can benefit.

Lastly, as the first empirical analysis of student knowledge and beliefs on democracy to be conducted in Ukraine, the research has proven to be useful in identifying possible problems and issues that will need to be addressed in future research. Further analysis of the data collected during this research will surely reveal more important and interesting comparisons and findings. However, the next round of research will seek to draw a larger random selection of classrooms to survey to increase our confidence in generalizing the results of the course. An improvement would come from limiting our samples to 14-year-olds so that we can draw deeper and more confident comparisons with the original IEA research done in the region. We also hope to alter the survey instrument to make it more relevant to our classroom analysis and a better fit for understanding some of the dynamics of Ukrainian society.

However, this future research has been delayed by the highly contested Ukrainian Presidential election, the results of which will surely decide the democratic climate of the next four years. One wonders whether the conduct of this election would have been different if we could have only instituted “We Are Citizens of Ukraine” a decade ago, when the iron curtain first fell.



Appendix A

Achievements of the Education for Democracy in Ukraine Project

On November 1, 2000, The Ohio State University's Mershon Center was awarded a two-year contract from the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs for the conduct of the project "Education for Democracy in Ukraine." This project was part of the Transatlantic Civil Society Support Program for Ukrainian Civic Education, a joint effort of the European Union and the United States. These activities were planned in accordance with CIVITAS International and drew upon prior collaboration with the Center for Citizenship Education, Warsaw (CCEW), and the success that the latter has achieved in promoting civic education in Poland.

Ultimately, through the *Education for Democracy in Ukraine* project, the US partners and NOVA DOBA have been able to achieve several important accomplishments:

1. Conducted a U.S. Study Tour for Ukrainian education policy makers, and subsequently negotiated and signed a "Protocol of Intentions" for teacher training and development of civic education in Ukraine;
2. DOBA has evolved into a **national association** (NOVA DOBA) with **482 members** across 22 of the 27 Oblasts of Ukraine and now owns an office/resource center fully equipped with current educational materials, computers and other office equipment;
3. Held 3 All-Ukrainian competitions on developing civic education lesson plans, which resulted in the book, *20+1 Lessons for Teaching Tolerance* (1000 copies);
4. Developed the course "We are Citizens of Ukraine," which included a *Teacher's Manual* (2000 copies) and a *Student Textbook* (36900 copies), which have been given the status "Recommended by the Ministry of Education";
5. Produced a "Project Citizen" Manual (5500 copies) and CD ROM "Project Citizen" (1000 copies), and held four Annual National "Project Citizen" competition involving 15,000 students;
6. Developed Teacher Trainers and Lesson/Curriculum writers in Active Teaching-Learning Methods, who have subsequently conducted a number of workshops, conferences, and round tables for civic education;
7. Trained **1,920** teachers in active methods and the new course, "We are Citizens of Ukraine," with all of them committed to teaching it in the 2001-2004 academic years;
8. A total of **30,000** students have directly participated in the project and another **50,000** have been impacted by their teachers' participation in the teacher training workshops.

Appendix B

Regions of Ukraine included in survey

1. Chernihiv region
2. Chernivtsi region
3. Crimea
4. Dnipropetrovsk region
5. Donetsk region
6. Kharkiv region
7. Kherson region
8. Khmelnytsky region
9. Kirovohrad region
10. Kyiv
11. Lugansk region
12. Lviv region
13. Mykolaiv region
14. Poltava region
15. Sumy region
16. Ternopil region
17. Vinnytsia region
18. Zakarpattia region
19. Zaporizhia region

Appendix C

Statistical Analysis Results

Table 1: ANCOVA Results

Variable	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	P Value
Treatment	1	7.81	0.0077
Gender	1	.25	0.6217

Table 2: Least Square Means for Democratic Knowledge Scores of 14-15 Year Olds

Variable	Treatment Average	Control Average	Difference	Label/Question
Correct	11.41 (76%)	10.00 (67%)	1.4 (9%)	Average Number of Correct Answers

