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Edited by ILDE



SCHOOLS FOR SOCIETY

Learning democracy in Europe
A handbook of ideas for action

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Foreword

The Network of European Foundations (NEF) was created to encourage operational cooperation between foundations throughout Europe so as to achieve much greater impact as a result of their joint ventures. Linking the work of foundations, both large and small, across national frontiers has opened up new perspectives to the independent foundation sector to influence European-wide developments.

The Initiative for Learning Democracy in Europe (ILDE) was one of the first initiatives to be launched by NEF and was deliberately conceived to make a distinctive contribution to the European Year for Citizenship through Education and its follow-up initiatives launched under the auspices of the Council of Europe in 2005. Ten foundations have worked closely to shape this project, pooling ideas both on the challenges and priorities for citizenship education and on the most effective ways of capitalizing on their collective experience in this field.

Foundations feel strongly the pressure for action, perceiving as they do the necessity of preparing young people to act as responsible citizens by providing inspiring and encouraging learning experiences for them. Foundations in various European countries have accordingly promoted, in a spirit of private-public partnership, a range of initiatives for developing kindergartens and schools as democratic spaces and for opening them up to their local community. This handbook aims to make these approaches to formal and informal democracy learning, covering a young person's life from early childhood until his or her transition to the labour market, both visible and transferable to different national or local contexts. It seeks to inspire the growing community of stakeholders striving for better learning and living democracy in and around kindergartens and schools, often the only common denominator in children's increasingly diverse lives. In this way, the handbook is complementary to the Council of Europe manual, *Democratic governance of schools*, published in 2007 and aimed principally at head teachers and school leaders. Cooperation with the Council of Europe has been invaluable at all stages in developing this handbook.

Private foundations can and often do play a catalytic role in the field of democracy education. Being part of civil society, they support public sector schools performing the demanding task of teaching and living democracy by means of their own grantgiving schemes – for development of pilot projects, materials, counselling, training, networking, empirical research, awards or fundraising. The added value from the work of and with foundations is based on their capacity to link the public and private sectors so as to overcome bureaucratic fragmentation in favour of better and more cohesive democracy learning for children and young people. Foundations are independent contributors to long-term partnerships with public administration for joint working on key issues, such as developing young people's competencies to act as democratic citizens caring for their community's well-being as well as their own.

Careful study of European developments in this field have clearly indicated the substantial gap existing between the political declarations of national governments and European institutions and what is happening in practice in schools, although it is essential to acknowledge the very different approaches across Europe. The scope for a special effort from the foundation sector is therefore evident. It complements and supports what governments and others are doing.

This handbook addresses a number of concerns. First, there is little systematic knowledge about the work of and initiatives taken by foundations. Analysis of these initiatives can help foundations and their staffs to learn from each other and disseminate or mainstream effective strategies and approaches. The handbook is therefore targeted at the diverse community of foundations all over Europe in order to broaden their choice of strategies, theories and practices of change with regard to schools. The handbook is also targeted at hitherto neglected stakeholders in civil society and those who act as school community advisers, facilitators or other multipliers in order to suggest a range of tested approaches. The main target group is therefore best described as partners for kindergarten and school develop-

ment who can provide support for a more democratic learning culture and structure as well as for democratic community education.

The inclusion of approaches in the field of early childhood as well as informal learning through problem-solving is a special concern of ILDE in order to promote continuous democracy learning for children, young people and their partners and to help them grow as people. The handbook seeks to strengthen long-term private-public partnerships between foundations and educational institutions, often starting with a short-term single-project approach. Respectful intervention and a common negotiation process to meet the special challenges of an individual kindergarten or school community, including the parents, are seen as basic pre-conditions for sustainable change. Finally, the handbook is a further step towards creating a pan-European infrastructure, with a clearing house of expertise and platform for foundations and their partners already involved or interested in democracy education to increase the impact of their work.

Democracy building does not fall from heaven: it has to be learned and needs continuous investment of effort. This responsibility cannot be placed exclusively on the shoulders of nursery school or school teachers and head teachers. Foundations are prepared to contribute their know-how and support in order to make kindergartens and schools better places for children to learn and experience how to cope with conflicts in a democratic manner, how to become problem-solvers instead of trouble-makers, how to make constructive use of diversity, and how to demand and promote children's rights in everyday life. It is in this spirit that this handbook is presented and we look forward to learning how well it is received and used.

Dr Pia Gerber, Freudenberg Stiftung

Introduction

This handbook is about how schools can contribute to democracy in Europe.

It looks at the role that European schools can play in fostering more inclusive and sustainable forms of democratic citizenship in society, how schools can develop this role, and ways in which foundations and other civil society organizations can support them in carrying it out.

Who is it for?

The handbook is written for foundations and other civil society organizations interested in supporting projects in the field of school democracy – from small local groups such as parents' associations and local voluntary agencies to national and international foundations and NGOs.

It is intended to complement the manual on democratic school governance for head teachers and school leaders published by the Council of Europe (Bäckman & Trafford, 2007).

What is its aim?

The aim of the handbook is to help schools to enhance and nurture the civic skills and values of European citizens, young and old, through closer cooperation and partnership with civil society. It looks at ways in which foundations and civil society organizations can act as catalysts for new thinking and practices in democratic education, identifying the most effective strategies and approaches by which this can be achieved and opening up a new agenda for action in and through schools.

How is it structured?

The handbook is divided into three main parts. The first part considers the future of education for democracy in Europe from a research and policy perspective, setting out the main challenges facing democracy in Europe today and the need for new forms of citizenship and citizenship education. It includes a summary of recent research findings and information on a number

of current initiatives in the field, and was specially written by Viola B Georgi of the Free University of Berlin.

The second part examines in more detail the ways in which schools can contribute to the development of democratic citizenship in society, not only through their formal teaching but also through the opportunities they can provide for citizens, young and old, to experience democracy in action – in the classroom, in the school community, and in the relationship between the school and the wider community beyond its gates. It looks at the special role that foundations and other civil society organizations can play in helping schools to become 'agents of democracy', and some of the challenges and opportunities facing them in developing this role.

The third part consists of a collection of themed case studies illustrating different ways in which European schools and civil society organizations have worked together to create new opportunities for democratic education. The case studies are taken from a range of educational and geographical settings. They show how partnerships of this kind can be important, the range of strategies and approaches they can adopt in practice, and how these may be initiated and developed.

How can you use it?

The handbook should be a source of inspiration and encouragement to foundations and other civil society organizations with an interest in democracy and education in Europe, whether contemplating new work or reviewing existing commitments in this field. It will help you to understand how you can have a positive influence on society through working in partnership with schools in different countries, to learn about the most effective strategies and approaches for doing this, and to decide which best suit your particular needs and ways of working.

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Educating for democracy in Europe

Viola B Georgi, Free University of Berlin

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1

1.1 Why Europe?

The ideal of democratic citizenship has a long history in Europe – from its early beginnings in the ancient Greek city state and Roman Republic to the emergence of the concept of *citoyenneté* during the French Revolution and the formation of the modern European nation-state in the 19th and 20th centuries (Gosewinkel, 2008).

Although the idea has come under threat time and time again throughout history, from forces such as colonialism, racism, fascism and communism, the democratic ideal continues to live on in Europe and provides the basic foundation on which European societies are built. The Council of Europe was founded in 1949 to uphold the ideals of democracy; its European Convention for Human Rights, adopted in 1950, set out the political and civil rights of European citizens, and these have since been protected by the European Court of Human Rights. Fifty years later, the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights was drawn up. The Charter embraces the whole range of civil, political, economic and social rights of European citizens and of everyone resident in the EU.

What are the challenges facing democracy today?

While it is perhaps a truism to say that democracy is not a given but has to be relearned every generation, there is good reason to believe that democracy in Europe is likely to face a number of unprecedented and serious challenges in the near future.¹

Although democracy has had a certain resilience in the past, we can by no means be sure that it will be strong enough to withstand the kind of anti-democratic forces that are currently emerging in Europe. Education for democratic citizenship has thus become a priority – for national governments, emerging democracies in Eastern Europe, the European Union, the Council of Europe and other European organizations and institutions as well as European foundations.

Depending on the specific national and regional situation, the most commonly perceived threats to democracy in Europe include:

- ▶ EU enlargement and integration processes
- ▶ Globalization
- ▶ Demographic changes and migration
- ▶ Growing diversity
- ▶ Increasing distrust in democratic institutions – at the national and European level
- ▶ Disrespect and disdain for politicians
- ▶ Nationalism
- ▶ Islamophobia
- ▶ Anti-semitism
- ▶ Xenophobia and other forms of bigotry
- ▶ Violence and conflicts
- ▶ Political apathy and political and/or religious extremism
- ▶ Terrorism
- ▶ Effects of economic recession

What kind of citizenship education is needed?

Citizenship education now appears as a statutory curriculum subject or a cross-curricular theme or as a dimension of the wider school curriculum in many European countries – whether influenced primarily by fears of young people's disengagement from political processes, by the affinity of some young people to radical groups, by concerns about declining social cohesion in more and more diversified European societies, or by the challenges and pitfalls of democratic transformation in the former communist countries (Paludan & Prinds, 1999; Eurydice, 2005).

Its content and method is still a matter for debate within European countries, however. In this process of reflection and revision on how democratic principles might best be promoted in society and 'strong democracy' (Barber, 1984) built, three interrelated courses of action would seem to be important:

1 *Democratizing political and social institutions*

First, we need to create and further develop democratic structures and procedures in our political and social institutions – especially schools. If schools are to meet the needs of both their students and their communities in a dynamic, constantly changing environment, they will need to be able to provide opportunities for participation for all their stakeholders – old as well as young.

2 *Fostering democratic attitudes and dispositions*

Second, we need to find new ways of generating and fostering democratic attitudes and dispositions in citizens. Schools, in particular, can play a crucial role in creating the framework and the conditions in which cooperative, tolerant and responsible citizens can evolve,

3 *Cultivating democracy as a 'way of life'*

Third, we need to develop and cultivate democracy not simply as a formal process but as a form of association – as a 'way of life' (Dewey, 1950). Not only does this suggest an important role for civil society organizations, but it also implies that we need to begin with the youngest children – by creating a democratic culture in kindergartens and schools, making the voices of children and young people heard as well as those of adults.

What kind of democracy does this imply?

Such an approach implies a participatory and multi-dimensional form of democracy that builds on the ability and willingness of citizens to take responsibility for their community, be it the school, the neighbourhood, the city, the nation, Europe or even the world. It emphasizes the active involvement of citizens in civil society as well as in the formal political process. Citizenship in this active mode adds to the vitality and vibrancy of democratic societies (Frevert, 2008). It is through citizens' participation in the wider public sphere that the formal political process is invigorated.

Since schools are part of the wider public sphere, it is not surprising, therefore, that there is a growing interest in Europe in democracy and education being more strongly interlinked and in schools being developed as sites of democracy learning for young and old alike (Beutel & Fauser, 2007).

Is it time for a new form of citizenship?

At an abstract level, the term 'citizenship' is a relatively uncontroversial one. It signifies membership of a political community and confers the status of equality on all citizens with respect to the rights and duties this status

entails, as well as implying certain forms of active behaviour in the community. In reality, however, in Europe in particular, citizenship remains a highly contested concept. This is because the concept of citizenship is not purely a legal one but always rooted in the political culture of a particular country (Preuss et al, 2003).

Recent research suggests that citizenship is a contextual, dynamic, contested and multi-dimensional notion (Wiener, 1997; Conrad & Kocka, 2001; Yuval-Davis, 2004/5; Lister, 1994). It is contextual because, at any given time, it has different interpretations and applications in different European societies. It is dynamic because its meanings and features change over time. It is contested because there are contrary and diverse opinions on the demands it should make of citizens. It is multi-dimensional because it brings together legal status (membership) with identity (feelings of belonging), civic virtues (dispositions, values and behaviours) and practices (engagement, agency and advocacy).

So what concept of citizenship is most appropriate for the democracies of 21st century Europe – that is to say, in countries which, albeit at different rates, are undergoing rapid changes as a result of factors such as the fall of communism, EU enlargement, Europeanization, globalization, demographic changes, migration often accompanied by increasing xenophobia, and the threat of political and/or religious fundamentalism?

Clearly, traditional models of citizenship will no longer do (Osler & Starkey, 2003). Our concept of citizenship must become more embedded in the life of civil society (Soysal, 1994) and its diversity (Georgi, 2008). Citizenship in a globalized and diverse Europe needs to build on a broader idea of 'community', one that goes beyond ethnic descent or that equates citizenship with nationality and which will pave the way for a broader understanding of citizenship that encompasses belonging, identity, and participation in a more unified European framework (Frevert, 2008).

¹ See, for example, reports of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights: <http://fra.europa.eu>

1.2 Recent research findings

The wide range of research that has recently been undertaken on democracy and schools in Europe testifies to the significance accorded to this area in the current policy agendas of many European countries.

Civic Education Study

One of the largest recent projects addressing democracy and citizenship was the so-called Civic Education Study. It was carried out by the *International Evaluation Association* (IEA) between 1996 and 2000 and included 28 countries, the majority of which were European. The main goal was to identify and compare the ways in which young people are prepared for their role as citizens in democracies.

The study explored 14-year-olds' knowledge and views on democracy; democratic institutions and citizenship; national identity; and social cohesion and diversity. It found a positive association between civic knowledge and participation in democratic life, as well as between democratic school practices and civic knowledge and engagement (Torney-Purta et al, 2001).

Civic Education Study – key findings

- ▶ Students with higher levels of civic knowledge are more likely to expect to participate in political and civic activities as adults. Schools have an important role to play in shaping future participation by teaching about topics that enhance political literacy.
- ▶ Schools that model democratic values and practices, through encouraging students to discuss issues in the classroom and take an active role in the life of the school, are most effective in promoting civic knowledge and engagement.
- ▶ Four out of five students indicated that they do not intend to participate in conventional political activities – except voting.
- ▶ Young people are only moderately interested in formal politics but appear to be more open to other forms of civic and political engagement, eg charity work, social engagement or protest marches.

All-European Study on Education for Democratic Citizenship Policies

The *IEA Civic Education Study* has not only inspired further curricular innovations and research in the field but also had a significant impact on the policy agendas of national governments and supra-national European organizations.

The Council of Europe's Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) project processed the findings in its *All-European Study on EDC Policies* (2000). Based on a stocktaking of pertinent policy documents, country reports and other documentation, the study aimed to:

- ▶ identify the current policies on EDC in all European countries;
- ▶ map the concrete measures taken by governments to ensure the effective implementation of these policies;
- ▶ collect the views of a sample of practitioners and stakeholders on the implementation of EDC policies.

- ▶ Student attitudes suggest the growth of a 'new civic culture', one that is characterized by less hierarchy and more individual decision-making. Young people appear to be gravitating towards more informal social movement groups than towards conventional political parties and groupings.
- ▶ Schools and community organizations can have a positive influence on the preparation of young people for adult civic life.
- ▶ A large majority of students in Europe have had a positive experience of working with their peers in school, in either formal or informal groups, to solve problems and improve their school.
(Summarized in Kerr, 2008)

The outcomes of this research are documented in a detailed synthesis (Birzea et al, 2004) and five regional studies (Kerr, 2004; Losito, 2004; Pol, 2004; Mikkelsen, 2004; Froumin, 2004). The conclusions can be summarized in three major findings:

- ▶ There is a massive compliance gap between political declarations and what happens in practice.
- ▶ The main pillar for EDC at present is the formal school curriculum.
- ▶ A more diversified approach to EDC is emerging – one that goes beyond the formal curriculum, acknowledging a need to develop partnership between stakeholders and encompass whole-school and wider community activity as well as formal and non-formal educational settings.

'In spite of many differences between the countries and regions examined, most countries assigned the education system a significant role in solving pressing socioeconomic, political, and cultural challenges and stressed that EDC presented a part of this thrust because it covered topics such as diversity, identity, tolerance, rights and responsibilities.'

David Kerr (Kerr, 2008)

Citizenship Education at School in Europe

Based on the *IEA Civic Education Study* and the *All-European Study on EDC*, the Eurydice survey *Citizenship Education at School in Europe* from 2004 and its outcomes have added considerably to the evidence base for democratic education in Europe. Eurydice, an information and research network on education in Europe, surveyed the way primary and secondary schools in the different EU Member States have addressed citizenship in general and the European dimension in particular. The study, an overarching survey of the provision of citizenship education in schools in 30 European countries, provides the most up-to-date overview of approaches, challenges and shortcomings in citizenship education.

Eurydice survey – key findings

- ▶ Many European countries include citizenship education in the formal school curriculum. In primary education, most countries offer citizenship education as an integrated or cross-curricular theme. In contrast, in secondary education, nearly half of all European countries have established citizenship education as a separate subject.
- ▶ Most national governments are of the opinion that citizen education should be part of a comprehensive strategy that involves developing not only political literacy but also positive civic attitudes and values that promote active participation in society.
- ▶ Most European countries highlight, in their educational legislation or other official documents, the importance of promoting a participatory school culture that is shaped by democratic values and encourages young people to become active and responsible citizens.
- ▶ An increasing number of countries try to develop an active 'learning by doing' approach to citizenship education, providing students with opportunities to experience and practise responsible civic behaviour both in daily school life and in the wider community.
- ▶ Many countries are aware of the importance of introducing a European dimension to citizenship education.
- ▶ There is a deficit in teacher training: few countries offer special training courses for teachers of citizenship education.

(Eurydice, 2005)

1.3 Current initiatives

In recent years, we have seen the emergence of a number of important initiatives emphasizing the role of education in sustaining democracy in European societies – influenced, at least in part, by empirical research findings in the field.

Key Competences Framework

The Lisbon Special European Council Meeting in 2000, entitled 'Towards a Europe of Innovation and Knowledge', posited the idea of a European framework that would define new basic skills for future citizens in European democracies. These skills were intended to function as a key measure of Europe's response to increasing globalization, societal pluralism and the shift to 'knowledge-based' economies. A number of so-called 'key competences for lifelong learning' were identified and set down in a *Key Competences Framework*. Among the key competencies identified in the framework was 'social and civic knowledge', an essential element in the knowledge, skills and attitudes that all Europeans will need for active citizenship and social inclusion in future years.

The concept of 'active citizenship'

In 2001, the ministers of education in Europe adopted a report on the future objectives of education and training systems, and the following year the Education Council and the European Commission endorsed a ten-year pro-

gramme that constitutes the EU's strategic framework for cooperation in the fields of education and training (Council of the European Union, 2001). The key objective mentioned in the work programme is to ensure that the learning of the values and principles of democratic participation by all is effectively promoted in order to prepare people for active citizenship.

Active citizenship

Active citizenship is defined as: 'participation in civil society, community and political life characterized by mutual respect and non-violence and in compliance with democratic values and the rule of law, with a view to improving the quality of life or the well-being of the community/society.' (European Commission, 2006; Hoskins et al, 2006)

Council of Europe Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) Project

The Council of Europe's pioneering Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) project may be considered the most sustained and successful attempt to promote democratic education across Europe over the past decade.

Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC)

The Council of Europe defines EDC as 'a set of practices and activities aimed at making young people and adults better equipped to participate actively in democratic life by assuming and exercising their rights and responsibilities in society.'

(Council of Europe, 2002)

This definition is underpinned by a resolution adopted by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education in 2000, where EDC is described as being 'based on the fundamental principles of human rights, pluralist democracy and the rule of law, with the aim of preparing young people and adults for active participation in democratic society, thus strengthening democratic culture, civil society, social cohesion and respect for diversity and human rights.'

(Council of Europe, 2000)

EDC aims at strengthening democratic societies by fostering and perpetuating a vibrant democratic culture and raising awareness of shared fundamental values.

In the late 1990s, EDC became a common goal of education policies in Europe. Although approaches varied, most European countries adopted EDC as a common reference point for all democracy-learning processes. The Committee of Ministers recommended that, depending on the specific context of each educational system, EDC should be made a priority objective of educational policymaking and reforms. Promoting this objective all over Europe, the Council of Europe initiated a European Year of Citizenship through Education in 2005, which put citizenship education in the spotlight.

The EDC project has continued since, with the aim of fostering sustainability of democracy learning in the Member States of the Council of Europe. It is now completing its third phase (2006–09). A strong human rights education dimension has been added to the project, which is now called 'Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights' (EDC/HRE).

The European Commission

As a consequence, the European Commission has placed the promotion of active and responsible civic behaviour from school onwards high on the political agenda. It is not by accident that the European Commission included 'interpersonal, intercultural and social competences, civic competence' as the sixth of eight competencies in its Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on key competencies for lifelong learning in 2005.

The same kind of thinking is evident in the new *Europe for Citizens Programme* (2007–13), which aims at bridging the gap between citizens and the European Union. The objective is to stimulate opportunities for active citizenship in civil society. Its main approach is to provide instruments for promoting active European citizenship and to encourage cooperation between citizens and their organizations from different countries in developing their own ideas about European citizenship in a way that respects diversity and goes beyond a national vision (European Commission, 2005).

