



**GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP OF INDONESIA AND PUBLIC CITIZENSHIP
EDUCATION: RECONSTRUCTING MEMBERSHIP, IDENTITY, AND
SOVEREIGNTY IN DIASPORA POLICY**

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(Naskah diterima: 1 October 2025, disetujui: 28 October 2025)

Abstract

This article examines Indonesia's Global Citizenship (GCI) as a new policy that offers permanent residence permits to foreign nationals with strong ties to Indonesia in response to the polemic surrounding dual citizenship and diaspora issues. Using document analysis and conceptual analysis, this study places GCI within the framework of citizenship philosophy: citizenship as legal status, political membership, and participatory practices. Conceptual findings show that GCI reconstructs membership through the recognition of blood ties, kinship, and history without changing the principle of single citizenship sovereignty. The article then interprets the GCI as a form of public citizenship education, namely the way the state shapes a collective understanding of who is included in "us," how loyalty is interpreted, and how the contributions of the diaspora are legitimized in the policy space. The implications discussed include the limits of citizen and state obligations, the risk of exclusion based on kinship categories, and the need for public ethical principles so that diaspora policies are not merely economic, but oriented towards justice and accountability.

Keywords: *Global Citizenship of Indonesia (GCI), diaspora citizenship, public pedagogy, political membership*

Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji Global Citizenship of Indonesia (GCI) sebagai kebijakan baru yang menawarkan izin tinggal tetap tanpa batas waktu bagi warga negara asing dengan keterikatan kuat pada Indonesia sebagai respons atas polemik kewarganegaraan ganda dan isu diaspora. Dengan pendekatan analisis dokumen dan analisis konsep, studi ini menempatkan GCI dalam kerangka filsafat kewargan: kewargan sebagai status hukum, keanggotaan politik, dan praktik partisipasi. Temuan konseptual menunjukkan bahwa GCI merekonstruksi keanggotaan melalui pengakuan ikatan darah, kekerabatan, dan historis tanpa mengubah prinsip kedaulatan kewarganegaraan tunggal. Artikel kemudian menafsirkan GCI sebagai bentuk pendidikan kewargan publik, yakni cara negara membentuk pemahaman kolektif tentang siapa yang termasuk "kita", bagaimana loyalitas dimaknai, serta bagaimana kontribusi diaspora dilegitimasi dalam ruang kebijakan. Implikasi yang dibahas meliputi batas kewajiban warga dan kewajiban negara, risiko eksklusi berbasis kategori ikatan, serta kebutuhan prinsip etika publik agar kebijakan diaspora tidak semata ekonomistik, melainkan berorientasi pada keadilan dan akuntabilitas.

Kata Kunci: Global Citizenship of Indonesia (GCI), Kewargan diaspora, public pedagogy, keanggotaan politik



I. INTRODUCTION

The debate over diaspora citizenship in Indonesia always faces two equally strong interests: the need to maintain state sovereignty through the citizenship regime, and the need to respond to global mobility, which means that the bond of “being Indonesian” does not always stop at the passport. In the context of civic and citizenship education, citizenship is not merely a legal status, but also political membership, identity, and practices of participation in communal life. This tension becomes even more relevant when talent migration and diaspora networks enable cross-border contributions to the nation, while the design of citizenship law tends to demand a single clarity.

Legally, Indonesia has established a principle that does not recognize dual citizenship for adults, with certain limited exceptions for children (e.g., those under the age of 18/unmarried and registration mechanisms as stipulated in Law No. 12 of 2006). This principle is often a point of contention when some members of the diaspora, including former Indonesian citizens and their descendants, have cultural, family, and historical ties to Indonesia but have taken on the citizenship of another country for access to work, education, or security. In the context of Southeast Asia, the phenomenon of talent mobility is also often discussed as brain drain, for example with data on changes in citizenship reported to have occurred in recent years.

Amidst these dynamics, the government, through the Directorate General of Immigration of the Ministry of Immigration and Corrections, launched the Global Citizenship of Indonesia (GCI) policy on November 12, 2025. In an official press release, GCI is positioned as a breakthrough to address the issue of dual citizenship by providing a form of permanent residence permit without time limits for foreign nationals who have blood ties, kinship, historical ties, or strong relationships with Indonesia. At the public policy level, GCI serves as a “middle ground”: the state does not change the prohibition on dual citizenship for adults, but opens up a form of functional membership through unlimited residence rights and opportunities for activity.

