

MARIA MAGDALENA ISAC

My overarching research focus is to investigate in a comparative perspective the role of student, school and educational system characteristics in the acquisition of citizenship competences in youth.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- 1/9/07-1/10/15 PhD Behavioural and Social Sciences, University of Groningen (NL).
PhD Thesis: "Effective Civic and Citizenship Education. A Cross-Cultural Perspective"
- 1/9/05-27/7/07 Research Master Human Behaviour in Social Contexts, Specialization: Research and Evaluation of Educational Effectiveness, University of Groningen (NL).
- 1/9/03-1/7/05 Master in Policy and Management in Education, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences (RO).
- 19/99-1/7/03 Bachelor in Educational Sciences, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University (RO).

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

University of Groningen (NL) 16/11/2015 to date
Researcher

I have further developed the work on citizenship education, especially on the aspects of measurement equivalence of attitudinal measures in ICCS 2016. Selected achievements: edited book "Teaching Tolerance in a Globalized World" and, article (under review, SCI indexed journal) "Indicators of (In)Tolerance toward Immigrants among European Youth. An Assessment of Measurement Invariance in ICCS".

European Commission, DG Joint Research Centre, Ispra (IT) 1/8/2012-31/7/2015
Post-Doctoral Researcher (Grant Holder 30)

During my PhD, I had the opportunity to take a leave to join the European Commission's Centre for Research on Lifelong Learning, which needed expertise in the area of citizenship education and international surveys.

Selected achievements:

- I coordinated (on behalf of DG EAC) the EC participation to the survey design (advice on the theoretical framework, measurement quality and comparability) of the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS, 2016).
- I developed and coordinated projects on: "Measurement Invariance of Attitudinal Measures in Large-scale Assessments in Education" and "Teaching Practices in Europe".

University of Bologna, Department of Management (IT) 1/12/2011-31/7/2012
Research consultant

I joined a team investigating the relationship between school autonomy and student achievement in multiple domains of learning. My main activities and responsibilities:

I carried out secondary-data analyses based on datasets from international large-scale assessments (e.g. ICCS) and Italian data (e.g. INVALSI), building composite measures and applying multilevel multiple regression techniques.

University of Groningen, GION Institute for Educational Research (NL) 1/9/2007-1/12/2011
Research assistant

I was part of the research group "Citizenship education and social integration". My main activities and responsibilities:

- Performing secondary-data analyses based on international and national (Dutch) datasets: ICCS, ELOS;
- Contributing to research reports for the Dutch Ministry of Education as team member of the ICCS 2009 NRC group for the Netherlands.

University of Groningen, GION Institute for Educational Research (NL) 1/9/2005-31/8/2007
Research assistant (part time)

My main activities and responsibilities involved writing literature reviews and empirical research papers on educational effectiveness topics (e.g. psychological precursors of school success, effective teaching strategies for improving the learning outcomes of low socio-economic status and ethnic minority students).

PRIZES AND AWARDS

2017 *Seal of excellence* for the INCLUDED project submitted to the H2020-MSCA-IF-2017 call.

2011 *Best postgraduate paper award* (\$1 000) and *international travel award* (\$1 000) for the paper “The contribution of schooling to secondary school students' citizenship outcomes across countries”, awarded by the School Effectiveness and School Improvement (SESI) Special Interest Group (SIG) of the American Educational Research Association (AERA)

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP:

In the past 10 years, I have been member of the following organisations:

- Comparative and International Education Society (CIES). I am currently the co-chair of the Large Scale Cross National Studies in Education (LCSE) special interest group;
- National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME);
- American Education Research Association (AERA);
- European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI);
- International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement (ICSEI).

FUNDING RECEIVED

- 25 000 EUR from IEA for a thematic report on ICCS data “Teaching Tolerance in a Globalized World” (2016).
- 60 000 EUR from European Commission, DG JRC, for the organization of the JRC/EC international conference “Lessons learned for understanding civic and citizenship education” (2013) in collaboration with INVALSI, University of Roma Tre and IEA.
- 62 400 EUR from the Ubbo Emmius Fund of the University of Groningen for drafting and carrying out the PhD project “Effective Civic and Citizenship Education. A Cross-Cultural Perspective” (2007).
- Additional scholarships received:
 - ♦ Research scholarship for the Research Master in Behavioural and Social Sciences, University of Groningen, The Netherlands (2005–2007).
 - ♦ Socrates scholarship for (Master) studies in education at Radboud University Nijmegen, Faculty of Social Sciences, Nijmegen, The Netherlands (2004).
 - ♦ Scholarship for excellent students (best 5%, both bachelor and master) from the Romanian Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation (1999–2005).