The most recent initiative, *Active Citizenship for Democracy*, by the European Commission-sponsored Centre for Research on Lifelong Learning in collaboration with the Council of Europe, has come to the conclusion that there is still a significant shortage of relevant data on which to base policy reform in this field. For an appraisal of the present scene in Member States, see the Final Report of the Commission's *Study on Active Citizenship Educa-*

tion, which contains an analysis of good practice examples and a number of case studies (European Commission, 2007). As a result, the European Commission is now working with Member States to identify data gaps and to sponsor a new European module, as part of the International Evaluation Association's new *International Civics and Citizenship Education Study*, due to report in 2010.

The initiative of creating a new European module within the framework of the *International Civics and Citizenship Education Study* marks 'a concerted effort, by national and supra-national organizations, to define the outcomes of citizenship education and to measure the extent to which citizenship education has equipped people with the capabilities needed to be active citizens in twenty-first-century Europe'.

David Kerr (Kerr, 2008)

What does the future hold?

Going beyond the national vision, respecting diversity and activating citizens to participate in civil society have indeed become major concerns in present debates on the future of democracy in Europe. That is why the development of forward-looking, dynamic and responsive political and educational concepts is crucial – concepts that respect differences and promote equality and inclusion; concepts that promote the idea that 'Europe's unity resides in its multiplicity' (Morin, 1987). The significance of the current process of evaluating and rethinking citizenship and citizenship education in Europe should not be underestimated. Fresh, new approaches to citizenship education in schools and the wider community contribute to creating the conditional democratic framework and the democratic mindset to balance unity and diversity in Europe.



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Schools and democracy
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2

2.1 Why schools?

The skills and dispositions of democratic citizenship cannot simply be taught formally: they have to be learned, at least in part, through experience. Learning begins in the home with the family and continues throughout life. Yet, increasingly, policymakers in countries across Europe today are looking to schools as sources of democratic learning. Why, then, when education for citizenship is lifelong, should schools be so important to this process?

Why schools?

While it is true that the democratic 'way of life' cannot simply be taught in the classroom but has to be experienced, there are important aspects of citizenship that can be, and need to be, taught formally. Civic knowledge – information about the institutions and processes of democratic government – is essential for democratic citizenship. So, too, is the ability to think critically about society, ie for citizens to be able to think for themselves rather than leave other people to do the thinking for them. Civic knowledge and critical thinking can both be taught effectively in the classroom – though ideally also in the context of real-life practical application.

Formal teaching aside, there are a number of other important reasons why schools have a key role to play in citizenship education:

1 *Schools give young people their first experience of public life*

While there are many things that parents and carers can do to lay the foundations for democratic citizenship in the home, this can only ever be the beginning. It is in the school that young people first experience what it is like to live and work in the public sphere. Schools bring together groups of people with different views and from different backgrounds, who have to live and work with one another as members of a community.

2 *Schools are a common denominator in young people's lives*

Almost everyone goes to school. As people's lives become increasingly diverse and disconnected, involvement in formal – as opposed to informal

and non-formal – education remains one of the few experiences common to the majority of children and young people in Europe.

3 *Schools can be a source of learning for adults as well as young people*

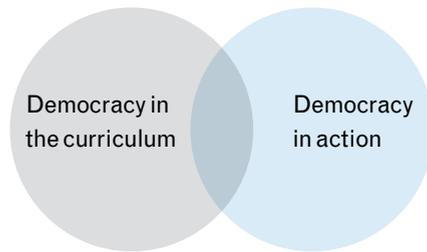
Schools are a common denominator not only in children's lives but also in the lives of many adults – not only school staff, governors and parents, but also community members in general. In some cases schools may be the only institution in public life with which adult citizens have any regular connection. In many European countries the idea of schools as sources of adult citizenship learning is quite new and its potential has yet to be exploited.

'Although many factors influence the development of attitudes and behaviours, the role of the school has particular importance.'
(*Torney-Purta & Barber, 2005*)

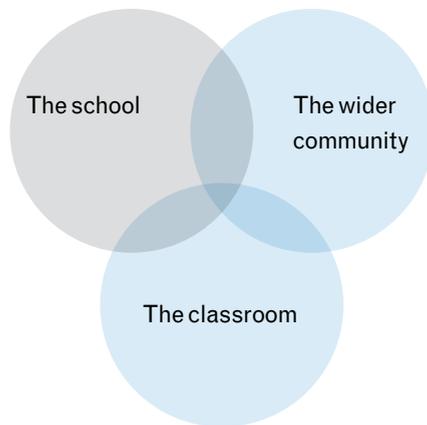
How can schools teach democracy?

In the first instance, schools can teach about democracy in the same way that they teach other things – in the classroom through conventional teaching. This includes lessons in civic or citizenship education; teaching about democracy and human rights in other subjects, eg in history or social studies; and teaching citizenship skills, such as critical thinking and discussion and debate, in different subjects across the curriculum.

Democracy is more than a body of knowledge, however: it is a way of living with and relating to others in the community. So formal teaching is not enough. The opportunity to *experience* democracy in action at first hand is also essential. So in teaching democratic citizenship, schools need to look beyond the content of their curricula to the opportunities they can provide for the experience of democracy in action.

Figure 1 Two sources of democracy learning in a school

The kinds of opportunities for active experience of democracy that can be promoted through schools fall, roughly, into three categories according to the types of communal experience they provide. These can be thought of as three overlapping types of community – or ‘public space’: the community in the classroom, the community in the school as a whole, and the wider community of which the school is a part.

Figure 2 Three overlapping communities or ‘public spaces’ in a school

What happens in classrooms is not entirely separate from what happens within the school as a whole, of course. Creating a more democratic culture in the school as a whole, by giving everyone involved more of a say in matters that affect them and sharing responsibilities more widely, affects the culture of the classroom – and vice versa. The same is true of a school’s relationship with its wider community.

There is also – or ought to be – a reciprocal relationship between the school’s formal curriculum and opportunities for practical experience of democracy in school life. Civic knowledge and critical thinking skills should not simply be a matter of academic study but also capable of application in real life, both in the school and beyond. Similarly, real-life issues and events in the school and its wider community can become the subject of analysis and discussion in the classroom.

What does this mean for practice in schools?

In practice this means developing a ‘whole school’ approach to democratic education, combining formal teaching with opportunities for democratic experience in the classroom, in the school in general, and in the school’s links with its wider community (see diagram, Appendix 2).

In particular, it means:

- ▶ incorporating an explicit element of citizenship education into the school curriculum;
- ▶ creating a more democratic culture within schools and their classrooms;
- ▶ involving parents and other civil society groups in the work of their schools and helping schools to engage more closely in the life of their wider communities;
- ▶ linking all the different citizenship education opportunities offered by a school into a coherent programme available to all its stakeholders.

Aren’t schools doing these things already?

The fact is that at present there are very few schools in Europe that are doing all these things, and many that are doing hardly any. In spite of the rhetoric from government, the evidence suggests that in many European countries there is a clear gap between policy and practice in democratic education – researchers call it the ‘compliance gap’ (Bîrzea et al, 2004).

There are a number of reasons why this is the case – some of which we shall explore later in this part of the handbook (Part 2.6). For now, however, what is important is to recognize that, despite the trend in official policy and legislation, the value of schools as sources of democratic learning and experience has still not been fully grasped – let alone put into practice – in the majority of European countries. In the following pages we shall look in more detail at what schools have to contribute in this area and how foundations and other civil society organizations can help.

2.2 The classroom community

It may seem an obvious thing to say, but the classroom can be one of the richest sources of democratic learning in a school. Not only is it a place where formal teaching takes place, but a class of young people is also a community in its own right – presenting its own opportunities for pupil participation and opportunities to experience democracy in action.

Where does democracy fit in the school curriculum?

Lessons in civic education, including peace and human rights education, not only teach students the ‘nuts and bolts’ of how democracy works but can also help them to learn the importance of peaceful conflict resolution, to come to terms with intercultural diversity and to develop a sense of European identity.

Teaching of this kind can be introduced into the school curriculum in a number of different ways:

1 *Civic or citizenship education as a separate subject*

As a subject in its own right, civic or citizenship education can be an excellent vehicle for helping young people gain a basic understanding of the system in which they live – legal, political, social and economic – and how they may have an impact on it, which is fundamental to any effective form of civic action.

2 *Traditional school subjects*

Traditional school subjects, such as history or social studies, can also be important sources of democratic education. The concept of democracy, for example, is often taught more easily through historical contexts. Studies of fascist and totalitarian regimes in the past can help young people to understand the fragility of democracy today. But it is not just history that can contribute. Art can help young people understand the role of the visual media in society, for example, and maths can help them to understand and interpret controversial numerical data and statistical claims.

3 *Cross-curricular skills*

Certain civic skills can be taught across the school curriculum in all subjects – just as reading and writing in the native language often is. Critical thinking and the skills of discussion and debate, including advocacy, argument and negotiation, can be developed in almost any subject if the teacher has the will and is sufficiently skilled.

Education Reform Initiative

The Education Reform Initiative in Turkey, with the support of a major Turkish bank and the Ministry of National Education, has produced and is disseminating to Turkish teachers a toolbox encouraging the development of critical thinking through three different curriculum areas: politics-economy, culture-art and science. (See Part 3, C.1)

4 *Suspended timetable days*

Suspending the official curriculum for a morning, an afternoon or a whole day can be a good way of organizing an extended programme of democratic education activities and for involving students in the process – though it can be a great deal of work and needs people who know what they are doing to make it a success.

Are some teaching methods more effective than others?

There is a direct link between learning based on discussion and debate, critical thinking, group and project work, and the basic skills that go with citizenship of a democratic society. Democracy depends for its existence on people who are articulate, can think critically, and respect and stand up for others regardless of their background. Teaching methods that give young people opportunities to take responsibility – for choosing a project, selecting an issue or evaluating an assignment, for example – are particularly effective at developing these capacities.

Types of learning that encourage democratic skills and dispositions include:

- ▶ active – emphasizing learning by doing;
- ▶ interactive – using discussion and debate;
- ▶ relevant – focusing on real-life issues facing young people and society;
- ▶ critical – encouraging young people to think for themselves;
- ▶ collaborative – employing group work and cooperative learning;
- ▶ participative – giving young people a say in their own learning.

(Huddleston & Kerr, 2006)

How can we create more participative classrooms?

When it comes to democratic learning, formal teaching is only one half of the story. The other is the opportunities the classroom can provide for the practical experience of democracy, for students to be able to take more responsibility for their learning and behaviour.

There are many potential opportunities for this in the classroom – for example, by involving students in:

- ▶ drawing up class rules;
- ▶ talking through problem behaviour;
- ▶ choosing questions to discuss;
- ▶ deciding on topics to research and designing research methods;
- ▶ setting learning objectives;
- ▶ assessing their own and other students' assignments;
- ▶ evaluating teaching and learning methods.

The 'Klassenrat'

In Germany, the Klassenrat – or classroom council – has an important role to play in democracy learning. The Klassenrat goes far beyond the traditional student council by creating a democratic space in which students are able to discuss *any* aspect of classroom life and to organize and run the discussion process themselves.

(Friedrichs, 2009)

Fundamental to this is the need to give students the chance to develop their own thinking and express their ideas publicly, while at the same time learning to listen to the views and opinions of others. These are some of the foundational skills of democratic citizenship and it is in the classroom that most young people first get the chance to learn and practise them.

The classroom as a 'public forum'

Many young people have their first contact with the 'public' world in the school classroom. Classrooms bring together young people from different backgrounds, with different views and outlooks on life who would not necessarily associate with each other out of school. In many cases, they provide them with their first proper opportunity to speak and act as citizens in their own right.

(Huddleston & Rowe, 2003)

Practices like these are still in their infancy in many European countries, however, and not yet fully understood at the grassroots level. Much needs to be done to raise awareness of their implications, for teachers as well as students, and to encourage schools to experiment with more participative approaches to learning.

What about the role of the classroom teacher?

The role of the classroom teacher is central to education for democratic citizenship. Learning from the example of others is one of the most basic and salient forms of learning. It is important, therefore, that teachers are able to model the skills and dispositions of democratic citizenship to their students – through their openness, respect for diversity, peaceful methods of conflict resolution, and appeal to reason and evidence in their opinions. They need to be able to create a learning climate that is supportive and non-threatening, enabling everyone to feel they are accepted as equal members of the classroom community and to express their views freely and without ridicule.

Working in this way is not always easy for teachers used to a traditional authoritarian approach in which they see themselves as the active transmitters of knowledge and their students as passive recipients. It means having to let go of some of their traditional authority and allowing their students to take the initiative from time to time. We need to be creative in finding new and more effective means of convincing teachers of the benefits of a more participative approach and helping them to develop the skills and confidence they need to put it into practice.

2.3 The school community

Anyone associated with a school will tell you that their school has a life of its own; that it is a community in its own right.

School communities are never neutral: the values they embody have a powerful effect on the people who live and work in them, and policymakers and practitioners have always known this. However, rather than organizing school life so as to promote social conformity and traditional forms of authority, as was formerly almost always the case, there is a need today to find ways of developing school communities that encourage more democratic ways of living, and which take issues of equality and respect for diversity seriously.

How can the culture of a school promote democracy?

Schools promote democracy by being democratic – by providing opportunities for their different stakeholders, young and old, to play a part in the way the school is run.

To some people, a democratic school might sound an odd idea. They think of democracy only in terms of the government of a country or political state. But democracy is more than just a political system: it is a way of *relating to* and *working with* others. Thus, while a school community may never be a democracy in the narrow sense of the term, it can be democratic in the way its stakeholders relate to and work with each other (Dewey, 1950).

It involves, among other things, developing a school culture, or 'ethos', in which everyone involved has a say in matters that affect them; responsibili-

The school as a 'democratic republic'

Spoleczne Gimnazjum nr 20 in Warsaw is run as a democratic republic in which all its members – students, teachers, parents and staff – are 'citizens'. It has its own school parliament, government and court, with elections every year. (See Part 3, A.3)

ties are shared; and relationships are characterized by a climate of mutual respect and trust (De Haan et al, 2007).

What does this mean for pupils?

This means opening up aspects of school life for wider participation by pupils – in particular, by providing opportunities for them to:

- ▶ develop their social relationships;
- ▶ express their opinions;
- ▶ take part in decision-making;
- ▶ accept positions of responsibility.

Democratic participation

Democratic participation means 'being involved in the decisions that affect your life, the life of the community and the larger society in which you live'. (Hart, 1992)

In what aspects of school life can pupils participate?

In principle, almost any aspect of school life is open for pupil participation. In practice, of course, it varies with age and whether it involves simply expressing opinions or having actual decision-making powers or responsibilities.

Aspects of school life in which pupils may participate include:

- ▶ rules, codes of behaviour, rewards and sanctions;
- ▶ the fabric and condition of school buildings and grounds;
- ▶ pupil welfare, social facilities and extra-curricular activities;
- ▶ school transport;
- ▶ school policies, eg on diversity, homework, class groupings, examinations;
- ▶ teaching methods and curricula;
- ▶ school improvement and self-evaluation.

Opportunities for participation do not just happen by themselves, of course. Mechanisms and structures are required, for example:

- ▶ social clubs, extra-curricular activities and events;
- ▶ elected class, year or student councils or school parliaments;
- ▶ focus groups, working parties, committees;
- ▶ questionnaires, surveys and suggestion boxes.

‘From my earliest Sarajevo school days, sitting on the student council convinced me that, given the right skills and knowledge, students could play an important role in improving conditions in the classroom and community. Since then my work with student councils and unions, involving Bosniak, Croat and Serb communities, across Bosnia and Herzegovina has reinforced those feelings.’

21-year-old Vedran Mustafic (www.osce.org/item|27511.html)

What sorts of responsibilities are pupils capable of taking on?

Depending on their age and experience, pupils are capable of taking on a whole range of different responsibilities in schools, for example:

- ▶ acting as class, year or school councillors;
- ▶ organizing events, running clubs and action groups;
- ▶ welfare of new pupils;
- ▶ peer mediation and mentoring;
- ▶ peer education;
- ▶ managing school websites and newsletters;
- ▶ lesson observation, research and evaluation.

They can even participate in staff recruitment and appointments by helping to draw up job descriptions, conducting student interviews with prospective candidates, and giving feedback on demonstration lessons.

‘Schools that model democratic values by . . . inviting students to take part in shaping school life are most effective in promoting civic knowledge and engagement . . . and [their students] are more likely to expect to vote as adults than other students.’

(Torney-Purta et al, 2001)

At what age can democratic participation start?

You can never be too young to learn democracy: it can begin from the earliest years. Young children in nursery and elementary schools are quite capable of participating in decisions that affect them when these are expressed appropriately.

Democratic participation in the nursery school

Staff in a nursery school in Denmark, for children from 6 months to 3 years, felt that they had become preoccupied with setting rules. So they decided to give the children more responsibility for controlling their own behaviour. They began reviewing the rules by listening to the children, with the result that while some of the rules were preserved, a number were discarded, eg if a child did not want to eat but to leave the table and go and play, that was acceptable provided they were not running backwards and forwards constantly. One outcome of this was an improvement in relations between staff and children. It also helped the children to resolve many of the conflicts they had with each other by themselves. Initially, some parents were unhappy with the changes, thinking they would lead to the children behaving badly at home. However, they soon found that the children were able to distinguish between the rules at home and in the nursery, and gradually realized that their children were capable of making more decisions for themselves than they had previously thought.

(Lansdown, 2005)

What about adult participation?

Recent discussions of school democracy in the European context have tended to focus on pupil participation. While there is a need in schools in most European countries to open up opportunities for young people's involvement, the potential for adult participation in school life has been given even less attention. Arguably, one of the main reasons why teachers in some countries are slow to embrace pupil participation is because of the lack of opportunities for their own participation.

There is a strong case, therefore, for enabling pupils to work more closely and join in decision-making *with* teachers, governors, ancillary workers and other adult stakeholders on a more equal basis. This would have the effect both of integrating pupil participation into school-wide decision-making and of providing scope for a wider range of adults to become genuinely involved in the life of the school (Huddlestone, 2007).

2.4 The wider community

A school's relationship with its wider community and the individuals and organizations that make up that community is a vital source of democratic education, yet it is often the one to which least attention is paid.

Schools, rightly, focus on their students, but they do not always recognize the democratic potential of engaging more closely with the community beyond their gates – for the communities themselves as well as for school staff and students.

Why should schools engage more closely with their wider communities?

The case for schools opening themselves up to the wider community has never been stronger. Throughout Europe, schools are increasingly finding themselves having to deal with problems – such as crime, poverty, and ethnic and religious tensions – that have their origin in the community beyond the school gate. At the same time, interest is growing in the ways in which schools can act as agents of social change in their wider communities. Educational policies in a number of European countries already prescribe an element of community outreach for their schools. In England, for example, schools were given a legal duty to promote 'community cohesion' in 2008.

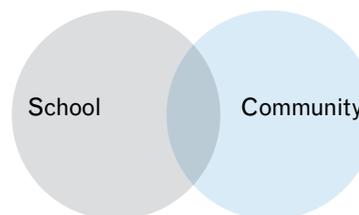
Although initiatives such as these may not be directed explicitly towards democratic education, they open up an agenda and establish forms of practice that can without too much difficulty be adapted to the needs of democratic citizenship learning as well. While community cohesion does not necessarily lead to democracy learning, for instance, democracy learning does lead to community cohesion – and so forth.

How can schools influence the democratic life of their wider communities?

When schools engage with the community around them a unique 'public space' is created, where all the stakeholders of the school are able to come together over issues of mutual interest – students and staff with parents,

local citizens, shops and businesses, public authorities and civil society organizations. The coming together of a school with its local community forms a distinct democratic space in its own right. Like the community within the school or the community within the classroom, it presents unique opportunities for democratic participation and the experience of practical democracy in action.

Figure 3 A unique 'public space' where school and community come together



What does this mean in practice?

There are different ways in which schools and their local communities can work together to create opportunities for wider community involvement and democratic participation:

1 *Bringing civil society into the school*

By encouraging parents and other community groups to become more involved in their schools – for example, through participation in:

- ▶ school governance and policy development;
- ▶ school self-evaluation and review;
- ▶ student mentoring;
- ▶ classroom assistance;
- ▶ organizing events;
- ▶ providing specialist management, legal and financial advice;

- ▶ fund-raising and sponsorship;
- ▶ helping with decoration, building and maintenance work;
- ▶ acting as visiting experts in lessons, eg on law, local government, media work.

2 *Taking the school out into civil society*

By incorporating local issues and events into the school's formal and informal curriculum – for example, through:

- ▶ environmental projects;
- ▶ intergenerational activities;
- ▶ community arts events;
- ▶ work experience placements in civil society organizations;
- ▶ local campaigns;
- ▶ community surveys and opinion polls;
- ▶ student volunteering schemes;
- ▶ links with local businesses;
- ▶ participation in local youth forums;
- ▶ community journalism and broadcasting.