International reports also emphasize that GCI is projected as an alternative to dual citizenship and is inspired by the Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) scheme, targeting groups such as former Indonesian citizens, people of Indonesian descent up to a certain degree, and children of mixed marriages. This policy narrative is important for the study of

Pancasila & Citizenship Education and social sciences because it shows how the state defines bonds (blood, kinship, history) as the basis for recognition, while linking them to the national development agenda through strengthening relations with the diaspora.

Philosophically, GCI opens up a new interpretation of citizenship as a multi-layered concept: citizenship as status, as membership, and as a practice of participation. This policy can also be understood as a form of public citizenship education, because through official categories (who is eligible, what ties are recognized, what rights are granted), the state teaches the community the boundaries of the political community, who is considered part of us, in what form, and with what consequences. The normative questions immediately arise: to what extent is recognition based on descent/historical ties fair, how is state accountability maintained when residence rights are used as a substitute for citizenship, and how is national identity reformulated without obscuring the principle of sovereignty?

Based on this background, this article positions the GCI as a relevant object of study for education, history, culture, and citizenship philosophy. By examining the policy text and official narrative of its launch (2025), and linking it to the applicable legal framework of citizenship (2006), this study aims to explain how the GCI reconstructs the idea of membership in the Indonesian community in an era of global mobility, as well as its implications for citizenship thinking and public citizenship education.

II. THEORETICAL STUDIES

Reading GCI requires a framework that views citizenship not only as a “passport,” but also as a legal status, political membership, participatory practices, and the construction of collective identity. Therefore, the following theoretical study places the concepts of citizenship, diaspora, national identity, and public pedagogy as a series of interconnected elements. The classic framework for understanding citizenship as a status and package of rights can be traced back to Marshall (1950) through the idea of “civil rights, political rights, social rights.” Civil rights relate to individual freedom and protection through the law; political rights relate to participation in power; while social rights relate to minimum welfare guarantees and access to social heritage so that a person can live decently according to the standards of their society. This framework is important because it shows that meaningful citizenship does not stop at formal recognition, but rather presupposes access to certain rights that make that status operational in social life.

In the Indonesian context, this formal status dimension is directly related to the citizenship legal regime, which affirms the principle of single citizenship for adults, with limited dual citizenship arrangements for children under certain conditions and registration mechanisms. Theoretically, this shows that membership boundaries are not only socio-cultural in nature, but are institutionalized through rules that distinguish between citizens and non-citizens, along with the consequences of their rights and obligations.

While Marshall emphasizes the evolution of rights, Walzer emphasizes the issue of “membership” as a prerequisite for distributive justice. In *Spheres of Justice* (1983), Walzer departs from the assumption that the distribution of social goods always occurs in a bounded world, namely a political community that first determines who is a member and who is an outsider. Within this framework, policies on residence permits, work permits, or access to services are not neutral procedures; they are mechanisms that regulate the lines of inclusion and exclusion within the political community. This means that when a policy grants permanent residence rights without granting citizenship, it is producing a form of “in-between” membership (neither fully outsider nor fully citizen) that has ethical and political implications: who is recognized, in what capacity, and with what rights.

The development of citizenship studies later confirmed that citizenship is not only granted by the state, but also exercised through socio-political practices. Isin and Nielsen (2008), through the idea of acts of citizenship, draw attention to moments when subjects assert themselves as citizens through actions, such as claiming rights, participating, or resisting, which shape the experience of citizenship beyond mere legal status. This framework helps to examine diaspora policies not only in terms of who is entitled to reside, but also in terms of what spaces for practice are opened up: opportunities for contribution, socio-economic networks, and forms of engagement in public life that may emerge from new arrangements.

To link citizenship with diaspora, the concept of diaspora needs to be treated with caution. Brubaker (2005) shows that the use of the term diaspora has become very broad and risks becoming too loose; therefore, he encourages diaspora to be understood not as a fixed entity, but as an idiom, stance, and claim, namely a way of speaking, a position, and a claim that can be activated in a particular political context. Consequently, when a country issues

policies for the diaspora, it actually helps shape the diaspora itself through official categories, incentives, and language of recognition.