SCIENTIFIC PRODUCTION¹

The selected publications demonstrate my experience with topics and methodologies at the frontier of comparative research in the fields of: civic and citizenship education and its role in the development of citizenship competences among youth in an internationally comparative perspective (1, 2, 5, 12, 15, 16); tolerance towards immigrants, inclusion and citizenship competences of migrant youth (4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13); cross-cultural comparability of measurement instruments/measurement invariance (3, 17, 18); complex methods of comparative data analysis (e.g. multilevel/structural equation models) of international large-scale assessments in education (all). In particular, my most influential scientific outputs (2, 5, 12) – in terms of both citations and recognition – have proposed and tested empirically a theoretical model that applies a systems perspective (inspired by educational effectiveness and ecological systems theory) to understand the role of educational systems and other agents in socializing students into active citizenship worldwide.

Published articles in internationally reviewed academic journals

1. Sampermans, D., **Isac, M. M.**, & Claes, E. (2018). Can Schools Engage Students? Multiple Perspectives, Multidimensional School Climate Research in England and Ireland. *Journal of Social Science Education*, 1-2018, 13-28.
2. **Isac, M.M.**, Maslowski, R., Creemers, B. & van der Werf, M.P.C. (2014). The contribution of schooling to secondary-school students' citizenship outcomes across countries, *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 25(1), 29–63. (**IF: 1.468, cit. 55**)
3. Bialowolska, D. & **Isac, M. M.** (2014). School autonomy – a cross-national perspective. Can we compare the opinion of school principals? *Edukacija*, 4(129), 5–20.
4. **Isac, M.M.**, Maslowski, R., van der Werf, M.P.C. (2012). Native student attitudes towards equal rights for

¹ In parentheses where relevant: Impact Factor 2017 (IF) of the journal and number of citations (cit.) from my public author page in Google Scholar: <https://scholar.google.be/citations?user=wqbWoNIAAAAJ&hl=en&oi=sra>

immigrants. A study in 18 European countries. *Journal of Social Science Education*, 11(1), 7–26. (cit. 9)

5. Isac, M.M., Maslowski, R., van der Werf, M.P.C. (2011). Effective civic education. An educational effectiveness model for explaining students' civic knowledge. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 22(3), 313–333. (IF: 1.468, cit. 30)
6. Isac, M.M. (2008). Book review – Creemers, B.P.M. & Kyriakides, L. (2008). The dynamics of educational effectiveness. A contribution to policy, practice and theory in contemporary schools. Routledge, UK, *Romanian Journal of Pedagogy. Special issue: Educational policy*, 7(12), 307–308.

Books and book chapters

7. Sandoval-Hernandez, A., Isac, M. M., & Miranda, D. (eds.) (2018). *Teaching tolerance in a globalized world*. Cham: Springer.
8. Isac, M. M., Sandoval-Hernandez, A., & Miranda, D. (2018). *Teaching Tolerance in a Globalized World: An Introduction*. In A. Sandoval-Hernández, M. M. Isac, & D. Miranda (Eds.), *Teaching Tolerance in a Globalized World*. Cham: Springer.
9. Isac, M. M., Sandoval-Hernández, A., & Miranda, D. (2018). *Teaching Tolerance in a Globalized World: Final Remarks*. In A. Sandoval-Hernández, M. M. Isac, & D. Miranda (Eds.), *Teaching Tolerance in a Globalized World*. Cham: Springer.
10. Sandoval-Hernández, A., Miranda, D., & Isac, M. M. (2018). *How Do We Assess Civic Attitudes Toward Equal Rights? Data and Methodology*. In A. Sandoval-Hernández, M. M. Isac, & D. Miranda (Eds.), *Teaching Tolerance in a Globalized World* Springer. Cham: Springer.
11. Isac, M. M., Maslowski, R., & van der Werf, M. (2018). *Atteggiamenti degli studenti nativi verso l'uguaglianza dei diritti per gli immigrati in 18 paesi europei*. In P. Corbucci, & M. Freddano (Eds.), *Diventare cittadini europei Idee, strumenti e risorse per un'educazione consapevole all'Europa* (I quaderni della ricerca; Vol. 39). Turin: Loescher Editore.
12. Isac, M. M. (2015). *Effective civic and citizenship education: A cross-cultural perspective*, Groningen: University of Groningen. (cit. 3)

