

Globalisation and the nation-state: (un)changing constructions of civics and citizenship education?

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The contemporary social and political world is now a complex mix of local and global trends. Technological change and the rapid growth of the global economy sit alongside the re-emergence of chauvinistic nationalism and local ethnic and cultural groups. Ten years ago Richard Falk (1999) described a new political contest between economic and market-driven 'globalisation from above'; and 'globalisation from below', with grass root movements (eg., feminist, environmentalist, human rights movements) pursuing an alternative global civic society agenda. Since that time, the intensity and complexity of these trends has increased and they are now exerting pressure on many of the institutions and practices of nation-states, including the concept of citizenship and the structures and practices and democracy.

This paper will use a case study of civics and citizenship education as a means of exploring the various understandings of, and responses by, governments of nation-states to these trends. Alan Reid will examine the adequacy of these responses in terms of the extent to which they are likely to meet the challenges of the changing constructions of citizenship in a globalising world.