Table 3: Numerical value of Survey Responses in each Category

Variable Category	Score = 1	Score = 2	Score = 2.5	Score = 3	Score = 4
Democracy	Very bad for democracy	Somewhat bad for democracy	Don't know/ doesn't apply	Somewhat good for democracy	Very good for democracy
Good Citizens	Not important	Somewhat unimportant	Don't know	Somewhat important	Very important
Government	Definitely should not be the Gov't responsibility	Probably should not be the Gov't responsibility	Don't know	Probably should be the Gov't responsibility	Definitely should be the Gov't responsibility
Our Country	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Don't know	Agree	Strongly Agree
Opportunities 1	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Don't know	Agree	Strongly Agree
Opportunities 2	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Don't know	Agree	Strongly Agree
Immigrants	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Don't know	Agree	Strongly Agree
Political System	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Don't know	Agree	Strongly Agree
School	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Don't know	Agree	Strongly Agree
Curriculum	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Don't know	Agree	Strongly Agree
Political Action 2	I will certainly not do this	I will probably not do this	Don't know	I will probably do this	I will certainly do this
Variable Category	Score = 1	Score = 2	Score = Missing	Score = 3	Score = 4
Political Action 1	Never	Rarely	Don't Know	Sometimes	Often
Classrooms	Never	Rarely	Don't Know	Sometimes	Often

Table 4: Least Square means on relevant Attitude questions

Treatment LS Mean	Control LS Mean	P Value	Label/Question	Section
1.47	1.69	.0195	When political leaders in power give jobs in the government to members of their family, that is good for democracy	Democracy
1.63	1.86	.0228	When one company owns all the newspapers, that is good for democracy	
1.41	1.63	.0238	When immigrants are expected to give up the language and customs of their former countries, that is good for democracy	
1.65	1.92	.0116	When courts and judges are influenced by politicians, that is good for democracy	
3.61	3.35	.0065	When many different organizations [associations] are available [exist] for people who wish to belong to them, that is good for democracy	
2.03	2.25	.0253	When young people have an obligation to participate in activities to benefit the community that is good for democracy	
3.16	2.93	.0120	When a minimum income is assured for everyone that is good for democracy	
3.43	3.20	.0045	When political parties have different opinions [positions] on important issues, that is good for democracy	
3.65	3.48	.0399	An adult who is a good citizen obeys the law	
3.44	3.17	.0056	An adult who is a good citizen votes in every election	
3.44	3.23	.0275	An adult who is a good citizen works hard	
3.54	3.30	.0016	An adult who is a good citizen participates in activities to benefit people in the community	
3.55	3.30	.0039	We should keep other countries from trying to influence political decisions in this country.	Country
1.78	2.22	.0031	Children who are members of certain ethnic groups have fewer chances than other children to get a good secondary education in this country	Opportunities 1
1.90	2.24	.0195	Children from poor families have fewer chances than others to get a good secondary education in this country	
1.69	1.99	.0115	Children who live in rural areas have fewer chances than others to get a good secondary education in this country.	
1.94	2.33	.0012	Adults who are members of certain ethnic groups have fewer chances than others to get good jobs in this country.	
3.02	2.70	.0034	Members of anti-democratic groups should be prohibited from hosting a television show talking about these ideas.	Opportunities 2
3.55	3.31	.0029	Schools should teach students to respect members of all ethnic groups.	
1.75	1.97	.0387	Me are better qualified to be political leaders than women	
3.57	3.37	.0140	Immigrants should have the opportunity to keep their own language.	Immigrants
2.75	2.49	.0155	When political issues or problems are being discusses, I usually have something to say.	Political System
3.47	3.29	.0393	Students acting together can have more influence on what happens in this school than students acting alone	School

Treatment LS Mean	Control LS Mean	P Value	Label/Question	Section
3.37	3.12	.0042	In school I have learned to understand people who have different ideas.	Curriculum
3.44	3.12	.0008	In school I have learned to co-operate in groups with other students.	
3.25	2.89	.0013	In school I have learned to contribute to solving problems in the community.	
3.19	2.89	.0050	In school I have learned how to act to protect the environment.	
3.23	3.02	.0327	In school I have learned to be concentrated on what happens in other countries.	
3.17	2.84	.0051	In school I have learned about the importance of voting in national and local elections.	
2.60	2.27	.0254	How often do you have discussions of what is happening in your national politics with teachers?	Political Action 1
2.62	2.30	.0195	How often do you have discussions of what is happening in international politics with teachers?	
3.23	2.95	.0423	Students are encouraged to make up their own minds about issues...	Classrooms
3.12	2.79	.0069	Teachers present several sides of [positions on] an issue when explaining it in class...	

This analysis was benefited by consultations with Dr. Nancy Boudreau and the graduate students of the Statistical Consulting Center of Bowling Green State University and Judith Torney-Purta, Carolyn Barber and Vera Husfeldt of the Civic Education Data Archive and Researcher Services (CEDARS) at the University of Maryland.



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