Research reports

13. Isac, M.M. (ed.) (2015). *Tolerance through education. Mapping the determinants of young people's attitudes towards equal rights for immigrants and ethnic/racial minorities in Europe*, Publications Office of the European Union, JRC96514.
14. Isac, M.M., Dinis da Costa, P., Araújo, L., Soto Calvo, E. & Albergaria-Almeida, P. (2015). *Teaching practices in primary and secondary schools in Europe: insights from large-scale assessments in education*, Publications Office of the European Union, JRC95601. (cit. 7)
15. Maslowski, R., van der Werf, M.P.C., Naayer, H.M., Oonk, G.H. & Isac, M.M. (2011). *Burgerschapscompetenties van leerlingen in de onderbouw van het voortgezet onderwijs: Eindrapport van de International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) in Nederland* [Citizenship competences of students in lower secondary education: Final Report on the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) in the Netherlands]. Groningen: GION. (cit. 5)
16. Maslowski, R., Naayer, H., Isac, M.M., Oonk, H. & van der Werf, M.P.C. (2010). *Eerste bevindingen International Civics and Citizenship Education Study (Initial findings from the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study)*, (GION Report), GION Institute for Educational Research, University of Groningen, The Netherlands. (cit. 10)

Conference proceedings

17. Isac, M.M., Palmerio, L. & van der Werf, M.P.C. (2018). Indicators of (In)Tolerance toward Immigrants among European Youth, The Citizenship Education Conference, Ghent, Belgium
18. Weziak-Bialowolska D. & Isac M.M. (2013). *Cross-national equivalence of students' perceptions of good citizenship in ICCS*. The 5th IEA International Research Conference (IRC), Singapore. (cit. 1)
19. Naayer, H. & Isac, M.M. (2010). *European citizenship in Dutch secondary education: A comparison between different types of schools*. Paper prepared for the 4th IEA International Research Conference, IRC 2010, Gothenburg, Sweden.
20. Isac, M.M., van der Werf, M.P.C., Maslowski, R. (2009). *Effective civic education in Europe*. Paper prepared for the Special Issue (4) of EARLI (European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction) SIG 13 - Moral and Democratic Education Newsletter.
21. Isac, M.M. & van der Werf, M.P.C. (2008). *Effective civic education. Testing an educational effectiveness model for explaining students' achievement in civic and citizenship education*. Paper prepared for the 3rd IEA International Research Conference, IRC 2008, Taipei, Chinese Taipei. (cit. 1)

Reviewer for the following journals (selected):

- Comparative Education Review (IF 1.815);
- European Journal of Education (IF 0.918);
- International Journal of Inclusive Education (IF 1.144);
- International Journal of Science Education (IF 1.325);
- Sociology of Education journal (IF 2.900);
- Social Psychology of Education (IF 1.261);
- Social Indicators Research (IF 1.648);
- School Effectiveness and School Improvement (IF 1.468);
- Young (IF 0.690).

INVITED PRESENTATIONS TO PEER-REVIEWED, INTERNATIONALLY ESTABLISHED CONFERENCES AND/OR INTERNATIONAL ADVANCED SCHOOLS

Over the years, I have been invited to contribute to over ten events as speaker or trainer. In the past five years, the most relevant for the INCLUDED project are:

- 2018 *Panel keynote* at the conference “Contemporary trends of education research. Models and practices at national and international level.”(CERED), Bucharest, Romania (Forthcoming)
- 2018 *Invited speaker* to the National Institute for Evaluation of Education (INEE), Mexico City, Mexico
- 2017 *Invited speaker* to the research seminar “INVALSI data: a research tool”, Florence, Italy.
- 2016 *Panel Keynote*: The results of learning in a comparative context. Benchmarks within the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (‘ET 2020’), at the International Conference “Diaspora in Scientific Research and Higher Education” in Romania, Timisoara, Romania.
- 2015 *Invited trainer* for the workshop “Using the IEA International Datasets for Informing Policy and Practice” at the 6th IEA International Research Conference (IRC), Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2012 *Invited expert* to NECE (Networking European Citizenship Education) Conference “Participation Now! Citizenship Education and Democracy in Times of Change”, Córdoba, Spain.
- 2012 *Invited expert* to the European Commission International Conference “Improving skills: Evidence from secondary analysis of international surveys”, Limassol, Cyprus.