The relationship is a reciprocal one: students learn through engaging with their community and the community learns through engaging with its schools.

How can parents be motivated to get involved in their children's school?

At one level, there is a natural motivation for parents to get involved in their children's school: it is a way of making sure their children are happy and do well there. Getting involved personally is often the only option open to parents who have concerns about their child's experience at school – be it concern about violence or bullying, gender equality, the standard of teaching, or some other aspect of their child's education.

It is a short distance from involvement for the sake of one's own child to more civic-minded forms of participation in school life – in fact, one can lead to the other. School-parent relationships, when structured appropriately, give parents first-hand experience of participation in a key public institution and contribute to their sense of civic agency. The important thing is that the relationship is an *active* one: it is all too easy to restrict parents to being passive receivers and assistants in schools rather than encouraging them to become joint contributors or partners in ways that are appropriate to their status.

European Parents Association

The European Parents Association acts as the voice of parents for all children in Europe. It brings together parents' associations in Europe, which between them represent more than 100 million parents. In the field of education, EPA aims to promote the active participation of parents in their schools and in wider society in Europe and to give a strong voice to parents in the development of all educational policies and decisions at the European level. (<http://213.10.139.110/epacontent>)

Why might other stakeholders want to get involved?

For other members of civil society, the school can provide a focus for community action that is familiar and non-threatening to people who lack trust in or have had difficult previous experience with public authorities. As a building, it can provide space; as an institution, facilities. In an important sense, therefore, schools have the potential to become hubs for community life, sites for the delivery of public services and forums for dialogue on matters of community concern.

Ordinary citizens will want to get involved in their schools, however, only if they feel there is something to be gained from their involvement, eg a local problem solved, a neighbourhood facility improved, or a public authority held to account. Where school-community relationships are structured with this in mind, citizens are more likely to be motivated to participate and thus benefit from the experience – both in terms of their individual sense of civic agency and through the development of their local community.

School as a community regenerator

Simin Han School, near Tuzla in Bosnia and Herzegovina, has adopted a 'School as community regenerator' approach to school-community relations. The idea of this approach is to turn a school into a catalyst for community renewal by making it the strategic focus of a range of development initiatives both within and beyond the school – through its curriculum as well as its facilities and physical location. (See Part 3, E.3)

Traditionally, of course, schools have been seen as providing a service for their communities rather than as agents for change within them, and have often set themselves apart from life beyond their gates. Old attitudes die hard and opening up schools to their communities will take time and effort. Much needs to be done to support this process, and foundations and other civil society organizations have a key role to play in this.

2.5 How foundations and civil society can help

Since the early 1990s, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been successfully running citizenship education programmes in European countries, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe. In Poland, for example, the *Fundacja Rozwoju Demokracji Lokalnej* (Foundation for Local Democracy) works with schools to facilitate their contacts with the local community. In Slovenia, the *Zveza Prijateljev Mladine Slovenije* (Friends of Youth Association) organizes a children's parliament at state level in which the elected school representatives take part (Eurydice, 2005). So what exactly can foundations and other civil society organizations offer schools in this field and what sorts of strategies and approaches can they use?

What have civil society organizations to offer?

Civil society organizations can support democratic school development in different ways. Small, local associations have flexibility and local knowledge, and are often well placed to deliver concrete programmes. Larger NGOs and foundations tend to have access to wider sources of funding and are able to operate at a national or international level, making them particularly effective at advocacy, campaigning and policy development. Specialist or niche organizations can provide sources of expertise that are not otherwise readily available, making them especially effective at resource development as well as training and professional development.

One thing civil society organizations have in common, however, is their ability to be self-regulating – operating independently of the state and private business on the one hand and of individual citizens and their families on the other. As such, they are uniquely placed to monitor, evaluate and, if necessary, criticize developments in democratic education, both nationally and on a Europe-wide basis, holding public authorities to account over policy development and implementation (Huddleston, 2009). They are also uniquely placed to act as catalysts for new thinking and ways of working, and to bridge the gap between policy and practice and between schools and their communities.

Foundations

Foundations are separately constituted non-profit bodies with their own established and reliable source of income (usually, but not exclusively) from an endowment or capital. They have their own governing board, and distribute their financial resources for educational, cultural, religious, social or other public benefit purposes – either by supporting associations, charities, educational institutions or individuals, or by operating their own programmes.

Civil society organizations

Civil society organizations are voluntary associations, formal as well as informal, that exist to benefit citizens and society. They include foundations and NGOs, community bodies, trade unions, faith-based organizations, cooperatives and mutuals, political parties, professional and business associations, charities and philanthropic organizations, informal citizen groups and social movements.

What kinds of things can you do to support democratic school development?

The most effective form of support for democratic school development is through partnership working with schools – either as an independent organization or in liaison with other civil society groups or with public or corporate institutions. However it is initiated – by school management, parents, students or civil society itself – partnership working is essential because the success of any educational initiative depends on it being firmly embedded in practice in schools and integrated into the whole-school development process.

Effective partnership working

The most effective forms of partnership are ones that are:

- ▶ replicable – applicable across a range of schools and communities;
- ▶ flexible – able to meet local needs and situations;
- ▶ practicable – take account of how schools actually work;
- ▶ sustainable – capable of making a long term difference;
- ▶ holistic – involve everyone in a school, not just an elite group;
- ▶ evidence based – built on empirical research.

The nature and focus of the partnership will vary according to the mission of the foundation or civil society organization and the kind of problem to be solved or result to be achieved.

In deciding how you might best be involved, there are a number of different criteria to consider:

1 Concrete programme or advocacy?

Do you want to have an immediate effect on school practice, through capacity-building or the provision of technical support, eg through training programmes or resource development? Or are you more interested in trying to address the root causes of problems at a policy level, eg by lobbying government or commissioning research?

2 Local or national| international?

Do you want the extent of your involvement to be purely local and aimed at a clearly defined, easily visible target group, eg a school or group of schools in a particular municipality? Or would you prefer to reach people at a national or international level, eg by running a national competition for school students?

3 Short term or long term?

Do you want your involvement to be for a limited period only, say a fixed period of one or two years? Or would a more extended period better suit your purposes?

4 'Hands-on' or 'start-up'?

Do you want to be directly involved in the day-to-day delivery of your project on the ground? Or would you be happier to restrict your input to its initial stages, eg by providing start-up funding?

Figure 4 Strategies and approaches for democratic school development

<i>Strategies and approaches</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Developing curriculum, teaching materials and toolkits	eg lesson materials or schemes of work for the classroom; guidelines on whole-school or extra-curricular activities – text-based, online or CD-ROM/DVD
Training – for teachers, students, parents or others	eg professional development seminars for teachers; peer mediation training for students; toolkits for school councils or pupil parliaments; training manuals on democratic school governance; advice and information packs for parent volunteers
Awards, standards, competitions and prizes	eg essay, poetry, video or art competitions; citizenship awards for students; charters or 'kite-marking' for schools; inter-school debating competitions
Creating networks – of individuals or schools	eg of individuals interested in school democracy; of citizenship educators; of parents or parent associations; of student councillors; of community volunteers – including through websites, discussion forums and newsletters
Carrying out or commissioning research	eg evaluating pilot projects; identifying best practices; researching client group needs; action research and development projects; investigating long-term effects in and on schools and their communities
Organization of conferences	eg for head teachers and school leaders; for citizenship educators; for NGOs and civil society organizations; for public authorities; for students; for schools – regionally, nationally and internationally
Consultancy or moderation	eg on the curriculum; on whole-school approaches; on school-community partnerships; on teaching and learning methods; on assessment and evaluation – including through workshops and audits

2.6 Challenges and opportunities

The idea of schools as agents of democracy is still relatively new to many people in Europe and foundations and other civil society organizations involved in promoting it face a number of challenges.

What are the main challenges to democratic school development?

There are a number of different but interrelated challenges to democratic school development:

1 The conflict with traditional attitudes on schooling

Traditionally, European schools have been organized along quite authoritarian lines. Parents have had little part to play in the running of their children's schools; students in the running of their classrooms; and teachers in what they have to teach. It is not surprising, therefore, that some people are suspicious of attempts to develop a more democratic approach. Teachers, denied autonomy and freedom by their principals, are unlikely to want to accord these to their students; head teachers may be reluctant to share aspects of whole-school decision-making which formerly were left to their sole discretion; and students, parents and others may be suspicious of the offer to become more involved in their schools, dismissing it as mere tokenism.

2 The existing school curriculum

However enthusiastic schools are about democratic education, there are always practical limits on what can be achieved owing to the restrictions placed upon them by the existing school curriculum. In Europe, the content of the school curriculum, and sometimes the teaching methods employed, is to a greater or lesser extent fixed externally – at a regional or national level. With the current emphasis on basic skills in literacy, maths, science and IT, there is often little space left in the formal curriculum for classroom teaching about democratic citizenship and little opportunity to integrate more interactive and collaborative methods into other subjects.

3 School priorities

School principals and teaching staff can feel so overburdened by the range of expectations laid upon them that they feel democratic education is a luxury they simply cannot afford. Centrally imposed accountability systems based on pupil testing and the assessment of teacher and school performance – largely in terms of pupil test results or 'scores' in basic subjects – have the effect of marginalizing activities aimed at personal and social development or community development. To this we must add the time taken up dealing with the many social problems that are met in schools today, such as bullying, gender inequality and the integration of minority groups.

4 Sustainability

Civil society partnerships with schools are necessarily temporary ones. There is always a time limit on the involvement. Alongside this, schools find their energies being taken up by having to cope with a continuous stream of government-directed 'initiatives' for school improvement – many of which prove ultimately to be ephemeral: here today, gone tomorrow. There is a worry that education for democratic citizenship may become just another 'initiative', and that programmes supporting it, however well intentioned, may be short-lived and fail to make any lasting impression on school life or the life of the wider community.

5 Measuring success

The effect of the current emphasis on testing in basic subjects has been a tendency to judge the value of educational activities only in terms of their measurable outcomes. There is a concern that so long as the effects of new practices in school democracy remain untested they will not be taken seriously – either by practitioners in schools or by the general public. Nor will there be any way of knowing which types of practice are effective and which are not.

How can these challenges be addressed?

While the challenges to democratic school development vary to some extent from country to country, experience of work in this field – as the case studies in the next part of this handbook show – allow us to identify a number of different practical ways of addressing these challenges, even, in some cases, of turning these challenges into opportunities. We list them here as a series of maxims or guidelines for action.

The role of the school leader is vital

Unless school leaders and principals are convinced of the value of opening up their schools to more democratic forms of organization and willing to make time and resources available to achieve this, little real change is likely to take place.

If the system is to blame, change the system

Where existing curricula and prescribed teaching methods leave little room for democratic education or interactive and collaborative methods in the classroom, we need to lobby public authorities for a change of policy.

Legislation has its uses

Educational legislation need not always be seen as a constraint, it can also be a powerful incentive for action. Policies on democratic education now have legal backing in almost every country in Europe, so the fact that they have not all yet been implemented in practice presents civil society organizations with a powerful argument for intervention.

Training is fundamental

Turning schools into agents for democracy demands new skills of teachers and new ways of working for students, parents and the wider school community, training for which is still lacking in many countries.

Democracy is the solution, not the problem

Where democratic participation is seen as a distraction from the 'real work' of a school, it is important to be able to show that it can contribute to this work, eg by improving the school learning climate (Osler, 2000), academic attainment, attendance and exclusion rates (Hannam, 2001) or key competencies (OECD – www.deseco.admin.ch). (See also the research findings in Part 1.2.)

Don't add on, integrate

To prevent democratic participation from being perceived as just more extra work, it is important to be able to show that it can be integrated into nor-

mal day-to-day activities, eg by involving staff, students, parents and others in meetings that are already being held, policy groups that already exist, and the kinds of decisions that are already being taken in schools on a daily basis.

The best argument is experience

When people – professionals and non-professionals alike – are given a real opportunity to participate in their schools and communities, they rarely need convincing of its advantages.

Genuine participation is always sustainable

Having enjoyed the benefits of real democratic participation, people rarely, if ever, reject it or want less of it. Initiatives that are seen as tokenistic are unlikely to have any lasting effect.

Harness alternative initiatives

Alternative educational initiatives, while not specifically designed with school democracy in mind, can often be adapted to support democratic learning as well, eg parent participation designed to improve the school's attainment grades can be developed so as to engage parents more generally in the life and work of their schools.

Build on the experience of existing partnerships

There is beginning to develop a body of experience among foundations and civil society organizations working alongside schools on aspects of school democracy on which new programmes and initiatives can draw – including the creation of networks of practitioners such as the Council of Europe EDC (Education for Democratic Citizenship) country coordinators and DARE (Democracy and Human Rights Education – www.dare-network.eu).

What do we mean when we talk about a school becoming more democratic? First and foremost, we refer to the role that schools can play in strengthening and sustaining democracy through the provision of opportunities for democratic participation and learning – both for members of the school community, staff as well as students, and for their fellow citizens living and working in the community beyond the school gates.

The idea of schools as agents of democracy is still quite new to many people in Europe, however. European schools have been and still tend to be authoritarian and hierarchical in character. To become more democratic, schools need to be more participatory institutions in which all individuals – young and old – have a part to play, and equality and justice are key principles. Democratic participation does not just mean the establishment of formal decision-making structures like school councils or parliaments; it also means encouraging individuals to feel they can take responsibility for what happens in the daily life of their school, in its classrooms, corridors, playgrounds and interactions with the wider community.

Thus it is not enough just to add a new subject or theme to the school curriculum or to introduce new procedures to the school council, important

though these may be. To create real opportunities to experience democracy in action means making changes to the school as a whole – to its ethos and internal culture as well as to its relations with parents, families and the wider community. It is a process that begins in kindergarten and continues through to higher education and beyond. It is about helping everyone involved, inside and outside the school, to develop a sense of shared citizenship and the skills and knowledge required to put this into practice effectively.

The case studies in Part 3 illustrate some of the different approaches and strategies adopted by foundations, other civil society organizations – and, in some instances, public institutions, eg in Sweden and Finland – in supporting schools across Europe to become more democratic institutions. They are taken from a range of educational and geographical settings and, for the sake of convenience, have been grouped into five separate sections:

- ▶ Section A *Involving the whole school community*
- ▶ Section B *Fostering tolerance and awareness of diversity and identity*
- ▶ Section C *Developing civic skills and attitudes*
- ▶ Section D *Creating a democratic school culture*
- ▶ Section E *Engaging schools in their communities*

.....

Ideas into action

.....

The themes identified in these sections are not intended to be definitive or exhaustive. Many of the initiatives appearing in one section could just as easily have appeared in another. The point, however, is to build up a general picture of the kind of pioneering work that has been undertaken in this field, its different emphases, and the potential it suggests for future partnership working between schools and civil society in strengthening and sustaining democracy.

3

A black and white photograph of four young children, two girls and two boys, smiling and holding up three large cardboard signs. The signs are arranged vertically and read 'KINDER', 'HABEN', and 'RECHTE' from top to bottom. The children are dressed in casual clothing, including sweaters and jackets. The background is slightly out of focus, showing what appears to be a room with shelves or a display area.

KINDER

HABEN

RECHTE

The idea of the school as an agent of democracy has implications for all members of the school community. For a school to become a genuinely democratic one, opportunities for democratic participation need to be available to all – students, teachers, management, administrative staff and parents. Since providing opportunities of this kind has implications for every level of the school's organization, every member of the school community can have a part to play in the democratizing process. Setting up representative bodies such as school councils or appointing specialist teachers of civic education, important though these may be, is not enough. There need to be opportunities for all individuals in every group within the school community to take a more active part in the life of the school and its wider community.

Achieving this is not easy and cannot be done all at once. The case studies in this section reflect some of the different approaches to whole-school involvement taken by foundations and civil society organizations working in partnership with schools in a number of European countries. They are taken from England, Germany, Poland and Belgium, and include:

- ▶ Involving the whole range of a school's stakeholders in school governance through the development of a school 'citizenship manifesto' (Citizenship Foundation)
- ▶ Introducing children's rights into school rule-making (Amadeu Antonio Foundation)
- ▶ Transforming a school into a democratic republic (Evens Foundation)
- ▶ Setting up joint student-staff seminars on student participation (Carnegie Young People Initiative, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation)
- ▶ Involving students in the provision and evaluation of their own participation opportunities (King Baudouin Foundation)

Involving the whole school community

3a

A.1 Citizenship Manifestos England

How can you engage the full range of the school's stakeholders in the life and work of a school and improve teaching and learning in the process? A three-year action research and development project run by the Citizenship Foundation in England shows just what can be achieved when a school develops its own 'citizenship manifesto'.

The birth of an idea

The idea of citizenship manifestos arose out of the problem posed for English schools in 2002 by the introduction of Citizenship as a new subject in the National Curriculum.

Schools in England have little tradition of civic education and the new subject was introduced with a set of guidelines that were, to say the least, open-ended and with the bare minimum of staff training. Not only was Citizenship poorly understood, but it was also

Citizenship manifestos

A citizenship manifesto is a short, public document that sets out a school's vision for citizenship education.

Rather like the manifesto of a political party, a citizenship manifesto outlines the school's democratic values and its intended programme of citizenship education activities for the coming year or years – in the form of a promise or pledge.

in imminent danger of marginalization due to external pressures such as examination 'league tables' and schools' constant need to improve their ratings. It began to become apparent that, if nothing were done to remedy the situation, the new subject could easily die on its feet.

It was in response to this situation that the idea of a citizenship manifesto was born.

The Citizenship Manifesto Project

With funding from the Esmeé Fairbairn Foundation, the Citizenship Foundation set up a three-year action research and development project to test the potential of the idea.

Twelve secondary schools were recruited from around the country. Participating schools were given free educational resources and access to Citizenship Foundation experts for the duration of the project as a way of encouraging and retaining volunteers.

Developed through the collective effort of representatives of a range of the school's stakeholders – students, staff (teaching and non-teaching), governors, parents and community members – citizenship manifestos not only raise the profile of, and bring coherence to, the school's democratic education programme but also open up its benefits to the community beyond the school gates.

A further incentive was the opportunity to be part of a nationwide curriculum development initiative. English schools today are regularly looking for concrete ways of demonstrating their commitment to school improvement – particularly in areas where they have been officially judged as weak. There can be much strategic value in linking partnership working to a school's self-evaluation process.

Esmeé Fairbairn Foundation

The Esmeé Fairbairn Foundation is an independent grantmaking foundation that funds the charitable activities of organizations achieving change for the better in the UK. Its primary interests are in the UK's cultural life, education, the natural environment, and enabling people who are disadvantaged to participate more fully in society.

Teacher evaluators

The next step was for each of the schools to appoint a teacher evaluator. Typically, these were Citizenship teachers or coordinators. Their role was to initiate and energize the manifesto development process in their school and to provide regular feedback to the Citizenship Foundation.

Two things were clear from the outset. First, the teacher evaluator's role would have been impossible to carry out without the support of their head teacher or principal – showing the

Citizenship Foundation

The Citizenship Foundation is an independent UK educational charity that aims to empower individuals to engage in the wider community through education about the law, democracy and society.

importance of obtaining this kind of support early on in the life of a project. Second, the best teacher evaluators were people whose investment in democratic education was personal as well as professional – indicating the value of identifying school contacts with a personal interest in this kind of partnership working.

Process as important as product

Essential to the concept of citizenship manifestos is the notion that the process of development is as important as the manifesto document itself. Accordingly, project schools were encouraged to involve representatives of as wide a range of stakeholders as possible – parents, governors, local businesses and community representatives as well as students and staff (teaching and non-teaching) – through the creation of school ‘manifesto working groups’. These working groups brought together different school stakeholders, sometimes for the first time, giving them unique opportunities to participate in policy-making in their schools.

‘The prospect of being featured in an attractive and widely disseminated local document was an important incentive for local business and community organizations to participate in the manifesto process and become more involved in school life more generally.’

Project Director

Displayed for all to see

A public launch for the manifestos and their subsequent dissemination provided further opportunities to involve school stakeholders. Citizenship manifestos were included in school publicity material and distributed to local institutions such as libraries and youth centres.

They were also converted into poster form and displayed around the school for all to see – students, staff and local visitors alike.

A practical teacher resource

As with any new idea, there were a number of practical obstacles to be overcome when it came to implementation in schools. Teacher evaluators often underestimated the time and human resources needed to get their manifesto process under way. They also had some initial difficulty in grasping the concept of the citizenship manifesto itself. To overcome these and related practical problems, the Citizenship Foundation devised a teacher’s resource, *Placing Citizenship at the Centre*, to help schools which may be thinking of developing a citizenship manifesto for themselves. Informed by the experiences of the project schools, the resource explains the manifesto process in ten simple steps, with notes and checklists for teachers at each stage.¹

Democratic citizenship permanently on the school agenda

Interviews with teacher evaluators and school leaders show just how successful the project has been and the part that citizenship manifestos can play in furthering civic values and understanding in the wider school community. Participating schools, without exception, described how the manifesto process had helped them to create more visible and coherent Citizenship programmes, leading to improved learning for and increased participation by students and greater involvement in school life by staff and other stakeholders. The process had brought together, sometimes for the first time, representatives of

a range of school stakeholders around issues of school policy and practice.