Ong (1999) adds an important lens through the concept of *flexible citizenship*, which is a strategy used by individuals/families to pragmatically take advantage of state regimes (passports, residence permits, economic access) in the context of globalization. Within this framework, attachment to one's country of origin does not necessarily disappear when a person changes citizenship; what changes is the way that attachment is negotiated through residency rights, mobility, and access to opportunities. This perspective is relevant for interpreting policies that do not grant dual citizenship but offer permanent residence rights: states are responding to the reality of global mobility by creating more flexible forms of membership without formally changing the principles of citizenship status.

In the realm of history and culture, a nation can be understood as an imagined community, a community imagined through historical narratives, language, symbols, and institutions that connect people who do not know each other into one (us). Anderson (1983) emphasizes that the nation community does not exist naturally, but is formed by historical processes and cultural technologies (e.g., print capitalism) that enable people to share a collective imagination of togetherness. For Pancasila and Civic Education (PPKn), this framework is important because civic education is always related to how the term “we” is imagined, inherited, and maintained through narratives and public institutions.

At the ethical-political level, Taylor (1992) shows that demands for recognition are closely related to identity and dignity; recognition or denial of recognition is not merely a matter of politeness, but concerns moral injury and social legitimacy. In diaspora policy, terms such as descent, historical ties, or strong relationships are not merely technical categories; they are instruments of recognition that determine who is considered to have moral closeness to the nation, and who is not.

This debate on recognition intersects with the debate on minority rights and substantive equality. Kymlicka (1996; early edition often cited as 1995) argues that recognizing certain rights for minority groups can be consistent with liberal-democratic principles, precisely in order to guarantee real equality, not just formal equality. Meanwhile, Young (1989) criticizes the ideal of universal citizenship as seemingly neutral, because universalism often obscures differences in experience and power relations; as a result, formal

inclusion can still leave substantive exclusion. These two ideas are useful for assessing diaspora policy: the recognition given to certain categories of people needs to be examined to see whether it results in more substantive justice or whether it creates new hierarchies within and outside the community.

Dewey (1916) viewed education as a process of passing on social experiences that enable a society to survive and renew itself; education, in this sense, is directly related to democratic life and the formation of citizens. In the tradition of critical studies, Giroux (2004) developed the idea of public pedagogy to explain how culture, public discourse, and policy work pedagogically to educate the public in understanding the socio-political world, even outside the classroom. Its conceptual reinforcement can be seen in the *Handbook of Public Pedagogy* (Sandlin, Schultz, & Burdick, 2010), which maps education and learning “beyond school” through public institutions, cultural practices, and social spaces that shape the meaning, values, and orientation of citizens' actions. Within this framework, citizenship/diaspora policy can be read as a pedagogical text: it teaches the boundaries of the political community, the types of attachments that are considered legitimate, and the norms of participation desired by the state.

Based on the above theories, GCI can be understood as a reconstruction of membership that lies between citizenship status and access to certain rights. Legally, Indonesia continues to adhere to the citizenship regime as stipulated in Law 12/2006. However, through GCI, the state offers permanent residence permits without time limits to foreign nationals who have blood ties, kinship, historical ties, or strong relationships with Indonesia. Theoretically, this can be interpreted as a functional membership format that opens up space for diaspora subjects to practice in the context of globalization, while also becoming an arena for political recognition and the structuring of national imagination.

III. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses an interpretive qualitative approach based on literature review with document analysis method, where the main corpus consists of press releases from the Directorate General of Immigration regarding the launch of Global Citizenship of Indonesia (GCI) dated November 12, 2025, supplemented by credible news documents for policy context; all texts are archived along with metadata (date, publisher, publication context) and then analyzed through qualitative content analysis by constructing a deductive coding

framework from citizenship theory and developing categories inductively from text findings (Mayring, 2000; Schreier, 2012), maintaining the traceability of coding decisions and category consistency following the principles of content analysis (Krippendorff, 2018). then the thematic results were deepened through conceptual analysis to assess the meaning and normative consequences of key policy terms (e.g., historical ties, strong relationships, and permanent residence permits without time limits) (Jackson, 1998), so that policy documents were read as texts that reconstruct membership and simultaneously produce messages of public citizenship education (Bowen, 2009).