ORGANISATION OF INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

- 2018 *Member of the scientific committee* of the EARLI Sig 13 Conference: Migration, Social Transformation and Education for Democratic Citizenship, Duisburg Essen, Germany
- 2017 *Member of the scientific committee* of the 3rd International Conference on Communication and Education in the Knowledge Society, Timisoara, Romania.
- 2016 *Co-organizer* of the First International Annual Meeting of the ICALT 3 project (International Comparative Analysis of Learning and Teaching), University of Groningen, The Netherlands.
- 2015 *Member of the scientific committee* and *organizer* of invited paper session “Tolerance through Education” at the 6th IEA International Research Conference (IRC), Cape Town, South Africa.
http://www.iea.nl/fileadmin/user_upload/IRC/IRC_2015/IRC-2015_Program.pdf
- 2014 *Organizer* of EC/JRC workshop “Statistical Methods Applied to International Large-Scale Assessment”.
<https://composite-indicators.jrc.ec.europa.eu/?q=events/statistical-methods-applied-international-large-scale-assessment-data-coin-invited-lectures>
- Organizer* of the EC/JRC workshop “Advantages and Limitations of PISA data”, Ispra, Italy.
<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/event/workshop/oecd-leaning-tower-pisa?search>
- Organizer* of the EC/JRC workshop “Using International Large-Scale Assessment Data”, Ispra, Italy.
<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/event/workshop/workshop-using-pisa-piaac-timss-pirls-talis-datasets>
- 2013 *Co-chair* and *organizer* of the JRC/EC international conference “Lessons Learned for Understanding Civic and Citizenship Education”, Rome, Italy. <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/event/conference/cce-research-seminar>

SUPERVISING AND MENTORING ACTIVITIES

2016–ongoing	Collaboration with KU Leuven in <i>PhD student supervision</i> in the field of political socialization. Member of the PhD assessment committee.
2012–2015	<i>Daily supervisor</i> of the PhD thesis in statistics “Testing cross-national construct equivalence in international survey” for the University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy.
2016	<i>External evaluator</i> of the PhD thesis “Post-16 Education and Training in England as a Force for Division in Youth Political Learning and Practice” for the University of Southampton, UK.
2016	<i>Daily supervisor</i> of the (Teacher Education) Master thesis “The effects of parental capital on students’ civic knowledge”, University of Groningen.
Along the years	<i>Co-supervisor</i> of various bachelor, master and research master students.

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCES

Since 2016	<i>Reviewer</i> for international conferences and organisations (CIES - Comparative and International Education Society Conference, AMCIS - 5th Annual Conference on Citizenship Education, EARLI - European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction). <i>Guest lecturer</i> on “Comparative and Civic and Citizenship Education” in the Research Master of Behavioural and Social Sciences, University of Groningen.
Since 2015	<i>Occasional advisor</i> for policy briefs on civic and citizenship education topics with ICCS 2016 data for EC/DG Education and Culture. <i>Occasional advisor</i> on course selection for continuous professional development for teachers for the eTwinning group: Creative Classroom.
2012	<i>Member of review panel</i> – Education Programme, University of Luxembourg.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In the past 12 years I have completed over 30 professional development courses. The most relevant for this application are:

- **J.A. Banks & University of Utrecht (2016):**
 - ♦ Knowledge Construction and the Education of Citizens in Diverse Societies.
- **European Commission (2012-2015):**
 - ♦ Impact Assessment of EU Policies;
 - ♦ Using Mplus for Structural Equation Modelling, Growth Curve Modelling and Testing Indirect Effects;
 - ♦ Constructing Composite Indicators.
- **OECD-CERI (2010):**
 - ♦ Growing Diversity in Student Populations, Theoretical Perspectives, Research and Policy.
- **IEA (2008):**
 - ♦ Introduction to the IEA Databases and the IDB Analyzer.
- **University of Groningen (2005-2007):**
 - ♦ Applied Theories;
 - ♦ Educational Evaluation;
 - ♦ Education and Society;
 - ♦ Applied Statistics;
 - ♦ Factor Analysis;
 - ♦ Power Analysis;
 - ♦ Meta-analysis;
 - ♦ Multilevel Analysis.