One of the best things about citizenship manifestos is that they come with inbuilt sustainability. They need to be reviewed every two or three years, thus enabling new generations of school stakeholders to become involved in the life and work of their schools and putting democratic citizenship permanently on the school’s agenda.

¹ The resource can be downloaded from the Resources section on the Citizenship Foundation website www.citizenshipfoundation.org.uk

Summary

Country	<i>England</i>
Lead organization	<i>Citizenship Foundation</i>
Approach	<i>Action research and development</i>
Focus	<i>Involving the whole range of a school’s stakeholders in school governance through the development of a school ‘citizenship manifesto’</i>
Age group	<i>Secondary school level</i>
Duration	<i>2005–08</i>

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A.2 Children's Rights Germany

In recent years a youth culture of white supremacy has developed in parts of Germany, particularly in the eastern part of the country. Neo-Nazi and other extreme right-wing organizations with agendas rooted in racism and anti-semitism are enjoying increasing popularity. What can you do to prevent this sort of culture entering into schools and permeating society? For Löwenzahn Primary School in Berlin-Neukölln the answer lay in putting students at the heart of school decision-making in a community-based project focusing on the concept of children's human rights and supported by the Amadeu Antonio Foundation.

Löwenzahn Primary School

Löwenzahn Primary School, Berlin-Neukölln, is in an area where many immigrant families live, mainly of Turkish and Arab origin. The teachers in the school are all German, but about two-thirds of the 400 students have an immigrant background.

The school had been experiencing problems with violence – among its students and involving members of the local community. The school playground is open and it is easy for anyone to gain access from outside. All was not well among the teaching staff either: there were endless arguments about the most appropriate

forms of teaching methods for a school with this kind of student intake. It was proving extremely difficult for the school to promote a unified vision of where it wanted to go – a legal requirement for schools in the region.

A more democratic approach to rule-making

Staff at the Amadeu Antonio Foundation became aware of the situation through one of the Foundation's existing programmes and contacted the school with the idea of a project focusing on children's rights.

The Amadeu Antonio Foundation

The Amadeu Antonio Foundation was founded in Berlin in 1998 to promote democratic culture through the protection of minority rights. It supports local projects and initiatives that confront neo-Nazism, racism and anti-semitism.

The Amadeu Antonio Foundation held intensive discussions with the management of the school about what they might do together. In the end they decided to do something on school rules and children's rights and the need to integrate the students' right to participate and right to freedom of opinion into the process of deciding school rules.

The Foundation offered to arrange a series of workshops with different school stakeholders, including parents and community members, on ways of introducing a more democratic approach to rule-making in school, including more involvement by the students themselves. It also offered to provide the trainers needed to run these workshops.

Underlying this idea was the view that in order for school rules to gain proper acceptance and respect it is crucial to involve all the school's 'stakeholders' in creating them – including the teachers, school management, non-pedagogical staff, parents and, most importantly, students.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Convention on the Rights of the Child has been ratified by over 190 countries since it was unanimously adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in November 1989. Ratification commits countries to a code of binding obligations towards their children.

Article 12 states: 'Children have the right to say what they think should happen, when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account.'

The project

On the basis of these preliminary discussions, the Foundation and the school came together

to put their ideas into practice. There were a number of steps to the process:

1 *Workshops with different groups of stakeholders*

They organized a series of workshops with different groups of school stakeholders to begin work on suggestions for possible new school rules, including students' workshops for all the Year 6 (5.Klasse) classes.

2 *Democratic dialogue and deliberation*

The suggestions for discussion were collected by representatives of the different stakeholder groups using a form of dialogue and deliberation in which participants were given the opportunity to express their own views and underlying needs and feelings, and to get to know the views, needs and feelings of others. The idea was that by using a more deliberative and democratic form of problem-solving, a deeper level of understanding between participants would be achieved and more creative solutions for controversial issues could be found. Voting was used only as a last resort when no other means of collective decision-making was available.

3 *Feedback*

The rules that were agreed through the deliberation process were fed back to the different groups of stakeholders. The student representatives had discussions within their classes as well as with all other classes at the school, and, if required, changes were made.

4 *Formal agreement and establishment of the rules*

The final step was to have the rules passed by the governing body of the school.

The benefits of the new approach

By the time the project was over, 40 new rules had been created using this new participatory approach, covering various aspects of the school's work. Staff and students alike welcomed the approach and reported how they felt it had contributed to improved relations within the school community – among staff, among students, between staff and students, and between the school and its wider community. Central to its success, they said, was the emphasis on children's rights, in particular children's right to be consulted on and participate in decisions that affect them and their daily life in school. As a result of the project, the idea of children's rights is now firmly embedded both in the school's vision and in its practical programmes. The distinction between rules and rights is often difficult for young children to grasp, and one of the advantages of children being practically involved in the process of rule-making and rights allocation is that it lays a foundation for their future understanding of this distinction.

Summary

Country	<i>Germany</i>
Lead organization	<i>Amadeu Antonio Foundation</i>
Approach	<i>Children's rights</i>
Focus	<i>Introducing children's rights into school in the context of collective rule-making</i>
Age group	<i>6–12 years</i>

Contact

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A.3 School as a Democratic Republic

Poland

What is the best way to prepare your students for life in a democratic society? By turning your school into a democratic republic, of course! Little did the staff and students at Spoleczne Gimnazjum nr 20 in Warsaw realize, when they tried to put this into practice, that they would eventually receive an Evens Foundation Prize for Intercultural Education, bringing much needed financial resources into the school and publicizing the idea of school democracy across Europe.

Spoleczne Gimnazjum nr 20

Spoleczne Gimnazjum nr 20 is a Bednarka school. Named after a Hindu who saved Polish orphans escaping from Soviet territory during the Second World War, Bednarka schools are staunchly independent in the spirit of the 'Solidarnosz' movement. They focus on service to others, intercultural exchange, and preparation for life in a democratic society in a country that still bears the scars of communist

School as a 'democratic republic'

The basic idea of the 'school as a democratic republic' approach is that a school should see itself and function, as far as possible, as a working democratic republic, in which all its members – students, teachers, parents and staff – are the 'citizens'. The 'citizens' of the

rule. Small wonder that at its foundation in 1990, Spoleczne Gimnazjum nr 20 was keen to organize itself along rigorously democratic lines.

Getting started: the constitution

The school's constitution was passed on 20 October 1990 and amended several times afterwards. The preamble reads:

'We, the students, teachers and parents, with a view to realize our intentions and aspirations connected with the education and bringing up of youth, hereby establish the School Commonwealth of Two Territories. It will promote knowledge, the ability to cooperate and respect for human rights.'

Setting up democratic institutions and authorities

Having passed a constitution, the next thing to do was to set up democratic institutions and authorities within the school community – in particular, a parliament, a government and a court.

school 'republic' draw up for themselves a constitution and found democratic institutions and authorities, such as a parliament, government and independent court. Elections are held each year and all elected bodies have a proportionate number of students, teachers and parents.

1 School Parliament

The School Parliament meets several times a year. It prepares and votes on bills and laws regulating important aspects of school life, introduces school by-laws and discusses difficult and controversial matters.

Example

The Anti-Drug Bill, a school by-law, allows school authorities to carry out drug detection tests on the school premises. The students, along with adult Parliament members, voted for limiting their freedom at school in return for the chance to create a drug-free environment. The bill has been functioning for a few years now and is considered to be working well. The majority of pupils say that it is easier to defy drug dealers when you know you run the risk of being tested.

2 School Government

The School Government – known as the 'School Council' – is responsible for organizing the whole school year and the events that take place (charity related, educational or recreational). It deals with the everyday life of the school. Members of the Council are assigned to different 'ministries' and functions, such as Prime Minister, Secretary of Order, Secretary of Finance, Secretary of Employment, Secretary of Culture and so on. Once a year the Prime Minister must report to the Parliament on all the activities carried out, and it is up to the Parliament to accept or reject the report.

Example

The School Council has been responsible for a Children's Day, Christmas Eve for hundreds of refugee children in Warsaw refugee camps, Christmas charity events for Polish families suffering from poverty, the Festival of Science and Art, the Sports Day and school entry exams.

3 School Court

Every sentence passed in the School Court conveys the importance of justice and responsibility over revenge. In the case of the most serious offences, the principal has the right to expel the offender. But there have been instances where students have sued the teachers and won. On one occasion an expelled student brought an appeal against the principal's decision, won, and was able to return to school.

Example

Most cases presented in the School Court concern issues such as bullying, physical abuse, bad behaviour during lessons, the destruction of school property and the use of alcohol at school.

An Evens Prize for Intercultural Education

In recognition of its pioneering work in school democracy, the school was awarded an Evens Prize for Intercultural Education in 2007. Sponsored by the Evens Foundation, Evens Prizes are designed to celebrate and foster initiatives in intercultural education in schools across Europe.

Although the award was worth €4,125, it wasn't just the money that mattered. What was more important to the school was that its approach had been recognized, nationally and internationally, and sets an example for others to follow.

A better community all round

Staff at Spoleczne Gimnazjum nr 20 say that students there have real respect for each other and other members of the school community, appreciate their freedoms, express their opinions freely, and are protective of their rights and the rights of others. No matter what the

activity, there is a distinct feeling that people come first – parents as well as teachers and students – which they say makes for a better community all round.

What they said . . .

'I was one of the authors of the School Constitution and a member of both the School Parliament and the School Council for a couple of terms. I have learnt to make responsible decisions and to protect my opinions. And I had lots of fun!'

School graduate

'In my opinion, the school is characterized by an extraordinary openness to pupils' opinions . . . what could be changed in the school, what could be improved. The school gives the opportunity to live in real democracy, not like in other schools, where everything is run by the adults.'

Student

'Taking part in a democratic procedure has not changed me into a politician . . . [but] . . . The school democracy served me well . . . Thanks to the democratic school experience we know that nothing is more precious than democratic liberties.'

School graduate

The Evens Foundation

The Evens Foundation, founded in 1996, is a philanthropic organization based in Antwerp, Belgium, with antennae in Paris and Warsaw. It takes and develops initiatives and supports projects which promote the harmonious living together of citizens and states within a peaceful Europe, with respect for diversity, both individual and collective, and integrity, both physical and psychological, with particular attention to the other.

Summary

Country	<i>Poland</i>
Lead organization	<i>The Evens Foundation</i>
Approach	<i>The school as a 'democratic republic'</i>
Focus	<i>Developing whole-school democracy</i>
Age group	<i>Secondary school level</i>
Duration	<i>1990–</i>

Contact

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A.4 Inspiring Schools England

What is the best way of supporting schools that want to increase student involvement in their decision-making processes? This was the question that the Carnegie Young People Initiative sought to address in England with its Inspiring Schools Project. The answer it arrived at was – by bringing students together with their teachers to reflect on the kinds of participation that suit the specific needs of their school.

A more strategic approach to student participation

An increasing number of resources have become available to support young people's involvement in decision-making processes in UK schools. Rather than 'reinvent the wheel', the Carnegie Young People Initiative embarked on a project that would add value to what was currently available by helping teachers to plan more strategically the ways in which they could embed student participation in their schools.

Carnegie Young People Initiative

The Carnegie Young People Initiative is a programme of the Carnegie UK Trust set up to increase the influence children and young people have over decisions that affect them. Working across the UK and Ireland, it specializes in research, new ideas and piloting innovative projects.

Inspiring Schools Project

The Carnegie Young People Initiative set up the Inspiring Schools Project in 2005 with support from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. The aim of the project was to test out models of good practice in schools seeking to introduce forms of student participation for the first time, recording practical outcomes and benefits and identifying barriers to student participation in schools and how they might be overcome.

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation is an independent grantmaking foundation. Its primary interests are in the UK's cultural life, education, the natural environment, and enabling people who are disadvantaged to participate more fully in society.

The value of empirical research

The project began by commissioning research from the University of Birmingham. In a field such as youth participation, where policy can sometimes seem to be driven as much by conjecture and assertion as by respect for evidence, the value of empirical research cannot be underestimated.

The research involved a literature review, an examination of the potential impact and outcomes of participation – on students, on

schools and on the wider community, and the collection of illustrative case studies. A key finding was that in many schools participation in school decision-making was restricted to a very small number of students. This corroborated earlier research carried out by the National Foundation for Educational Research in England a little earlier (Cleaver et al, 2005). A picture was emerging: opportunities for student participation in UK schools were clearly not being planned for strategically.

Pilot study

Building on the findings of the research, the project set up a small-scale pilot study in schools. The aim was to understand more about the processes and challenges of developing a student participation strategy in different schools and to use the evidence and insights gained to create a toolkit or resource pack to help teachers in other schools.

Six volunteer schools were identified and two external trainer-mentors recruited. Each school was to provide a coordinating teacher and commit five days of his or her time. The project would pay for the teachers to attend an initial seminar in London and an evaluative seminar at the end. The schools were also to set aside three days for visits by the trainer-mentors to work with the coordinators, school leaders and students, as follows:

- ▶ Day 1 Schools reflect on their aspirations and turn them into action plans.
- ▶ Day 2 The plans are presented to school stakeholders – students, parents, governors, local authority advisers and community representatives.
- ▶ Day 3 Debrief by trainer-mentor.

The schools were not expected to develop new approaches as such, but, using existing materials and guidance, to select and develop a model of

student participation appropriate for their own particular circumstances.

Workshop method

A workshop method was used in the schools, encouraging young people to work together with the adults and enabling school personnel to choose the sort of approach to student participation that best suited their needs.

Models of student participation were developed in relation to four different areas of the work of the school:

- ▶ Assessment
- ▶ Curriculum
- ▶ Classroom
- ▶ Community

In each of these areas, schools were helped to develop forms of student participation at different levels including one-to-one, small groups, self-selected groups, class groups, year groups, whole-school groups and young people-adult groups.

'We were impressed and heartened by the sense of pride among staff and students involved in student voice work; the increase in levels of trust between teachers and students; improved behaviour in the school; improved relationships between school and the wider community.'

Project officer

A new toolkit

The insights and experiences gained in the pilot schools were distilled to create a brand new toolkit, *Inspiring Schools – Resources for Action* (Hunjan et al, 2006), which could be disseminated throughout the country, enabling other schools

to replicate the same kind of self-reflective workshop approach. The intention was not to replicate kinds of resources that already existed but rather to collate and cross-reference the ideas and guidance they contained.

Lessons learned

A number of important lessons were learned during the work in schools. First, the process of trying to adopt a whole-school approach to student participation was rather more unpredictable and time-consuming than had initially been thought. The practical logistics of getting the school personnel together for the workshops was a serious challenge. So, too, was the need to persuade some staff about the merits of involving students in school decision-making.

Second, schools involved in the pilots all benefited immensely from being assigned external trainer-mentors. The trainer-mentors not only prevented individual teachers feeling isolated and helped them to realize the wider implications of their work but were active in creating a sense of common endeavour in the

Critical factors

The project identified four factors critical to the successful embedding of student participation in the culture of a school:

- ▶ Vision: a shared understanding in the school of why student participation is important and the difference it will make to the school.
- ▶ Status: making student participation a school priority.
- ▶ People: equipping students, staff and others for this kind of work.
- ▶ Organization: finding ways to embed student participation within school structures.

school. Clearly, the presence of external partners can make an important difference to the success of whole-school initiatives of this kind.

Where next?

Although over 2,000 copies of the toolkit were disseminated to schools, the project was aware that this was only one intervention and a toolkit on its own can go only so far. The value of this combination of empirical and action research-based work, however, is that it lays a firm foundation for future action – whether it be lobbying government to play a more active part in this area, establishing a network of interested teachers and schools, or commissioning further research or resource development.

Summary

Country	<i>England</i>
Lead organization	<i>Carnegie Young People Initiative</i>
Approach	<i>Empirical and action research and resource development</i>
Focus	<i>Developing a more strategic whole-school approach to involving students in school decision-making</i>
Age group	<i>Secondary school level</i>
Duration	<i>2005–07</i>

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A.5 Student Participation

Belgium

How can you make student participation real – foster the kind of participation that is meaningful to students and leads to the development of genuinely democratic attitudes and relationships in later life? Arguably, it is by ensuring that the students themselves are involved in the provision and evaluation of their own participation opportunities. This was the approach taken by the King Baudouin Foundation in a five-year project undertaken in secondary schools in Flanders.

Chronic lack of opportunities for student participation

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, staff at the King Baudouin Foundation, working in the Flanders part of Belgium, frequently heard complaints from young people about the chronic lack of opportunities for them to get actively involved in their schools. One of the most striking findings of its 1990–91 campaign, *A message from the young – an agenda for the future*, in which 20,000 young people were given an opportunity to speak out about their lives and their future, was the demand for more opportunities for student dialogue and participation within the school environment. This was confirmed in a small-scale study of the participation culture in 25 Flemish schools in 1993, which showed that there was both a lack

of opportunities for student participation and a massive demand for them by the young people that took part.

King Baudouin Foundation

The King Baudouin Foundation is an independent foundation, established in 1976, that pursues sustainable ways to bring about justice, democracy and respect for diversity – in Belgium, Europe and internationally. www.kbf-frb.be

Campaigning for change

In response to this state of affairs, the King Baudouin Foundation launched a campaign (1994–98) to introduce more opportunities for student participation in Flanders secondary schools. The campaign had two elements: first, to lobby the government for and advise on new legislation and institutions in this field; second, to set up a series of workshops for students and teachers to help them to improve the situation in their own schools. Underpinning this campaign lay the belief that democracy cannot simply be taught in formal lessons: it has to be experienced in the daily life of the school as well.

Three areas of activity

The Foundation's work with teachers and students focused on three areas of activity:

- ▶ creating opportunities for students and teachers to evaluate the current situation with regard to student participation in their schools, and laying the foundations for a series of training workshops;
- ▶ setting up joint workshops for students and teachers on ways of improving provision for student participation, not just in terms of formal bodies like school councils but in relation to a range of different types of participation;
- ▶ bringing schools together to exchange information and experiences and create support networks.

Steps in the process

The programme of work in schools was broken down into a number of discrete steps:

1 A whole-school audit

Each school was asked to carry out an audit of its current provision for student participation, with students and teachers working together to analyse the structure and level of provision and evaluate its strengths and weaknesses. A specially devised tool was used for this purpose – see Appendix 3.

2 Student and teacher workshops

Schools were given a choice of three different types of workshop depending upon the results of

the audit and the extent of participation currently on offer:

A one-day workshop for schools with little or no experience of student participation

This workshop was aimed at helping students and teachers to identify opportunities for participation in their schools, and to consider obstacles and how they might be overcome. It was designed for 60–80 students and 3–5 teachers from a single school and made use of methods like role play and improvisation. Before the workshop a preparatory discussion took place using the audit to determine the issues to work on. At the end participants made a joint declaration of future intent and this was returned to a few months later in a follow-up evaluation discussion.

Three half-day workshops for schools with student councils

These workshops were aimed at helping the student council to function more democratically and achieve more recognition in the school. They were designed for 12–15 members of a student council and 3–5 teachers or support staff. Before the first workshop a preparatory discussion took place involving the school principal and student council members using the audit to determine the issues to work on. There was a gap between the second and third workshops for the participants to put into practice what they had learned.

Weekend workshops for more advanced schools

This workshop was aimed at reflection on practice and exchange of experiences. It was designed for 40 schools each sending three representatives – a teacher and two students.

Participants discussed different types of participation, roles and structures and ended by drawing up an action plan for their school.

3 Student Support Centre

With the support of the then Flemish Minister of Education, the Foundation set up a Student Support Centre to act as a platform for the exchange of ideas and information between schools.

4 An event, a colloquium and a publication

The schools' programme concluded with a special event for young people, a colloquium for policymakers and a publication for schools, *Involvement and Participation at School*.

Take-up by schools

Over the duration of the programme almost 400 secondary schools took part, roughly 45 per cent of all Flemish secondary schools. The schools involved clearly saw value in the programme, both in terms of what they could gain from working with a civil society organization like the King Baudouin Foundation and in terms of its long-term goal: the development of more meaningful and effective forms of student participation in school life.

One of the lessons of the project was that representative student bodies, such as student councils, are never enough. The most successful schools were those that provided a range of types of participation, including forums, open dialogue and thematic groups and committees. Schools of this kind tended to produce students with a greater sense of personal efficacy and generally more positive attitudes towards democratic participation as well as improved results in academic subjects.