IV. RESEARCH RESULTS

Global Citizenship of Indonesia (GCI) essentially produces a form of political membership that approximates citizenship but deliberately does not exceed the limits of single Indonesian nationality. At the level of official documents, GCI is defined as a permanent residence permit with no time limit and is even promoted as a stable life transition, with reporting required only once every five years at no cost. Here we see that the pattern of fulfilling residency certainty as a substitute for the demand for dual citizenship: the state provides duration and mobility in and out as compensation, but does not grant citizenship status.

Another finding is that the program architecture is structured as a layered diaspora pathway, rather than a single category. On the official website of the Directorate General of Immigration, GCI is mapped into four visa categories: E32E (former Indonesian citizens), E32F (former Indonesian citizens with special expertise and a guarantor from the central government), E32G (descendants of former Indonesian citizens up to the second degree), and E32H (descendants of former Indonesian citizens with special expertise and a guarantor from the central government). This mapping is philosophically important because it shows that the state is formulating kinship as the basis for recognition (blood/descent/family relations) as a gateway to permanent residence rights.

In categories E32E and E32G, a double logic is clearly evident, which is a key finding of the study: on the one hand, the program is based on *jus sanguinis* genealogical ties, similar to the tradition of citizenship by blood, but on the other hand, it is constrained by economic instruments (minimum income, cost of living, and investment/property commitments). For example, E32E requires proof of a minimum income of US\$15,000 per year (or US\$1,500

per month), living expenses of US\$2,000, plus a minimum investment commitment of US\$5,000 or property ownership of at least US\$1,000,000. E32G for first/second degree descendants also includes a higher investment commitment scheme (US\$10,000 or US\$25,000) or a minimum property value of US\$1,000,000. Theoretically, this pattern can be interpreted as a combination of family morality and economic rationality in a single membership design.

Therefore, the results of discourse analysis show that GCI is moving towards citizenship that is proxied by capital (both financial and genealogical capital). In her study of citizenship, Ayelet Shachar highlights how citizenship rights can be understood as valuable inheritance transmitted through birth and rules, making them prone to becoming privileges that can be protected like assets. In the context of GCI, this “inheritance” does not take the form of a passport, but rather unlimited residency rights, access to which is reinforced by investment/property commitment requirements that function as a class filter.

At the same time, other findings emerge from the exclusionary provisions. In E32E/E32G/E32F/E32H, there are restrictions on applicants who (for example) come from countries that were once part of the Indonesian Territory, have worked as civil servants/law enforcement/intelligence/military personnel abroad, have been involved in separatism, or have acted against national interests. Philosophically, this shows that the GCI is not merely a service policy, but a boundary-making device: the state affirms moral-political boundaries about who can be repatriated as part of the national community and who is considered a risk.

When viewed through a classical lens, there is a shift in focus from citizenship as a package of civil, political, and social rights (Marshall, 1950) to residency status as the core of membership. This is similar to the discussion of denizens (non-citizen residents) who obtain many substantial rights without full political rights, as discussed by Tomas Hammar (1990) in his typology of alien-denizen-citizen. Thus, the research results can be formulated that GCI builds an Indonesian version of denizenship, where there are permanent residence rights and high mobility but still limits the formal political horizon.

From a policy justification perspective, international reports confirm that the government frames the GCI as a response to the prohibition of dual citizenship for adults and as a response to concerns about brain drain. As stated in a Reuters article (November 24, 2025), officials stated that the goal was to turn the brain drain phenomenon into a strategic

opportunity for diaspora talent to return or contribute. This shows an instrumental orientation: the diaspora is positioned as a resource for development, not merely as a subject of identity recognition. Another report from ABC (December 3, 2025) shows criticism from the diaspora that this scheme does not provide real benefits and is considered a revenue grab. It also highlights that the regulations underlying the program do not provide clarity on land/property ownership rights, even though for many former Indonesian citizens, inheritance and property issues are the main reasons they retain their Indonesian passports. In other words, the study found a gap between the narrative of return and the economic and social rights that the diaspora expects.

The implementation aspect is also a significant finding of the study. SBS Indonesian reports that access to the application will only be available on January 26, 2026, and the process is still ongoing. If this is true in practice, then there is a risk of a credibility gap: when a policy has been communicated as a breakthrough, but the access channel is not yet operational, the credibility of the diaspora may decline and the space for disinformation may grow. This point is important to analyze in Civic Education because it touches on a crucial theme.

