JUDITH TORNEY-PURTA (UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, USA):
LESSONS FROM INTERNATIONAL LARGE SCALE ASSESSMENTS OF CIVIC AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Judith Torney-Purta’s presentation, “Lessons from International Large Scale Assessments of Civic and Citizenship Education,” will briefly introduce the history of political socialization and civic engagement studies including the three (about to be four) studies conducted by IEA. She will bring the perspective of a developmental psychologist active in this field of research for several decades.

The speech will discuss lessons learned in the following areas illustrated primarily with analysis from CIVED99 (and some from ICCS09). She will consider issues relevant for educators, researchers, and those who advise policy makers:

- examining why a focus on cognitive achievement alone is insufficient for those who hope to improve civic engagement;
- identifying probable developmental prerequisites for civic participation and the personal resources students need to become participants;
- viewing adolescents’ attitudes toward the political participation of women and of immigrants/ethnic minorities as integral parts of civic engagement;
- considering how national policies may be reflected in the socialization of adolescents;
- making estimates of how quickly reforms can be expected to improve civic education;
- emphasizing the importance of teachers and schools being prepared to foster positive and productive classroom and school climates for learning about civics (the Discourse Community and the Participatory Community at School) and also being prepared to engage in conceptually strong teaching.

Then she will consider issues specifically relevant for those conducting research in this area:

- measuring skills/reasoning and attitudes in adolescents, teachers, and principals/headmasters;
- strengthening international collaboration within the research process and encouraging the secondary analysis of these data;
- understanding how to present results to policy makers in a more compelling way than means, tertiles of distributions, and country rankings.