Summary

Country	<i>Belgium</i>
Lead organization	<i>King Baudouin Foundation</i>
Approach	<i>Student participation</i>
Focus	<i>Bringing students and teachers together to increase opportunities for student involvement in school life</i>
Age group	<i>Secondary school level</i>
Duration	<i>1994–99</i>

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Central to the creation of thriving and sustainable democracies is a sense of common citizenship among members of a society regardless of their ethnic, cultural, religious, social or sexual differences – whether they simply live and work there or are actually citizens of the society. This shared sense of equal citizenship can exist only when individuals feel secure in their sense of personal identity and are respectful of the identities of others. Fostering tolerance and an awareness of issues of diversity and identity is therefore an essential element in democratic education and one in which schools from kindergarten upwards can have an important part to play.

The case studies in this section reflect some of the different approaches to tolerance and awareness of diversity and identity taken by foundations and civil society organizations working in partnership with schools in a number of European countries. They are taken from France, Germany and Italy, and include:

- ▶ Raising students' self-esteem and motivation by affirming their sense of identity and equal value as democratic citizens (Centre Européen Juif d'Information; Evens Foundation; Bernheim Foundation)
- ▶ Training young people in initiating and implementing peer education projects (Regional Centre for Education, Integration and Democracy, Berlin)
- ▶ Running student workshops on tolerance development (Bertelsmann Foundation; Europäische Jugendbildungs- und Jugendbegegnungsstätte; Centre for Applied Policy Research, Munich)
- ▶ Developing a positive sense of self-identity and shared citizenship in immigrant students (Fondazione per la Scuola della Compagnia di San Paolo)
- ▶ Supporting immigrant students through intercultural peer education and school-family integration (Fondazione per la Scuola della Compagnia di San Paolo; Italian Centre Supporting Building Development of Emergent Nations)

Fostering tolerance and awareness of diversity and identity

3b

B.1 Classroom of Difference™ France

Raising students' self-esteem and motivation is not always easy, especially in a school with a culturally and religiously diverse student body in a socially disadvantaged area. The Lycée Louis Querbes, near Toulouse, tackled this problem through a special programme designed to help its students develop a more positive sense of self-identity and to recognize their equal worth as democratic citizens.

Lycée Louis Querbes

The Lycée Louis Querbes is in a small town in southern France near Toulouse. It has about 700 students from a wide range of cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds.

Standards of behaviour and motivation had been declining in the school for a while – witnessed by numerous incidents of aggression and violence. The head teacher, Pierre Vanpouille, was looking for ways of raising students' self-esteem and creating a more positive learning climate. He was convinced that the way forward lay in students' sense of their cultural and religious identity. So he began by looking at the Classroom of Difference™ training programme, run by the Centre Européen Juif d'Information (CEJI).

Centre Européen Juif d'Information

Centre Européen Juif d'Information is an international non-profit organization, established in Brussels in 1991, to combat prejudice and discrimination and to promote social cohesion through training, education, dialogue and advocacy.

Classroom of Difference™

Classroom of Difference™ is an anti-prejudice and diversity training programme and curricular resource designed for teachers, administrators and other school staff members, to help prepare them to meet the challenges of a multicultural school community. It is based on a 12-hour core teachers' training module in which participants explore specific issues within the context of their work in school – including stereotypes and prejudice, intercultural relations, institutional discrimination and intervention strategies. This training is accompanied by the *Anti-Prejudice Study Guide*, a curricular tool that enables teachers to transfer their training experience directly into their work with students. After the core training, teachers may take part in additional coaching and training to help them with the implementation of the *Anti-Prejudice Study Guide* and other school-based projects dealing with issues of diversity and discrimination.

Help from the Evens Foundation and the Bernheim Foundation

The programme was tested, with support from the European Commission, then revised and disseminated with the assistance of the Evens Foundation and the Bernheim Foundation.

The Evens Foundation

The Evens Foundation, founded in 1996 in Antwerp, Belgium, is a philanthropic organization that takes and develops initiatives and supports projects which promote the harmonious living together of citizens and states within a peaceful Europe, with respect for diversity, both individual and collective, and integrity, both physical and psychological, with particular attention to the other.

The Bernheim Foundation

The Bernheim Foundation was founded in Brussels in 1974 by Emile Bernheim to support economic and social issues, education, culture and research, and peace.

Integration Days

After taking part in the Classroom of Difference™ programme, the school management and teachers of the Lycée Louis Querbes began to implement a new intercultural initiative in their school called 'Integration Days'.

Over two days at the beginning of the school year, teachers work in pairs to deliver a Classroom of Difference™ training experience to newly arrived students at the school. The aim is to create a positive atmosphere in the classroom by helping students to get to know each other quickly and become integrated into school life by emphasizing their identity as equal

citizens. It also lays the foundations for other class projects aimed at developing intercultural solidarity, such as supporting a school in the remote areas of the High Atlas, or a cooperative of women making rugs in Morocco.

Integration Days start from the premise that a good classroom climate is a precondition for academic success and that this can be achieved only by helping students to develop a positive sense of their own personal identity.

'Ateliers'

Another idea developed by the school is the concept of 'ateliers'. By shortening lessons the school is able to gain spare time from 3pm to 5.30pm at the end of the school day for individualized lessons and projects. During this time students have a free choice of activity, including workshops designed to consolidate knowledge and skills; help with learning methodology; provide training and practice; develop communication and expression; or enable students to follow their own projects. These activities are intended to respond to the individual needs and interests of students, to foster their personal development and to contribute to the building of cross-cutting competencies.

Each student enrolls for the workshops in which he or she is interested – including ones offered by students for their peers. The system demands a high level of autonomy and responsibility from students. It is definitely not regarded as an easy option and there are strict sanctions for students who do not attend.

Improvements in student motivation and behaviour

During the time that this approach has been in place, teachers at the Lycée Louis Querbes have

reported significant improvements in student motivation and behaviour. There have been far fewer incidents of aggression and discrimination. Students have a higher sense of self-esteem and a more positive attitude towards diversity in the classroom, often deliberately choosing to work in groups that are culturally diverse or to bring together students of different genders or ages. Conflicts are solved more constructively than before, often without teacher intervention. Students clearly appreciate the extra freedom they have been given and use it in a responsible way.

Prize for Intercultural Education

In 2007 the school won an Evens Prize for Intercultural Education, helping it to further enhance its projects and showcase them to a wider international audience.

The benefits of embracing diversity

The experience of the Lycée Louis Querbes shows just what a school can achieve by embracing the diversity of its pupils and giving opportunities for individuals from different backgrounds to express and build on their identity openly.

What they said . . .

'The programme has facilitated a mutual understanding between students and teachers.'

Teacher

'The Integration Days were appreciated because they allowed us to put the problems out in the open and deal directly with acceptance of differences.'

Teacher

'The Integration Days allowed us to know ourselves and each other better and to see the teachers in a different way.'

Student

Summary

Country	France
Lead organization	Centre Européen Juif d'Information – with support from the Evens Foundation and the Bernheim Foundation
Approach	Classroom of Difference™
Focus	Raising self-esteem and motivation of students from culturally diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds by affirming their sense of identity and equal value as democratic citizens
Age group	Secondary school level
Duration	Ongoing

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B.2 Peer Leadership Training Germany

Young people sometimes learn better from their peers than they do from adults. Nowhere is this more evident than in the learning of civic skills and values. It was for this reason that the RAA eV, an NGO based in Berlin, set up a model programme of peer leadership training for a group of young people in German schools.

Young people initiating projects for young people

It can be hard for teachers to deal with issues like violence and racism in the classroom, because the world in which they live is often far removed from the lives of their students. A more effective strategy with issues like this is sometimes to encourage young people to initiate their own projects and share what they learn with their peers. But it is not easy for young people to do this unprepared – training and personal coaching is needed.

Peer leadership training

Peer leadership training aims at creating networks of young people able to motivate their peers to play a more proactive role in their schools and communities. Peer leaders are young people with natural authority who enjoy the respect of their age group. They have

A model programme

The programme devised by the RAA in 2000 focused on civic education and the development of intercultural competence. It involved training two to four students per school over a period of two years to help them initiate and carry out their own projects within their school community. In the process they were expected to act as multipliers at their schools, introducing other young people to ideas of tolerance and democracy and gradually changing the culture and atmosphere within the school.

The RAA

The RAA (Regional Centre for Education, Integration and Democracy) is a German-based NGO that specializes in the promotion of democratic school development and intercultural initiatives. It develops and supports projects that stimulate interactions between schools, young people and social work.

credibility with their peers because they live the same kind of lives and speak the same 'language'. Through training they are able to gain the skills and knowledge needed to put their natural abilities to good use in initiating their own projects and acting as multipliers in encouraging other young people to get involved.

Selecting students and supportive adults

During the first phase of the project, the RAA went to schools with which it already had contacts to find suitable students willing to take part. The age groups chosen were Years 9 and 10 (8. and 9. Klasse) and for the Gymnasium Year 12 (11. Klasse) – making sure the volunteers would be staying in the same school for the next two years. Students in vocational schools were also targeted. A minimum of two students were sought per school so that the peer leaders would be able to work as a team. A supportive adult from each school was also recruited. All together, 70 young people were chosen from schools in five different 'Länder' (regions of Germany).

Three levels

The training took place on three interrelated levels.

1 National

Young people's workshops were held three or four times a year nationally. These gave young people opportunities to exchange and evaluate their experiences and offered training in a variety of relevant topics and methods for peer-led activities – focusing, in particular, on problems related to racism and xenophobia. Topics discussed included: multiculturalism and interculturalism; gender mainstreaming; right-wing extremism and its ideologies; asylum and migration; groups, conflicts and violence; discrimination and racism; democracy and civil society; and globalization and justice. Skills training emphasized intercultural competencies, moderation and communication, rhetorical skills, mediation, structuring decision-making processes, perceptual skills in handling group

dynamics, teamwork and project management skills, presentation and research skills.

2 Regional

Monthly regional meetings supported by a coach helped to mould the peer leaders into teams, build up networks, and provide further opportunities for them to exchange ideas and experiences and plan new developments together.

3 Local

The main task at the local level was to support the peer leaders in the initiation and realization of their own projects, through a mixture of professional advice and personal encouragement. The aim was to be able to reach beyond their private sphere with their projects and make a definite difference to the quality of democratic life in their schools and neighbourhoods. Coaches helped the peer leaders to grow in competence and self-esteem, to present their projects to the public, to reflect on their experiences, and to coordinate their activities with key staff in the RAA.

Examples of local projects

Berlin

Peer leaders in Berlin who identified racism and xenophobia as a recurring problem in their school prepared a questionnaire for Year 8 (7. Klasse) students. They selected the class with the worst problems and devised strategies to try to improve the situation. The project acted as a pilot for further work on this issue in school.

Hoyerswerda – Brandenburg

Peer leaders in Hoyerswerda wanted to do something about gang rivalry at their school. They found a simulation game, adapted it for use

in their own school and tried it out with a Year 8 class (7. Klasse). A PowerPoint presentation on this project and a resource pack now helps teachers and other classes to use the game themselves.

Hagen – NRW

A peer leader in Hagen who saw there were problems with right-wing extremism in his town initiated a partnership with the local youth centre and the RAA Hagen to help young people do something about it.

Rostock – Mecklenburg-Vorpommern

Peer leaders in Rostock started a campaign for more peace and tolerance in their community. They presented their case at every possible public event in the locality gaining the support of thousands of other young people as well as adults, politicians and artists.

'We really want to change something, and later, when we might be Members of Parliament... do the right thing. Our generation doesn't want to be unreachable as is the case for the generation presently in power.'

Peer leader

Positive outcomes

Examples such as these are testimony to what can be achieved by peer leaders with the appropriate support and training opportunities. In addition to examples of peer-led projects, schools involved in the programme reported that young people attending the training have become much more thoughtful and mature, and able to raise issues of tolerance and democracy with their peers and people in general, as well as effective in planning and carrying out youth-led

projects. Tellingly, some of the most dynamic peer leaders were not the most successful academically, emphasizing the importance of encouraging a broad range of young people in this work.

Summary

Country	<i>Germany</i>
Lead organization	<i>RAA Berlin</i>
Approach	<i>Peer leadership training for democracy and intercultural competence</i>
Focus	<i>Training young people in the skills of initiating and running democratic education projects with and for their peers</i>
Age group	<i>Upper secondary school level</i>
Duration	<i>2000–05</i>

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B.3 Tolerance and Democracy

Germany

Tolerance is an essential democratic virtue, but can it be taught? This was the question that the Bertelsmann Foundation set out to answer in partnership with the Centre for Applied Policy Research, Munich, and the European Youth Education and Meeting Centre, Weimar, in a three-year project involving German secondary schools.

Tolerance – a precondition for democratic conflict resolution

The idea of tolerance as a precondition for democratic conflict resolution was the starting point for a three-year project initiated by the Bertelsmann Foundation on promoting tolerance and democracy in secondary schools in and around Weimar in Germany.

Bertelsmann Foundation

The Bertelsmann Foundation is a private operating foundation created in Germany in 1977. Its work is based on the conviction that competition and civic engagement are fundamental for ensuring social change.

How do you teach tolerance?

The project brought together three types of teaching and learning method, either developed or adapted by the Bertelsmann Foundation at the Centre for Applied Policy Research in Munich.

1 Betzavta

Betzavta – literally ‘together’ – is an approach developed at the Jerusalem-based ADAM Institute for Democracy and Peace which consists of exercises in creative conflict resolution focused on the whole person. External conflicts are transformed into internal dilemmas. Problem-solving exercises encourage tolerance development and a better understanding of democracy and the democratic process.

2 ‘A World of Difference’[®]

‘A World of Difference’[®] is a programme of the New York Anti-Defamation League. It consists of exercises aimed at sensitizing learners to ways of dealing with minorities. It enables individuals to reflect on their own values and cultural socialization, encouraging a positive attitude towards diversity and developing the competencies needed to recognize different forms of discrimination and to take action against them.

3 Achtung (+)Toleranz

Achtung (+)Toleranz (Respect & Tolerance) is a programme that is built around a model that defines tolerance. This model works as a tool of self-analysis and gives orientation in conflict situations. The programme also aims to develop communication skills useful in conflict situations.

Centre for Applied Policy Research (CAP)

Founded in Munich in 1995, the Centre for Applied Policy Research is a university-based think-tank. Among other things, it works with decision-makers and practitioners in the fields of conflict management, participation, European policy, democracy and tolerance.

Overall approach

The overall approach of the project was based on the development of a particular set of social competencies – including social perception, communication skills, ability to cooperate, practical conflict resolution, and the capacity to act tolerantly. The idea was to provide students with opportunities not only to learn about democratic and tolerant behaviour theoretically but also to experience it in practice through experiential exercises. These experiences would help students to apply their learning in daily life. This would be reinforced by the development of a more democratic culture within the school community generally – a second strand of the project, focusing on teacher training.

The aim was to build up a long-term partnership with students and teachers in schools in the region over three years in cooperation with a local out-of-school educational institution, the European Youth Education and Meeting Centre (EJBW).

European Youth Education and Meeting Centre (EJBW)

The European Youth Education and Meeting Centre is based in Weimar and is active in the fields of political education, intercultural learning, theatre and pedagogy.

Starting out

An agreement was established with the EJBW for partnership working over a three-year period and a number of schools were contacted. The idea was to recruit different kinds of school – from lower secondary ('Regelschule' – Haupt- and Realschule) and upper secondary school (Gymnasium) to vocational ('Berufsschule'); and students from different age groups – from Year 9 (8. Klasse) to vocational training (13–35 years).

Student workshops

Three five-day sequential workshops were held with a group of students and teachers from each school, one each year:

1 First seminar: *Introduction to education for democracy and tolerance*

This centred on an exploration of the individual personality of the participants and ways of living and working together in the classroom. It aimed at developing cooperation, decision-making and conflict resolution strategies and was based on experiential learning methods.

2 Second seminar: *Tolerance*

This focused on exercises from the 'Achtung (+)Toleranz' programme on the meaning and concept of tolerance, the limits of tolerance and options for non-violent behaviour. The exercises were complemented by the teaching of concepts of communication psychology and the development of skills of cooperative dialogue.

3 Third seminar: *'Together'*

In this seminar the participants explored ways of living together in a more democratic way. Betzavta exercises formed the major part of the seminar and focused on the exploration of the concepts of freedom and equality and their relationship in a democratic society.

Optional activities

The seminars were complemented by a series of optional activities, including whole-staff training, in-school follow-up workshops, an intercultural workshop for students in Turkey, and training for multipliers.

Evaluation

The effects of the seminars and the complementary activities were subjected to a proper scientific evaluation, quantitative and qualitative, in cooperation with the University of Applied Sciences, Jena. The evaluation looked at several levels and areas of learning – cognitive as well as emotional knowledge, skills and attitudes – at an individual level and at the level of the peer group. The focus was on how students experienced conflicts emotionally, how they judged them cognitively, and how they acted upon them practically. Participative evaluation played a major role, with participant self-evaluation facilitated through supported self-reflection complementing a summative external evaluation.

Promising results

The results of the evaluation showed that the students involved in the project made huge strides in personal development and in development of the kind of social competencies required for peaceful conflict resolution. They have become much more open and confident at talking about in-class conflicts with their peers and generally more aware of and interested in democratic means of dealing with them. While this experiment involved only a limited number of young people, it shows what can be achieved when tolerance development is taken seriously in a school.

Summary

Country	<i>Germany</i>
Lead organizations	<i>Bertelsmann Foundation, EJBW, CAP</i>
Approach	<i>Education for tolerance and democratic conflict resolution</i>
Focus	<i>Long-term partnership working with schools and out-of-school education to develop tolerance and the skills and competencies of conflict resolution</i>
Age group	<i>Secondary school level</i>
Duration	<i>2002–04</i>

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B.4 Project OASI Italy

How do you prevent immigrant students from dropping out of school? A partnership of two vocational schools in Genoa succeeded in doing just this by helping develop a sense of shared citizenship among its students.

IPSIA Otero and IPSSAR Bergese

IPSIA Otero and IPSSAR Bergese are two vocational high schools in the heart of western Genoa's industrial area. There has been a great deal of immigration to this part of the city and about 30 per cent of the students in these schools are immigrants, over 70 per cent of which are Latin American.

In 2002 the two schools joined together to see if they could find a more effective way of helping the immigrant students to integrate with their Italian peers. Above all, they wanted to reduce the number of immigrant students who dropped out of school altogether. This was the beginning of Project OASI.

Project OASI

Project OASI, or Orientamento Assistito Studenti Immigrati (Assisted Guidance for Immigrant Students), comprises a range of initiatives aimed at helping school students develop a sense of shared citizenship while respecting each other's different identities. The project is funded by the provincial authority of

Genoa and from ministerial funds for designated areas with high immigrant populations.

A psycho-pedagogical approach

Fundamental to Project OASI is the notion that students' migration histories have to be taken into account if they are to become successfully integrated into life in their new country. Teachers and immigrant students often look in two different directions: teachers to the future in Italy, and students to what they have left behind in their country of origin. It is important for students to be able to talk about themselves and have their histories understood if they are to begin to link their past to a future in Italy.

Peer tutoring

Peer tutoring is another approach that is used systematically throughout the project. Volunteer students, Italian and non-Italian, already settled into the school, are grouped into five mini-teams and attached to first-grade classes. They help new students to integrate into school and with each other, and act as role models for their social and educational development.

Step by step

Project OASI follows a number of sequential steps:

1 Reception and guidance

A series of meetings is held with the student and a psychologist or cultural mediator, alone and with his or her family – to welcome them, collect information, explain the Italian school system and Project OASI, and administer psychological tests.

2 Peer tutoring

Older students who are already at ease in Italy are trained to become peer tutors in a series of seminars. They draw up questionnaires to help them gather information from and get to know new students, working in teams and keeping regular contact with class teachers as well as the project contact person.

3 'Knowing your town' guidance

Immigrant students get a chance to find out about Genoa, how to use public transport, do shopping and so on, through excursions led by Italian students and a cultural mediator.

4 Autobiographies

Students in small mixed groups have an opportunity to share their memories and experiences, leading to the writing of their own autobiographies. This is based on the idea that not being allowed to speak one's own language can be a traumatic experience and that immigrant students need to be able to reaffirm their identities through telling their personal histories before they can progress with their lives.

5 Social activities

Social activities, such as games, sports, drama and music, are arranged. These change every year according to students' interests. They are generally carried out in school hours and bring together students from both schools.

6 Feedback and dissemination

The final element in the project is the opportunity to discuss progress and publicize successes. Regular meetings are held with class tutors to share experiences and benefit from work with a psychologist. A project team meets weekly in each school to coordinate activities. A DVD about the project is shown to students and families and acts as a useful introduction to issues relating to immigrant students for teachers. The project and the ideas behind it have featured in Rai Educational TV programmes and the concept has been discussed in a number of seminars and conferences in Genoa and elsewhere.

Concorso Centoscuole Award

In 2007 the project received an award from the Fondazione per la Scuola as an example of transferable and documented good practice in the field of civic education. The award not only provided the project with a sum of money to help support the continuation of its activities, but also represented a public acknowledgement of the value of its approach.