At this point, the most fundamental message regarding citizenship is the clear distinction between the status of citizens and non-citizens. Indonesia does recognize limited dual citizenship for children, but children with dual citizenship are required to declare their choice of citizenship after reaching the age of 18 or getting married, with a deadline for submitting their declaration no later than three years after that. Because the GCI is intended for individuals with foreign citizenship and takes the form of a permanent residence permit, this policy teaches that attachment to Indonesia can be accommodated through the right of residence, but does not automatically change a person into a citizen.

The immediate consequence for public citizenship education is the formation of a spectrum of membership: there are Indonesian citizens as full political members, then there are groups with permanent residence permits who can live and carry out long-term activities, but remain in foreign citizenship status. Reuters' explanation confirms that this permit allows former Indonesian citizens and their descendants to live and work in Indonesia indefinitely as an alternative to dual citizenship for adults, which is not recognized by Indonesian law. In terms of civic education, this broadens the understanding of citizenship: it is not just a matter

of passports, but also of how the state regulates access to life, access to work, and forms of contribution that are considered legitimate.

This policy also constructs a narrative of kinship as the basis for state recognition. In the context of civic education, this can be interpreted as the state's way of defining who is still considered part of the national community, even if that person is not legally an Indonesian citizen. In this way, the GCI serves as public education about our boundaries: not all foreigners, but certain foreigners who have a closeness that is recognized by the state. At the same time, the legitimacy of the policy is not only determined by the official formulation, but also by public acceptance and a sense of justice. The ABC article (December 3, 2025) shows a divided response from the diaspora: some welcome the program, but others consider it to offer no real benefits and even view it as an attempt to generate revenue. They also criticize the claim that this scheme is a solution to dual citizenship and that the Indian OCI model is an exaggerated claim. Such reactions are important because they touch on the trust of citizens (including the diaspora) in the state: when the benefits are perceived as unclear or not significantly different from existing permits, the policy tends to be understood as symbolic rather than fulfilling real citizenship needs.

The aspects of state capacity and service certainty are also part of civic education that is no less important. SBS reports that although the GCI was launched as a response to the issue of dual citizenship, access to applications will only be available on January 26, 2026, and is still in process. Therefore, policy promises that cannot be immediately accessed have the potential to create a gap between the official narrative and the experiences of citizens, which in turn affects trust in the accountability of public services.

In addition, framing GCI as a response to brain drain makes this policy carry an instrumental message of citizenship: the diaspora is seen as a development resource that needs to be brought back or invited to contribute. Reuters emphasizes the goal of turning brain drain into a strategic opportunity for the diaspora to return or contribute, and cites references to data on changes in citizenship in the region as the background for the urgency of the policy. This message is ethically debatable: whether the diaspora is seen primarily as development capital, or as subjects of recognition who have the right to be treated fairly in relation to their country of origin. Thus, these findings reinforce the core of the discussion: the GCI shapes public understanding that membership in a nation can be accommodated

through permanent residence rights, but citizenship status remains limited by applicable legal principles. The policy opens up opportunities to strengthen transnational national ties, but it also raises questions about equitable access, clarity of benefits, accountability of services, and public trust, which determine whether the policy is truly understood as recognition or merely a symbol. It also shows how citizenship is no longer singularly defined by a passport, but rather as a spectrum of rights, obligations, and recognition negotiated between the state, the diaspora, and the market.

V. CONCLUSION

Global Citizenship of Indonesia (GCI), launched on November 12, 2025, is a policy of permanent residence without time limits for foreign nationals who have blood ties, kinship, historical ties, or strong relationships with Indonesia, thus serving as a middle ground for the issue of dual citizenship without changing the principle of single citizenship in Law No. 12 of 2006. This policy creates a new spectrum of membership by providing certainty of residence and opportunities for activities for the diaspora, while still limiting their political status as Indonesian citizens. However, it has sparked debate over its legitimacy due to certain requirements and restrictions, as well as the gap between the rhetoric of recognition and the certainty of other rights expected by some members of the diaspora. Recent media coverage also shows a diverse public response and the possibility of policy adjustments.

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