Fondazione per la Scuola della Compagnia di San Paolo

Fondazione per la Scuola is the educational arm of the Compagnia di San Paolo, a non-profit private Italian foundation based in Turin. It aims to promote better quality education by helping schools to exploit opportunities offered by self-governance, and to share and disseminate good practice – particularly in relation to intercultural dialogue.

Outcomes

Taken together, these initiatives have had many positive results. Italian and non-Italian students are now much more knowledgeable about and respectful of each other. Teachers have changed the way they approach foreign students in class and there has been a demand for training to help them with this process. Immigrant students and families show more trust in the system, with an increasing number asking to talk to the cultural mediator. There has been a dramatic improvement in the student drop-out rate – now down to 5–6 per cent of immigrant students – and in the new school year two further vocational institutes in Genoa are going to take part in the scheme.

What they said . . .

'When I first came here I couldn't understand a word and I didn't go out for a month. Then I came to school and they put me in a project which I really enjoyed. I could speak my own language and say what I was feeling . . .'

Student

'Nobody can understand how you feel when you arrive here for the first time better than someone from your country. I've been through all this too.'

Peer tutor

'I have discovered a world I did not know, thanks to the stories of these kids.'

Teacher

Summary

Country	<i>Italy</i>
Lead organization	<i>Fondazione per la Scuola della Compagnia di San Paolo</i>
Approach	<i>Psycho-pedagogy and peer tutoring</i>
Focus	<i>Integrating immigrant students into school life by helping them develop a positive sense of self-identity and shared citizenship</i>
Age group	<i>Upper secondary school level</i>
Duration	<i>2002–</i>

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B.5 Intercultural Peer Education Italy

How can you integrate immigrant students into school successfully? By opening up the school to their parents and involving them in the integration process was the answer given by an Italian civil society partnership, in an experimental programme in Turin.

Immigration in Turin

The number of foreign children in Turin has increased significantly over recent years. Immigrant children are often allocated to schools on the basis of the school attended by their relatives or the children of friends, regardless of their achievements or past schooling. This can lead to a number of problems, both for the school and for the children concerned.

Education and social inclusion

Aware of the need to find more inclusive and equitable ways of integrating immigrant children into schools, Pianeta Possibile, the intercultural education division of CICSENE (Italian Centre supporting Building Development of Emergent Nations), a Turin-based NGO, had been carrying out a number of experimental projects in the area. Underpinning these projects lay the belief that to be effective, initiatives in educational inclusion must involve a range of agents and actors, including families, administrative staff and school leaders as well as teachers and students – Italian and non-Italian.

'Students and Citizens'

In 2007, drawing on the accumulated experience and expertise of CICSENE, the Fondazione per la Scuola della Compagnia di San Paolo established a project called 'Students and Citizens' as a way of helping Turin high schools to integrate foreign students into school life and develop the skills and attitudes of democratic citizenship.

The project comprised a whole series of different initiatives:

Intercultural peer education

One of the approaches pioneered in CICSENE projects is intercultural peer education. In this approach certain immigrant students are chosen to take on the role of tutor. The intercultural peer tutors are selected from students who are already settled in the Italian school system but are still able to speak and write in their language of origin. Thus, at meetings of immigrant parents, young tutors of immigrant origin are not only able to present information about the school to immigrant families, but also to show them that success at school does not depend upon being Italian.

Intercultural peer tutors attend training workshops to prepare them for the role. The

Fondazione per la Scuola della Compagnia di San Paolo

Fondazione per la Scuola is the educational arm of the Compagnia di San Paolo, a non-profit private Italian foundation based in Turin. It aims to promote better quality education by helping schools to exploit opportunities offered by self-governance, and to share and disseminate good practice – particularly in relation to intercultural dialogue.

1 'Area Scuola'

'Area Scuola' is a personalized, direct, online advisory service for teachers, school managers, school administrative staff, students – Italian and non-Italian – and families of immigrant students. It includes material translated into different languages, linguistic mediation, advice regarding family reuniting and support for parenting, orientation and re-orientation courses, training of peer tutors, advice on school regulations and a documentation centre.

workshops emphasize drama and role play and interactive forms of learning. They focus particularly on students' awareness of their own multiple identities and how this can help them act as a bridge between immigrant families and schools. Key elements in the training include:

- ▶ knowledge about Turin and its public services, particularly for foreigners;
- ▶ the rights and duties that come with Italian citizenship and membership of the EU;
- ▶ the Italian school system;
- ▶ skills of critical thinking and working with others.

2 A multilingual guide

A guide, *Directing our future: vademecum for parents and children*, was written to support immigrants with children in Italian schools. It was produced in three versions: Arabic-Spanish-Italian; Romanian-Portuguese-Italian; and Chinese-Albanian-Italian. It has been distributed to all secondary schools in Turin and to other institutions such as libraries, and is also available online. A brochure, *Thoughts for reunited families*, was published in seven languages and in two versions, one for parents and one for children.

3 Additional school support

Opportunities were arranged for immigrant high school students to have additional teaching in the summer and Christmas holiday periods on topics with which they were experiencing most difficulty.

4 Teacher training schemes

Special in-depth training courses on intercultural topics were arranged for high school teachers in charge of the inclusion of foreign students, including information about schools and education systems in the countries from which students and their families had migrated. The training materials were also made available online and as CD-ROMs, and were accompanied by an online forum page on the Pianeta Possibile website.

5 Information meetings

Meetings were set up for immigrant parents of children in the second and third years of secondary school, ie at a point where they had to choose between different educational and vocational options – with intercultural peer tutors acting as interpreters and role models.

6 Support meetings

Support meetings were also set up to help immigrant parents deal with some of the problems of adolescence their children were experiencing in their new Italian lives. Children of immigrant families often relate to their peers and their parents in a very different way to Italian adolescents. The meetings were led by a team of experts on migration, psychologists, teachers and cultural mediators.

7 Social events

Finally, different types of social event were arranged for students out of school time, including recreational and sports events, guided tours and drama courses.

Indications of success

Every high school in Turin involved in the project has now formed a team of intercultural peer educators – with each team made up of four students, three of whom are always from immigrant families. A large number of parents have become involved in the scheme, despite their lack of fluency in Italian and long working hours. Teachers have been more than ready to adapt their methods to take account of the increasingly diverse student body – a tribute to the sensitivity implicit in the general approach.

A 'school-family' approach

Central to the work of the project was the active involvement of both families and schools in all its processes. School-family integration is fundamental to effective educational and social inclusion. It is for this reason that many of the educational initiatives of the project were geared to schools understanding the situation of immigrant families and immigrant families understanding the situation of Italian schools.

Summary

Country	Italy
Lead organizations	Compagnia di San Paolo, CICSENE
Approach	Intercultural peer education and school-family integration
Focus	Supporting the integration of immigrant students in Italian schools
Age group	Secondary school level
Duration	2006–

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Since October 2008, the work of Pianeta Possibile has continued through Il Nostro Pianeta.

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It is one thing to see oneself as a citizen of society with rights and responsibilities equal to those of other citizens. It is another to be an effective citizen, confident in one's ability to make a positive difference to society. The development of democratic skills and attitudes – sometimes known as 'democratic competencies' – is, therefore, an essential aspect of democratic citizenship and one in which schools from kindergarten upwards can have an important part to play.

The case studies in this section reflect some of the different approaches to the development of practical democratic competencies taken by foundations and civil society organizations working in partnership with schools in a number of European countries. They are taken from Turkey, Germany, England and Poland, and include:

- ▶ Developing critical thinking (Education Reform Initiative, Sabancı University)
- ▶ Pioneering new ways of teaching debating skills (Hertie Foundation)
- ▶ Educating for political literacy (Citizenship Foundation)
- ▶ Encouraging voter turnout in elections through student campaigning (Centre for Citizenship Education, Warsaw)

Developing civic skills and attitudes

3C

C.1 Critical Thinking Turkey

The ability to think critically is an essential element in democratic citizenship. What can schools do to develop this important ability? The Education Reform Initiative in Turkey has created new teaching materials and methods to help develop students' critical thinking skills and attitudes across the school curriculum.

New projects initiated

In 2007 the Education Reform Initiative (ERI) in Turkey initiated two interconnected projects aimed at enhancing students' capacity for critical thinking through the formal education system – in particular, to create materials on critical thinking to be used in teacher training programmes and as supplementary materials for the classroom.

Education Reform Initiative

Education Reform Initiative is a project launched within the Istanbul Policy Centre at Sabancı University to improve education policy and decision-making through research, advocacy and monitoring. It attempts to serve as an example of how policy dialogue should be conducted within a contemporary democratic framework by bringing together concerned civil society groups and relevant state agencies.

The first project was largely content-orientated and involved the creation of a 'toolbox' of 60 different texts and the adapted translation of the *Teaching and Learning Strategies for the Thinking Classroom* from the Open Society Institute's Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking (RWCT) programme. This will be used as a guidebook on different methods of promoting critical thinking in the classroom and other aspects of thinking and learning. The 'toolbox' is to be used as supplementary material for teachers to implement critical thinking strategies and active participation in the classroom.

Critical thinking

Critical thinking is a form of thinking in which individuals deliberately question their prejudices and assumptions, analyse opinions and weigh up evidence logically and rationally to reach new levels of understanding and develop new attitudes and opinions of their own (Gurkaynak, 2004).

The second project aims to disseminate both sets of materials to approximately 6,600 Turkish teachers in 2009 through a period of comprehensive teacher training programmes and activities. This project will be implemented with the financial support of AKBANK, a major Turkish bank, and in partnership with the Ministry

of National Education General Directorate of Teacher Training and Education.

Background to the projects

Curriculum reform in Turkey in 2004 presented new opportunities for the development of critical thinking in schools. The new curriculum included the acquisition of critical thinking skills as one of its objectives. This therefore presented an opportunity to strengthen this imperative and to make it more coherent by introducing it across the curriculum.

It also allowed for the incorporation of an elective course on Thinking Skills for 6th, 7th and 8th grades (ages 12, 13 and 14). This course was announced in 2007, though no official teaching materials were produced to accompany it.

Strategies for developing a more democratic approach

The Education Reform Initiative adopted a number of strategic approaches to these initiatives.

1 *Bringing together civil society and state agencies*

It recognized that sustainable improvements in curriculum, textbooks and teaching methods could be achieved only by bringing together civil and public organizations and agencies in Turkey in a process of collective dialogue.

2 *Creating new classroom materials*

It made the development and dissemination of classroom material one of the central planks in its approach. The materials developed for the 'toolbox' take the form of over 60 interlinked texts, encouraging flexibility in use, multidisciplinary learning and potential for future revisions. They are grouped under six main titles in three

different fields: politics-economy, culture-art and science. The contents of these are interrelated and deliberately designed to be flexible so that teachers can add more if they wish.

A key feature of these materials is that they highlight global issues and help students to question their Turkey-centred assumptions. They emphasize different patterns of argumentation and promote the use of different resources through a comprehensive bibliography and suggestions of practical activities for developing critical thinking skills and attitudes in the classroom.

3 Disseminating new teaching methods

It emphasized the importance of appropriate teaching methods for democratic citizenship and engaged in disseminating these by adapting *Teaching and Learning Strategies for the Thinking Classroom* for a Turkish context.

4 Emphasizing teacher training

It recognized the crucial part played by teacher training in the development of a more democratic approach to schooling. Neither the toolbox and its teachers' manual nor the guidebook will be disseminated without training. In fact, training will be used to highlight the links between the toolbox and the guidebook and their complementary nature. It will also support the new roles for teachers envisaged by the new curriculum – embracing a constructivist model of teaching and learning, replacing teacher-centred with student-centred learning. In doing so, it will play a part in the development of the new set of teacher competencies introduced by the Ministry of National Education. The training programmes also aim to form support clusters of teachers in different schools and cities who are able to share their classroom experiences.

Progress to date

The toolbox of classroom materials and its teachers' manual has now been completed. The texts were written by prominent academics and experts. It is called a 'toolbox' since it is very different from a conventional textbook in terms of its logic and design. It deals with six major themes:

- ▶ Discrimination
- ▶ Environment
- ▶ Genetics
- ▶ Cultural heritage
- ▶ Globalization
- ▶ War

There are 11 cards for each theme. The first identifies the major issues that are covered in the following cards and the discussion exercises they contain. The most important feature is the flexibility of the material and the fact that it is not set out in a linear sequence, allowing the combined use of different texts under different themes.

The guidebook on teaching methods has also been completed and published. It introduces new techniques which can be used across subjects and courses for the 12–18 age range, and contains the following sections:

- ▶ Principles of Active Learning and Critical Thinking
- ▶ Teaching Methods and Strategies
- ▶ Lesson Planning and Assessment
- ▶ Teaching in and across the Disciplines
- ▶ Active Learning on Your Own

The training of 20 expert trainers has also been completed. These experts were trained in the teaching techniques presented in the guidebook and in the contents and teaching methods outlined for the toolbox. These 20 expert trainers

will be responsible for the training of 160 teachers who in turn will teach these methods to approximately 6,600 teachers in eight different cities in Turkey.

The next phase

The next phase of the projects will include:

- ▶ Teacher training
- ▶ Pilot implementation
- ▶ Implementation
- ▶ Impact evaluation

Summary

Country	Turkey
Lead organization	Education Reform Initiative
Approach	Critical thinking
Focus	Enhancing students' critical thinking skills and attitudes by equipping teachers with new materials and teaching methods
Age group	Secondary school level
Duration	Ongoing since July 2007

Contact

Education Reform Initiative

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C.2 Debating Germany

Having the confidence and the ability to argue and defend a case is an essential element in democratic citizenship. The Hertie Foundation in Germany is pioneering new ways of teaching debating skills in schools at both a national and an international level.

Promoting debating skills in schools

In summer 2002 the Hertie Foundation set up a project to help students in German schools to improve their debating skills. The project had two elements:

1 *Training for teachers and students*

First, there was a training course for teachers to learn about debating and gain experiences in debating themselves before being trained in how to train their students. This was planned to take place yearly and conceived on a modular basis. The teachers would then train their students during Year 9 (8. Klasse) German lessons.

2 *A nationwide competition for schools*

Second, there was a nationwide debating competition for schools, in two age groups: Years 9–11 (ages 13–15) and Years 12–14 (ages 17–19). The competition takes place annually, beginning with class competitions within schools – two students from each class going on to the regional competition. The regional

winners are given three days' additional training before continuing to the next level of the competition: the 'Land' (federal state). The winners at this level receive three more days' additional training in preparation for the national finals. The six best students nationally take part in a special weeklong training course and become members of the alumni programme of the Hertie Foundation.

The first nationwide competition took place in summer 2003. By 2007 there were around 450 schools – roughly 50,000 students participating in the programme across the country in regional clusters of schools.

The Hertie Foundation

The Hertie Foundation was founded in Germany in 1974 and initiates and supports work in the fields of the neurosciences, European integration and learning democracy.

Debating across borders

Following the success of national debating, the Hertie Foundation is collaborating with Goethe Institutes and the Foundation 'Remembrance, Responsibility and Future' to promote an international debating competition in German in several other European countries. The Goethe Institute in Prague organizes a version of the competition in the Czech Republic. From this

has emerged the idea of a transnational debating project, bringing together Czech and German students in workshops and public debates on transnational issues.

Debating

Debating is a formal method of democratic deliberation carried out between two groups of people, representing the 'pros' and 'cons' of a controversial idea or course of action. The method originates in Anglo-Saxon countries where it is a common form of parliamentary discussion. It follows quite strict rules on who is allowed to speak and for how long, speeches usually alternating from each side. The quality of the debate depends on the knowledge, analytical depth and rhetorical skills of the participants and the outcome is always decided by a vote.

The Goethe Gymnasium

The Goethe Gymnasium in Sebnitz, a secondary school in a small town in south-eastern Germany, close to the Czech border, is one of the German schools that has taken part in the Hertie Foundation project.

It all began when one of the teachers attended training in debating. Over time, more and more teachers became interested in the method and a course of in-service training was organized for the school as a whole. So far, 18 teachers have benefited from this, including all the teachers of German who have now introduced debating as an integral part of their subject.

The method is introduced formally in Year 9 (8. Klasse). However, some teachers begin earlier with less complex exercises in Years 7 and 8 (6. and 7. Klasse). In Year 10 (9. Klasse), the method is taught in more depth, leading up to

the class competitions and the selection of two students to take part in the regional heats. In Year 11 (10. Klasse), debating can be and is often used in all classroom subjects, especially in the natural and social sciences.

Interested students also have the opportunity to exercise their debating skills in a voluntary debating club which takes place once a week in the afternoon. It is also planned to introduce debating into student council meetings.

International cooperation

Students at the Goethe Gymnasium are now sharing their knowledge of debating skills with two partner schools in the Czech Republic.

With the support of the Goethe Institute Prague, students in Years 12 and 13 (11. and 12. Klasse) active in the debating club have been to the Czech Republic to help as judges in the Czech national debating competition. They are also helping to organize a training event on debating for Czech students.

What they said . . .

'For us as students, debating is an initiator to think more deeply about our society.'

Student, 9. Klasse

'Debating is a good way to learn how to use language, how to research about issues, and how to argue.'

Student, 9. Klasse

'As a teacher for biology and chemistry I am happy to be a project teacher for "youth is debating" . . . There is a whole range of new opportunities to make students think of human responsibility in the natural sciences.'

Teacher

A three-day debating workshop is held once a year with German and Czech students on issues of Czech-German relevance as a contribution to the transnational, debating across borders project.

Democratic skills and intercultural understanding

Teachers at the school have reported how interest in democracy has increased through the introduction of debating into the school curriculum. It has also helped students to grow in self-confidence, develop their critical thinking skills, take social and political issues more seriously, and be prepared for other situations where they might need to argue a case, such as in oral examinations. The international dimension has improved the intercultural understanding of the German students and left them with more positive attitudes towards their Czech peers.

'In history lessons debating can enable students to learn more profoundly about historic events and personalities. Arguments that have been brought up in a debate may be an incentive to deal more deeply with history. To find the pros and cons of an issue means that historic events are looked at from different perspectives. This fosters the ability to see a situation from another person's point of view and build comprehension for certain actions.'

Teacher

Summary

Country	<i>Germany</i>
Lead organization	<i>The Hertie Foundation</i>
Approach	<i>Debating</i>
Focus	<i>Developing democratic skills and attitudes, knowledge of social and political issues and intercultural understanding through debating</i>
Age group	<i>Secondary school level</i>
Duration	<i>2002–</i>

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C.3 Political Literacy England

How can you help young people to gain a real grasp of democracy – not just to accumulate facts about their democratic institutions but to learn how to think and act as democratic citizens? A unique classroom teaching resource developed by the Citizenship Foundation in England may help to provide an answer.

The idea of 'political literacy'

When the idea of 'political literacy' first appeared in England in the early 1970s, it signified a radical departure from the fact-dominated form of civic education found in some English schools at the time. It suggested a new form of teaching in which young people not only learned about the formal institutions of government but also learned what it meant to think and act as a democratic citizen.

Political literacy

'Political literacy is all about helping people become politically aware and effective. It is about giving them the ability to read issues and events politically. This means using the ideas, language, forms of thought and argument which citizens use when dealing with a public issue.'

Citizenship Foundation

The idea finally comes of age

For almost a generation the idea lay dormant. Government policy was antagonistic to politically related curriculum initiatives in schools and advocates of such programmes were open to accusations of political indoctrination.

It was only with the arrival of a period of consensus politics in the 1990s and the emergence of 'citizenship' on the UK policy agenda that political literacy began to come of age. A new subject called Citizenship was introduced into the English National Curriculum with an identifiably political dimension.

The problem, however, was that government guidelines on the new subject offered schools little direct advice on how politics should be handled in the classroom. Teachers were confused. Few of them had ever heard the term 'political literacy', let alone understood what it might involve in the classroom.

The Political Literacy Project

In the run-up to the introduction of the subject, therefore, the Citizenship Foundation, with funding from the Department for Education and Skills, initiated a two-year project to develop and test a new political literacy resource in schools.

Citizenship Foundation

The Citizenship Foundation is an independent UK educational charity that aims to empower individuals to engage in the wider community through education about the law, democracy and society.

School pilots

One of the first tasks of the project was to recruit volunteer schools through local authority advisers to pilot draft materials. The minimum requirement was that they would pilot materials on five separate occasions, completing a one-page evaluation sheet each time.

'It is important to involve teachers from the very beginning of any curriculum resource development project. It not only gives your resource credibility, but also makes sure that the product you end up with is practicable and user-friendly. You need to be able to make revisions as you go along, because it is too late at the end!'

Project Director

Values and principles as well as action

Essential to the kind of teaching envisaged by the Citizenship Foundation was the idea that democratic citizenship is as much about values and principles as action. Accordingly, the resource materials were structured around concepts rather than skills as such, eg justice, equality, freedom and tolerance.

Values and principles exist in different forms that often conflict in reality (eg equality of opportunity and equality of outcome). So issues relating to different concepts were embedded in the form of dilemmas in stories, case studies

and imaginary scenarios about real situations which the learners would have to 'solve'. Each situation encouraged learners to explore a different question, eg Should we be free to do what we want? What makes a society a fair one? Is equal always fair?

The classroom as a public forum

Also essential was the idea that the natural medium for political literacy teaching is group discussion. It is only through opportunities to argue a case, listen to and interact with the views of others, and negotiate a common course of action that people acquire the skills needed to do these things. Thus, the project developed the notion of the classroom as a 'public forum' – not only a forum in which young learners can practise their skills, but also a real forum where young people can discuss as citizens in their own right.

Meeting the needs of teachers

In developing a classroom resource, it is important to take into account the needs of teachers as well as those of learners. For the Political Literacy Project this meant several things. The resource was divided up into a number of separate lessons, taking the teacher step by step through the activities to teach in the classroom – including key questions for discussion. There were background notes on the topic of each lesson. A general introduction explained the idea of political literacy and the sort of teaching methods it involves. Lessons were designed to be free-standing to make it easier for teachers to use them to create their own courses or integrate them into existing programmes.

These were all brought together in a single, photocopiable volume, and offered to a commercial publisher for publication and distribution.¹

Independent evaluation

The project commissioned a final evaluation report from the University of York. This involved face-to-face and telephone interviews with teaching staff in a sample of the pilot schools and a detailed analysis of the text. Reports of this kind give curriculum projects credibility with policymakers and make useful lobbying tools as well as increasing the take-up of educational programmes.

Critical acclaim and teacher endorsement

Teachers in the pilot schools without exception endorsed the approach taken by the project and the high quality of the individual lesson materials. They said they liked the way the resource made issues of democratic citizenship accessible and relevant for the age group, and the sense of purpose it gave to class discussion.

'We got onto a really good discussion about the whole concept of the idea of law and what its purpose was. Yes, the whole idea of the rule of law was one of the useful concepts that were written in here.'

Teacher interview

The publication received critical acclaim. Reviews recommended to schools its uniquely practical approach to political literacy. A group of Japanese educationists even set about adapting the resource for use in schools in Japan.

Next step

Critical acclaim is one thing; take-up in schools another. In England there is a free market in curriculum resources for schools: teachers have complete freedom over what they use in the classroom – whether free or from commercial publishers. Moreover, numbers distributed or sold do not tell the whole story. The next step for the project will therefore be to determine the effect of its approach in schools across the country as a whole.

¹ *Citizens and Society*. Details available from the Resources section on the Citizenship Foundation website www.citizenshipfoundation.org.uk

Summary

Country	<i>England</i>
Lead organization	<i>Citizenship Foundation</i>
Approach	<i>Curriculum resource development</i>
Focus	<i>Developing discussion materials to promote political thinking and debate in the classroom</i>
Age group	<i>Upper secondary level</i>
Duration	<i>2002–04</i>

Contact

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C.4 Young People Vote Poland

How can you encourage citizens to vote in parliamentary elections? Through a civic education project focusing on voting and elections devised by the Centre for Citizenship Education, and with the support of town and regional authorities and the local media, a Polish school not only succeeded in improving the civic knowledge and awareness of its students, but also in raising levels of local voter turnout in state elections.

Kędzierzyn-Koźle

Kędzierzyn-Koźle is a town of about 60,000 inhabitants situated in south-west Poland in Silesia. Before the Second World War, the region used to be part of Germany. Then, after the war, refugees from eastern Poland settled there so that today the population is very diverse – including a significant minority that identifies with Germany.

1st Comprehensive Lyceum

1st Comprehensive Lyceum in Kędzierzyn-Koźle has over 600 students aged 16–19. Most of the students go on to university or other high schools after graduating. Getting accepted for this school is not easy and demands a high mark in the post-gymnasium exam, so the educational standard is a high one.

Nevertheless, the cultural make-up of the students closely mirrors that of the town in general. Students come mainly from nearby villages where a traditional lifestyle is still common. They tend to be reserved and suspicious of others – even xenophobic sometimes – and do not closely identify with the region. Many plan to live in Germany in the near future where members of their family still live. Political indifference is widespread among the student body and in the local population as a whole. Low turnouts in elections show a lack of interest in voting and the democratic process.

Links with civil society organizations

In a bid to broaden the outlook of its students and to help them become civic-minded, the school made links with a number of civil society organizations, including the Foundation for the Preservation of Jewish Heritage in Poland and the national office of Amnesty International.

Centre for Citizenship Education

The Centre for Citizenship Education (CCE) is a Polish non-governmental educational foundation established in 1994. The CCE promotes the civic knowledge, practical skills and attitudes necessary in the building of a democratic state founded on the rule of law

Through an Amnesty International school group, students have the option of getting involved in a range of projects on democratic citizenship and human rights. Students meet twice a week with a teacher coordinator to plan activities such as workshops, exhibitions, debates, competitions and trips, publishing booklets and leaflets on the activities they have undertaken.

Young People Vote

One of the most significant initiatives at the school involved linking up with the Centre for Citizenship Education (CCE) in Poland to take part in a programme called Young People Vote. The aim of the programme is to increase turnout in state and European elections. Young People Vote gives young citizens not old enough to vote an opportunity to participate in elections parallel to and modelled on state elections – including presidential, parliamentary and local government elections as well as European ones

and civil society. It also operates a non-profit teacher training institute registered with the Ministry of Education and Sports. CCE projects are primarily addressed to schools and aim to prepare young people for active and responsible citizenship.

– and to have the results published in the local media. It enables young people to find out and speak up about important social and political issues affecting them and their region.

Working with the Centre for Citizenship Education gave the school access to new resources, professional guidance and an internet platform through which it could exchange information with other schools. This was supplemented by financial and technical help from the town and regional authorities and local newspapers.

Getting started

Having formally registered on the Young People Vote programme, a working group of student volunteers began to draw up a plan of action and divide up tasks among its members. All activities were recorded and publicized in the local media. These included:

Posters

The group ran a competition open to all students at the school to design a poster encouraging people to take part in the elections. The posters were exhibited in the main hall, with the three best ones used as designs for official posters and leaflets in the town. Students distributed the posters around the town and residential areas along with some additional posters produced by the Centre for Citizenship Education. Soon the posters were visible everywhere.

Slogans and leaflets

The students also worked out their own election slogans and persuaded local newspapers to have these printed onto leaflets.

A survey

They carried out a survey to find out the percentage of local citizens intending to vote in the forthcoming state elections and presented the results in the school hall.

A 'happening'

A few days before the elections, the group organized a 'happening' in the centre of the city – in colourful costumes in the form of 'votes' and 'walking ballot boxes', students attracted people's attention and gave out the leaflets they had prepared.

Mock elections at school

Together with the School European Club, the Young People Vote group organized mock elections for their fellow students at school, setting up polling stations, ballot boxes and voting lists.

What they said . . .

'It was both funny and extremely important – I'm happy to have taken part in it.'

'The action taught me how to negotiate with people, specially the ones in offices and institutions.'

'I am sure I will vote if only I have the right to.'
*Students at 1st Comprehensive Lyceum,
Kędzierzyn-Koźle*

Voter turnout up by 20 per cent

After the elections students compared voter turnout between 2005 and 2007 in the constituencies in which they had been operating and could reasonably be expected to have had an influence. The results exceeded all expectations: in some polling stations turnout was up by 20 per cent.

While it is difficult to say how much of this increase was due to student effort, local officials were adamant that the school had a definite effect on the level of voter turnout, showing how a school can make a difference to democratic activity in a community – particularly when this is done in partnership with public authorities and the local media. It also shows how participation in real-life community issues at a local level can help young people to become more civic-minded and respectful of the democratic process as well as gaining a practical insight into national and European political systems.

Summary

Country	<i>Poland</i>
Lead organization	<i>Centre for Citizenship Education</i>
Approach	<i>Active citizenship in the community</i>
Focus	<i>Encouraging voter turnout in elections through student campaigning</i>
Age group	<i>Upper secondary school level</i>
Duration	<i>September – October 2007</i>

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Democratic education is not just a matter of formal teaching, though this has its place, but about creating an environment in which people feel they are able to have a say in how their school is run and take responsibility for aspects of school life for themselves. A democratic school culture is a precondition of democratic learning. It is through the experience of democracy in action that people come to develop the kinds of skills and attitudes needed for them to become effective as citizens in a democratic society.

Such a culture does not come about by accident: it has to be planned for and worked on. A key factor in this is the development of democratic attitudes and appropriate professional skills in teachers and other school personnel. The case studies in this section reflect some of the different approaches to the creation of a more democratic school culture taken by foundations and civil society organizations working in partnership with schools in a number of European countries. They are taken from Germany, Sweden and Belgium, and include:

- ▶ Creating a democratic culture in the kindergarten (Regional Centre for Education, Integration and Democracy, Berlin; Institute for the Contextual Approach at the Free University of Berlin; Bernard van Leer Foundation; Linden Foundation)
- ▶ Developing democratic approaches in teacher education and teacher professional development (Universities of Stockholm, Uppsala and Växjö)
- ▶ Promoting a culture of peace and democracy through peer mediation (Bernheim Foundation; University of Peace)
- ▶ Bringing together public services and citizens in a cooperative effort to improve local education (RAA Berlin; Freudenberg Foundation; Karl-Konrad-and-Ria-Groeben Foundation; Senate Department for Education, Science and Research)

Creating a democratic school culture

30d

D.1 Living Democracy Germany

At what age can democratic education start? By creating an atmosphere in which children could feel appreciated as individuals with a part to play in their school community, a German NGO enabled kindergarten children in a town in eastern Germany to develop basic democratic competencies and attitudes and help to prevent the growth of right-wing extremism and violence that was experienced in eastern Germany after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Eberswalde

Eberswalde is a small town northeast of Berlin in the region of the former RDA. During the 1990s, following the fall of the Berlin Wall, eastern Germany experienced a steep rise in unemployment, movement of labour and a growing frustration and resignation among those who stayed. In many parts of the new 'länder' growing and violent right-wing extremism, coupled with the helplessness of politicians and the ignorance of a major part of the population in the face of these developments, was a frightening phenomenon. In Eberswalde many civic initiatives were set up to tackle these problems, especially among young people.

There emerged a debate about the possible correlation between authoritarian methods in kindergartens in the former RDA and the

rise of right-wing extremism. The discussion was picked up by people in Eberswalde and, with the help of staff at the ISTA at the Free University of Berlin and the RAA Berlin, ideas were developed to open up opportunities for the development of a more democratic approach to education in the kindergarten.

ISTA at the International Academy of the Free University of Berlin

The Institute for the Contextual Approach (ISTA) is an institute of the International Academy at the Free University of Berlin working in the field of democratic education.

The RAA

The RAA (Regional Centre for Education, Integration and Democracy) is a German-based NGO that specializes in the promotion of democratic school development and intercultural initiatives. It develops and supports projects that stimulate interactions between schools, young people and social work.

Children shaping their own environment

The idea of the Living Democracy initiative was to create an atmosphere in which young children in kindergarten could feel appreciated as individuals and want to play an active part in shaping their environment, so as to help them to

develop a sense of personal agency and a basic set of democratic competencies and attitudes – sometimes called the 'contextual' approach.

The 'contextual' approach

In terms of democratic education, the contextual approach is a person-centred approach that aims at helping children from different backgrounds to understand and shape their environment in a self-determined, competent and responsible way. Children are conceived as agents of their own development and education, and their teachers and carers are trained in ways of interacting with them that make this possible.

The project

With financial support from a number of foundations specialized in early childhood development – including the Bernard van Leer Foundation and the Linden Foundation – the project team at the Institute for the Contextual Approach (ISTA) and at RAA Berlin conducted a small-scale but methodologically significant project in three local elementary schools:

1 *Building relationships*

To begin with, forging trustful relationships with the teachers was the main task. By visiting the children and their teachers, the project team was able to learn about everyday life in the schools and work with the teachers to identify the kinds of day-to-day practices that might be open to change.

2 *Workshop I*

After about nine months, the project team ran a special workshop for the teachers where they discussed how they saw the children in

their schools and the sorts of perspectives the children might have on democratic forms of relationship. Afterwards, they were encouraged to continue thinking about the issues discussed and to try to integrate them into their professional practice.

3 Identifying key areas

Next, they worked with the teachers to identify three key areas in which they wanted to work with the children and helped them develop practical strategies for this. The areas chosen were:

- ▶ developing language competencies;
- ▶ promoting thinking and talking about one's family background;
- ▶ reflecting on identity and diversity in the classroom.

4 Workshop 2

A little later, they organized a second workshop in which teachers learned more about the 'contextual approach' and how they could plan and carry out projects with the children in a more participative way.

5 'Developmental' workshops

Finally, a series of 'developmental' workshops were held, giving the teachers the opportunity to work together regularly on a collegiate basis on issues they were interested in and to share experiences of implementing the approach.

Dissemination

The results of the work in the three schools were presented at a local conference. On the basis of this conference a further 35 elementary schools were recruited and during the next three years the ideas learned were disseminated throughout the whole region of Barnim and Uckermark.

Conclusions

The Living Democracy initiative was hailed as a great success by the teachers who took part in it. They felt that it made a significant difference to the atmosphere and experience of daily life in their schools. In particular, they said that as they modified their normal practice to give the children more of a say in their school environment – eg in the design of classrooms, or when to eat or have their daily naps – they noticed a definite change in their outlook and behaviour. Children said they felt they were listened to more and treated as individuals with their own opinions and needs, and teachers felt a more collegiate atmosphere had developed among the adults.

At a more general level the project showed the importance of building positive relationships with teachers if this kind of approach to democratic education is to be successful.

Teachers need to feel appreciated for who they are and what they do, as individuals with their own opinions and needs, if they are to be able to create a more democratic environment for their children. This cannot be forced or achieved in one-off workshops, but takes time and effort.

'As the children could themselves shape the direction of the project and realize their ideas into a plan, they have become more independent. They have learned to include and apply their knowledge. In all the talks we had they interacted more with each other. They have become more aware of their own skills and competencies and those of the others. . . . The children have become more settled, concentrated and caring with each other.'

Elementary school teacher

Summary

Country	<i>Germany</i>
Lead organizations	<i>ISTA (Institute for the Contextual Approach) at the International Academy (INA) at the Free University of Berlin; RAA (Regional Centre for Education, Integration and Democracy), Berlin</i>
Approach	<i>A 'contextual' approach</i>
Focus	<i>Encouraging children to shape their own school environment</i>
Age group	<i>Kindergarten and elementary school level</i>
Duration	<i>2002–07</i>

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D.2 Democracy in Higher Education Sweden

Recognizing how higher education teaching is often dominated by rigid schedules, standardized syllabuses and traditional power structures, university researchers in Sweden tested a number of more democratic teaching methods in teacher education and professional studies programmes as well as in courses for university teachers – pointing the way forward for future initiatives by foundations and other civil society organizations.

The search for new teaching methods

Dissatisfied with the traditional way of teaching in higher education, a group of research staff members of the universities of Stockholm, Uppsala and Växjö in Sweden were looking for new teaching methods based on a more democratic relationship between lecturers and students. They felt that the rigid schedules, standardized syllabuses and hierarchical power relations typical of universities of the past were having a detrimental effect on students and failing to equip them with the skills and attitudes required for democratic citizenship in the modern world.

With a grant from the Swedish Research Council, the group – consisting of one professor, eight senior lecturers and a number of PhD students – set up a three-year project to explore new teaching methods, especially in relation to

teacher education and continuing professional development and in-service training courses for teachers.

The project was to focus on the idea of creating a more democratic view of knowledge in which learners come together to construct collectively the practical knowledge they take into the workplace. Underlying this idea is a concept of participative democracy in which all citizens have the opportunity to influence the society in which they live and work.

The aims of the project

The aims of the project were:

- ▶ to understand and find out more about the processes that take place in different models of participatory and experience-based practice;
- ▶ to illuminate the difficulties and obstacles encountered in these processes in order to diminish the discrepancy between the democratic aims expressed in theoretical documents and what currently happens in practice in higher education;
- ▶ to understand the concept of 'knowledge' and the power that dominates universities today in order to be able to challenge and develop it.

Three approaches

In the course of conceiving the project, the group developed a number of new approaches to university teaching, including:

1 *Life stories* (Dominicé, 1990)

In this approach students write their own life stories focusing on their interest in the subject of the course they will be attending. The stories are used to relate the students' experiences, memories and emotions to the topics they are studying, giving them confidence in what they are doing as well as helping them criticize undemocratic structures in the work place.

2 *Democratic knowledge processes*

(Holmstrand & Härnsten, 2005; Härnsten & Holmstrand, 2008)

In this approach, knowledge is constructed through dialogue between students and their lecturer. Instead of one person transferring knowledge to others, the perspectives, experiences and knowledge of all the people involved in a course serve as the point of departure for the collective creation of knowledge. As they have actively participated in the construction of their knowledge, participants are more capable of understanding its underlying structures, leading to a higher level of professional confidence and a more critical outlook on power relations in the workplace.

3 *Research circles* (Härnsten, 1994;

Holmstrand & Härnsten, 1995; Lundberg & Starrin, 2006)

In this approach participants and researchers meet on equal terms. The starting point is a problem which the participants consider urgent. In a collective process of knowledge construction, all participants have an

opportunity to discuss their own views and experiences and to modify them in the light of the perspectives of others. The researcher contributes knowledge from research, keeping a critical distance from proceedings and acting as a catalyst to enable participants to structure the problem in a systematic fashion. The approach is derived from the old idea of the 'study circle' modified into the 'research' circle and introduced in Sweden some 30 years ago through cooperation between universities and trade unions.

Implementing and researching the approaches

The new approaches were trialled in a number of different higher education programmes and courses, including:

- ▶ teacher education programmes, eg political science – University of Stockholm;
- ▶ courses for university researchers and teachers wishing to improve their teaching practice – at the universities in Stockholm, Växjö and Kalmar;
- ▶ in-service training for teachers – University of Stockholm;
- ▶ a continuing professional development programme for teachers in inclusive education – University of Stockholm.

Special needs teachers

One of the courses was a professional development programme for special needs teachers. Two months before the programme started there was a meeting with participants where the 'life stories' approach was explained. Course participants were asked to write their own life story with a focus on their interest in children with special needs. These stories

were used during the programme and also afterwards in liaison with a university teacher when participants started their jobs in their new profession.

What they said . . . (Siljehag, 2007)

'To make the "house" cosy and comfortable will depend on our active involvement and our view of humanity. During the years it is important to care for the "house" so that it doesn't fall into decay. And it is the same for us who will be working in pre-school and school with special education tasks, we must all the time improve our competence so that we can develop our work methods for the benefit of the children.'

Special needs teacher

'This course has given me an experience in the world of independence and responsibility.'

Participant on a course for university teachers

Findings of the research (Härnsten & Wingård, 2007)

The extent to which the different approaches could be applied depended upon the structure of the programmes and courses in which they were to be used. Being very strictly and narrowly regulated, teacher education courses do not allow for much variation, even where participants are keen to work on the 'life stories' approach.

In general, however, the research group reported that the introduction of more democratic approaches to teaching led to a higher level of cooperative and dialogical working between participants on the courses and helped them to develop a more self-aware and responsible understanding of their professional activities.

Working with their experiences, memories and emotions increased participants' self-belief as professionals and gave them a more critically democratic approach to their work and the institutional structures within which it takes place.

The opportunity to view knowledge from different perspectives and to become more involved in the process of knowledge construction had a positive effect on teachers' classroom practice, encouraging them to adopt a more democratic approach in their own teaching and to be continually looking for ways of improving their professional practice.

Summary

Country	Sweden
Lead organizations	Universities of Stockholm, Uppsala and Växjö
Approach	Democratic teaching methods in higher education
Focus	Researching the effectiveness of new approaches to teacher education and professional development courses for teachers
Age group	Adult
Duration	2003–06

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D.3 Peer Mediation

Belgium

When violence is seen as the norm, what can schools do to promote a culture of peace and democracy? A peer mediation project in Belgian schools supported by the Bernheim Foundation in partnership with the University of Peace is producing some promising results.

A culture of violence

Many children in Europe today live in a culture where violence is seen as the norm. Violence takes different forms, verbal as well as physical, even institutional. Children see violence taking place between adults, between other children, and between adults and children.

What can schools do about this? Simply imposing stricter sanctions is not enough. Children need opportunities to reflect upon the causes of the violence they see around them, think about its consequences and be introduced to constructive alternatives if they are to take seriously the idea of peaceful conflict resolution.

This insight was the starting point for a project designed to introduce the methods and practices of peer mediation into Belgian schools, run by the Bernheim Foundation and the University of Peace in Namur.

Bernheim Foundation

The Bernheim Foundation was founded in Brussels in 1974 by Emile Bernheim to support economic and social issues, education, culture and research, and peace.

University of Peace

The University of Peace is a centre for training in peaceful conflict resolution, founded in 1960 by Dominique Pire, winner of the Nobel Prize for Peace.

Peer mediation

The Peer Mediation programme was developed by the University of Peace in 1992 after several trainers had travelled to Quebec in Canada to visit similar initiatives. Further journeys to Quebec – especially in 2003 to attend a world conference on violence in schools – along with the Foundation's experiences in schools at home in Belgium, helped to refine the programme.

A pedagogical toolkit

Central to the programme is a pedagogical toolkit produced by the University of Peace in 2000. This consists of a book entitled *Seeds for Mediators, Future Mediators* and two explanatory videos and is intended for use by teachers and other adults in schools. It

is accompanied by a book with reflective worksheets for use by the children.

A network of practitioners

In addition, a website was set up as a way of giving teachers an opportunity to exchange views, experiences and problems and get ideas for further activities. The website contains a list of contact names and participating schools, details of the programme, guidance for implementation and evaluation, resources and a 'blog' and discussion forum.

Implementing the programme

The mediation programme is a carefully drawn up mixture of training for teachers and other adults in school, training for students and a briefing for parents – helping everyone concerned to develop the competencies required for peaceful conflict resolution.

It takes place in a series of stages:

1 Checking motivation

It is essential to make sure that the head teacher genuinely supports the programme and that enough of the teachers are sufficiently motivated to implement the programme properly. A preparatory meeting is held for the school to meet the programme initiators and to sign an agreement guaranteeing involvement.

2 General training for all educational staff

There is a three-day workshop for all educational staff – teachers, managers and carers – on how to confront and resolve conflicts in a democratic manner.

3 Specialized training for classroom teachers

Classroom teachers are given their own specialized training in another three-day workshop. In this workshop, teachers have the opportunity to reflect on their own way of handling conflicts and how they might improve their approach. In the first instance, this was for two different year groups – 3rd and 4th.

4 Briefing for parents

Parents of the year groups where the programme is to be implemented are invited to a special meeting in school to help them find out more about the programme and what it seeks to do.

5 Training for students

Students receive ten sessions of training, each lasting 1 hour and 40 minutes, helping them to learn how to apply the techniques of peer mediation in different conflict situations.

6 Coaching for teachers

After each activity in the classroom, teachers have an opportunity to exchange views and experiences with a trainer, enabling them gradually to integrate the tools of the programme into their daily routine.

What they said . . .

'This has resulted in a positive atmosphere for students and teachers. The first year has now to be followed up by a second one to enable teachers to develop competencies of mediation and citizenship more autonomously. A third year would certainly initiate a domino effect so that the whole school could benefit by practising the tools and methods within each classroom.'

Head teacher

'I don't fear any more to deal with a conflict directly when it is breaking through. The activities helped me to see my students in a different way, to better understand them.'

Teacher

'I learned not to tease others, but that everyone should try to understand the other's perspective.'

Student – 8 years

An atmosphere of trust

The effect of the programme was evaluated using qualitative research methods. Teachers participating in the programme described how a more trusting atmosphere came to characterize their classes during the course of the programme. They said they feel they have come to know their students better, and their students understand each other better and are able to handle potential conflict in a more constructive way. Seeing the benefits of the programme in action has encouraged more teachers in participating schools to come forward for training.

Summary

Country	<i>Belgium</i>
Lead organizations	<i>Bernheim Foundation, University of Peace</i>
Approach	<i>Peer mediation</i>
Focus	<i>Training teachers and students in peer mediation methods</i>
Age group	<i>Primary school</i>
Duration	<i>2000–</i>

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D.4 One Square Kilometre of Education Germany

How can you bring a sense of citizenship and social solidarity to a community that is fragmented and broken? The One Square Kilometre of Education Project is attempting to do just this by improving the educational prospects of all the children living within one square kilometre in a deprived part of a German city, bringing together public services and citizens in a spirit of common endeavour.

The Reuterkiez

The Reuterkiez in Neukölln is an urban area with a culturally, linguistically and socially diverse population. Many of its inhabitants come from immigrant families, mainly from Lebanon and Turkey. There is a high rate of unemployment and a large proportion of people on social benefits. Social and educational services are fragmented and cooperation between them tends to be poor. Many children, especially those from an immigrant background, have difficulties at school and end up as school failures.

One Square Kilometre of Education

This project aims to improve the educational opportunities of all the children living within an area of one square kilometre by bringing together and coordinating local social and educational services with local citizens and

Strategic approach

Cooperation is at the heart of the One Square Kilometre of Education Project. In fact, the project itself is managed by a coalition of four different partners: RAA Berlin, the Freudenberg Foundation, the Karl-Konrad-and-Ria-Groeben Foundation and the Senate Department for Education, Science and Research, Berlin.

The partnership takes a long-term perspective: it is thought that at least ten years will be needed to achieve the kind of systemic change hoped for. It works through an inductive process, not relying on ready-made solutions but encouraging stakeholders to create their own approaches and methods. It does this chiefly through support and training, including professional development for teachers on methods of working with children from an immigration background and differentiation in the classroom. The work of the project takes place on four levels:

1 Skills

It aims to improve the skills of teachers and other professionals with regard to teaching and

empowering them to take joint responsibility for the education of young people. In doing so the project is strongly process- and participation-oriented, giving everyone concerned a sense of democratic citizenship and common responsibility.

supporting children from a variety of backgrounds in diverse classrooms.

2 Attitudes

It aims to develop a culture of recognition for diversity and the unlearning of 'deficit-oriented' concepts of educational failure in respect of ethnic minority children.

3 Systems

It aims to improve cooperation and communication between social, educational and other services as a means of overcoming institutional fragmentation.

4 Participation

It aims to create systematic opportunities for parents and other stakeholders to participate in local decision-making about education.

Activating the stakeholders

The activation and participation of stakeholders is taking place through a step-by-step process. To date this has involved:

1 Preparation: June to October 2006

Potential stakeholders contacted to identify their initial needs and to suggest common goals and possible fields for cooperation.

2 Initiation: November 2006 to May 2007

Partners identified and needs of stakeholders established – including:

- ▶ improving the culture of learning in schools;
- ▶ new measures for fostering learning and catering for special needs;
- ▶ participation of parents;
- ▶ cooperation between institutions;
- ▶ further professional development of teachers, carers and social workers;
- ▶ setting up a concerted quality management system.

3 Target setting: June to November 2007

Targets set through a series of workshops, meetings and conferences—including:

- ▶ an open space with 80 students from Year 5 (4. Klasse) to year 11 (10. Klasse);
- ▶ a parents' conference;
- ▶ workshops for nursery schools and for primary school management teams;
- ▶ a conference for primary school teachers;
- ▶ school steering group meetings.

4 Implementation: October 2007—ongoing

Stakeholders began meeting together; a scientific evaluation team and working group were formed, and evaluation workshops and conferences for stakeholder groups held.

Franz Schubert Primary School

Franz Schubert Primary School is one of the three primary schools within the project area. It is involved in the project in three different ways:

Improving transition

The school is trying to help to develop a smooth transition for students from nursery to primary school and from primary to secondary school. It gets in touch with parents of nursery children and provides them with important information about the enrolment of their children. Programmes and practices implemented at the primary school to promote learning are coordinated with the secondary schools to be followed up there.

Involving parents

There is continuous communication with parents about learning targets and ways of helping their children to achieve success.

Teacher competencies

It is helping its teachers and carers to improve their intercultural and social competencies

and ability to provide teaching and learning appropriate for a multicultural environment.

A pedagogical 'laboratory'

Within the one square kilometre the project has established a multi-purpose pedagogical 'laboratory' which, among other things, serves as:

- ▶ a centre for information and communication;
- ▶ a location for professional training;
- ▶ a venue for 'curriculum nights' and further communication with parents;
- ▶ a parents' centre;
- ▶ a place for intercultural mediators to bring together different groups, eg Roma;
- ▶ a meeting point for the local community.

Early signs of success

Although it is still early days, the project is already beginning to show signs of success. Communication between the different institutions within the one square kilometre is starting to improve and there is much more coordination between different social and educational institutions. A range of stakeholders are working towards self-set targets. Eighty school children are being given special assistance from youth welfare services to improve their academic performance. One nursery school has created its own 'learning centre' to help develop a more individualized learning culture. Communication between parents and between parents and schools has improved and a special centre for parents has been established. The pedagogical 'laboratory' has been in great demand. While deeply ingrained cultures and systems cannot be changed overnight, the project is beginning to show just what can be achieved when a whole-community approach to educational development is implemented.

Summary

Country	Germany
Lead organizations	RAA Berlin, Freudenberg Foundation, Karl-Konrad-and-Ria-Groeben Foundation, Senate Department for Education, Science and Research
Approach	Whole-community empowerment through school improvement
Focus	Improving education and developing a sense of citizenship and shared responsibility
Age group	All levels
Duration	2007–

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Schools can never be completely divorced from the communities that surround them: the wider community impinges on school life in a variety of ways. Problems relating to migration, discrimination or inequality, for example, are experienced as much inside as outside schools. But just as the school can be active in developing a more democratic environment in its internal community, so too can it be active in developing a more democratic environment in the community beyond its gates.

To become active agents of democracy in society, schools need to be able to engage with their communities, providing opportunities for the internal community of the school to engage with individuals and groups in the wider community beyond and vice versa.

The case studies in this section reflect some of the different approaches to engaging schools in their local communities taken by foundations and civil society organizations working in partnership with schools in a number of European countries. They are taken from Finland, Estonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Germany, and include:

- ▶ establishing participatory structures for young people in schools and communities (Helsinki City Youth Department; Helsinki City Education Department);
- ▶ helping students to research local community problems and present their solutions to the public authorities (JaanTõnisson Institute);
- ▶ transforming the school into a catalyst for community renewal (Freudenberg Foundation; Robert Bosch Foundation; Community Foundation Simin Han; UNICEF);
- ▶ training adults as participation facilitators (Bertelsmann Foundation);
- ▶ engaging young people in their communities through service learning (Freudenberg Foundation).

Engaging schools in their communities

3e

E.1 Voice of the Young Finland

How can you involve young people in decision-making in their schools and local communities? City officials in Helsinki developed a series of participatory structures for young people built around a new system of student councils in schools, and set aside funding to implement young people's proposals for improving their city.

Young people are citizens too

The Finnish Local Government Act obliges municipalities to listen to their residents and make their services resident- and customer-oriented. This applies not only to adults but also to children and young people. They are to be regarded as equal members of the municipality with an equal right to be heard and opportunities for participation.

When in 1998 some of the city councillors in Helsinki tried to establish a youth council, however, it was apparent that young people were using their rights of participation much less than older people.

So the Helsinki City Education Department looked for ways of trying to involve children and young people much more in local decision-making. This coincided with a move by the Helsinki City Youth Centre and its Board to develop more inclusive forms of engagement for young people in the city.

Voice of the Young

Inspired by the example of Porsgrunn, a city in Norway with a tradition of youth participation, the Helsinki City Youth Department and the Education Department developed the idea for a project called Voice of the Young.

The idea built on a new curriculum and policy for Finnish schools, called the Youth Participation Programme, which came into effect in 2004. The programme aimed at establishing some form of student participation in every school as a way of fostering the teaching of civic engagement and entrepreneurship in schools.

For Finnish schools this represented an important new direction in the practice of student participation. In the 1970s and early 1980s, the situation with regard to school councils was a difficult one. School councils, especially in upper grade schools, were closely linked to party politics. Student council members assigned themselves to student organizations which were themselves associated with political parties.

Furthermore, there existed the so-called 'cross-voting' system which allowed for the election of a higher proportion of students, leading to student dominance of school councils and conflicts between students and teachers. As a result, school councils were disbanded from some Finnish schools in the 1980s.

From small beginnings

Consequently, when the Voice of the Young programme was launched in Helsinki in 2000, it was begun as a pilot project involving only ten schools.

New student bodies were elected in all the participating schools, including primary schools. Each class elected two representatives to the student body board. The representatives acted as negotiators and messengers between the class and the student body.

The aim, however, was that in about five or six years all the schools in Helsinki would be part of the system. By 2006, student councils had been established in 142 schools, involving over 50,000 students. Now in 2009, all comprehensive schools in the city are involved in the programme.

The Helsinki Education Department provides €600,000 per year to fund projects and initiatives of students in and around schools. Every school receives an average of €3,500 per year. Schools with more than 1,000 students are likely to receive €7,000 or more.

Arenas for democratic participation

Essential to the idea of the Voice of the Young project is the idea of the school as not only an arena for democratic participation in its own right but also a stimulus and a focus for wider areas of democratic participation in youth

work and in the community as a whole. The aim is to develop some of the Voice of the Young local groups into regional committees in which schools' student boards and young people in youth clubs get together to work on joint projects, such as improving sports facilities or city planning.

'Open forums'

The idea of 'open forums' is to promote dialogue between young people and decision-makers on important social topics. They are intended for all 7th to 9th graders, students of upper secondary schools and vocational institutions, and older young people in youth centres in Helsinki. The forums discuss a different issue each year. In 2008 the issue was students' ideas for improving the well-being of children and young people. After discussing the students' ideas, politicians and civil servants are asked to make certain promises, with a view to them taking up at least one of the students' suggestions.

Annual Mayor's Meeting

The Voice of the Young activities culminate in an annual Voice of the Young Mayor's Meeting in Helsinki, held annually in March. The Education Department earmarks €600,000 from its budget for the implementation of project proposals made by children and young people. Every project school participates in the Mayor's annual Voice of the Young meeting in which the decision on the distribution of the money is made. The representatives discuss different schools' projects in the Mayor's meeting, eg buying new lockers and benches for school corridors, leisure facilities for breaks, games and sports equipment for the schoolyard, or events to improve school cohesion such as a day of music

and dance or a whole school trip to the forest or the countryside.

Before the meeting a 'future' workshop is organized within each of the participating schools. Students in each class consider what they think needs improving in their school environment or atmosphere. They choose the best proposal and two student representatives take it forward for the student board to consider. The student board selects an improvement project from the suggestions made by the classes and elects two representatives to attend the Mayor's meeting.

Democracy in action

As a result of these initiatives, all Helsinki schools are now involved in the Voice of the Young programme in one way or another and have the opportunity to experience democracy in action in their schools and their city, contributing considerably to the young people's sense of democratic citizenship and personal efficacy.

Summary

Country	<i>Finland</i>
Lead organizations	<i>Helsinki City Youth Department, Helsinki City Education Department</i>
Approach	<i>Democratic participation in school and community life</i>
Focus	<i>Funding participative structures for children and young people at different levels of the community based in and around schools</i>
Age group	<i>Primary and secondary school level</i>
Duration	<i>2000–</i>

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E.2 Let's Do Something Useful! Estonia

How do you engage school students in the life of their community in a way that is both enjoyable and develops democratic attitudes and skills? 'Let's Do Something Useful!', an active learning project based on the US programme Project Citizen, proved it had the potential to do just this when students of the Tartu Mart Reiniku Gymnasium in Estonia became involved.

Coming to terms with a communist past

Although Soviet rule in Estonia ended more than 16 years ago, authoritarian structures and models of thinking are still evident in public life today. Despite new syllabuses, curricula and textbooks being introduced into schools, teaching methods are still often more characteristic of the previous totalitarian regime.

Convinced that something needed to be done to train teachers in more democratic methods, the Jaan Tõnisson Institute developed an active learning project for Estonian schools based on the US programme Project Citizen.

The Jaan Tõnisson Institute

The Jaan Tõnisson Institute is an NGO based in Tallinn. It was founded to foster democratic development and the strengthening of civil society in Estonia.

Project Citizen

Project Citizen aims to engage schools with their wider communities through collaborative student project work. Working individually or in pairs or groups, students identify and analyse problems in their locality, design solutions and take concrete steps to put them into practice – taking responsibility for what they do both as individuals and for their team as a whole. Every student in a class is involved and able to learn from the experience, both in terms of personal confidence and in the development of civic skills and knowledge.

There are five key stages in the process:

- ▶ finding out about public policy issues and problems related to the community and choosing one to study;
- ▶ gathering and evaluating information about the problem;
- ▶ examining and evaluating alternative solutions;
- ▶ deciding on and developing a public policy proposal to address the problem;
- ▶ proposing a solution to public authorities with the power to implement it.

'Let's Do Something Useful!'

While the approach of Project Citizen could be transferred directly to the Estonian context, it was clear that the title would have to be changed. Owing to the high number of Russian-speaking

residents who are not legally citizens of Estonia and in order to make all school students feel included, it was decided to rename the programme 'Let's Do Something Useful!'

The Institute advertised the project to teachers throughout the country via email, phone calls, personal invitations and articles in teachers' newsletters. Interested teachers were invited to take part in two-day training seminars, introducing them to the idea of Project Citizen and guiding them through its different stages.

The Tartu Mart Reiniku Gymnasium becomes involved

Teachers at the Tartu Mart Reiniku Gymnasium were some of the first to take part in the training seminars. In January 2007, they set up a project in their school with Year 10 students. The students were all volunteers and agreed to do the project in their own time under the supervision of a history and social studies teacher.

The project had several steps:

1 Brainstorming

Students began with a brainstorming exercise to choose the problem on which they most wanted to work. The topic they chose was: 'How are the citizens of Tartu involved in city environment planning?' Tartu is a rapidly changing city and citizens are eager to see their home town develop. There were some cases the students found, however, where citizens felt that the city government was not always making the right decisions.

2 Group work

After identifying the project on which they wanted to work, students divided into four separate groups. Each group worked

independently, coming together from time to time to inform the others of their progress and plan the next steps of the project together.

3 *Documentary research*

The groups began by researching local newspapers for discussions about urban development, eg plans for new buildings, facilities or parks. They found material about a new shopping centre and the science museum Ahhaa, Toome Hill. Then they researched the city government's website (www.tartu.ee) for documents about plans and decisions, eg the Department of Architecture.

4 *Finding out about the decision-making process*

Following this, the groups carried out a series of interviews with officials and others – city administrators, journalists, etc – about the ways in which planning decisions were made and publicized in the city. It transpired that the city government used a number of different media channels to inform and involve citizens, but it was not clear that citizens themselves felt involved in the process.

5 *Questionnaires and interviews with local citizens*

Students designed and distributed a questionnaire to local citizens asking how satisfied they were with the city government's public relations policy. They also carried out a number of face-to-face interviews.

6 *Outcomes*

At the end of the project students put together a project portfolio, video and poster to present their findings to teachers, classmates and city officials. They recommended a number of ways

to improve relations between citizens and public authorities, including:

- ▶ a citizens' forum on the city government website;
- ▶ virtual questionnaires on the internet;
- ▶ special newspaper extras dedicated to the improvement of the city environment.

They also recommended that school students should continue to be involved in this work.

A host of learning opportunities

Running the project was not always easy. To begin with there was the difficulty of integrating project learning into the daily routine of the school. There was also a constant worry about how municipal staff might react. Would staff feel the students were intruding in areas that were none of their business and put obstacles in their way? It was important, therefore, to ensure that the students were taught how to communicate sensitively with local officials.

In the event, however, all the hard work paid off. The project presented a host of learning opportunities for students. The chance to help to solve a real problem in their local community boosted their motivation and morale. It made them look at their city with new eyes – as active citizens rather than passive inhabitants – and gave them opportunities to learn: how to design, implement and interpret questionnaires; prepare and carry out interviews; make a documentary video; and the value of collaborative teamwork. It also gave city employees and other staff working in community institutions the opportunity to reflect on the nature of their work and its relation to ordinary citizens.

Summary

Country	<i>Estonia</i>
Lead organization	<i>Jaan Tõnisson Institute</i>
Approach	<i>'Let's Do Something Useful!' – an adaptation of a US programme, Project Citizen</i>
Focus	<i>Helping schools to become more involved in their communities by encouraging students to research a local problem and present their solution to public authorities</i>
Age group	<i>Secondary level</i>
Duration	<i>2004–07</i>

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Original US programme

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E.3 School as a Community Regenerator Bosnia and Herzegovina

What can you do when people lose their sense of community? Supported by a partnership of civil society organizations led by the Freudenberg Foundation, a Bosnian primary school became a catalyst for democratic renewal in a community suffering from the after-effects of war.

Simin Han School

Simin Han School is located in Tuzla in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is a primary school with students aged 6–15. As a result of the war, the community around the school experienced a number of serious problems – including poverty, mental illness, broken families and a large number of displaced persons – leading to an overall sense of loss of community.

During the war the population of the school community changed completely. By the end more than 80 per cent of its population were displaced persons – mainly Muslims. Many families were missing a father or mother or both parents. More than 60 per cent of parents were without employment or income and more than 60 per cent of the students suffered from symptoms of post-traumatic stress syndrome.

The school as a ‘community regenerator’

Recognizing the seriousness of the problem, a number of civil society organizations led by the Freudenberg Foundation in Berlin joined

together to do something, supporting moves the head teacher of Simin Han School was already making – such as introducing new interactive learning techniques and opportunities for parent participation – to turn the school into a ‘community regenerator’.

The idea of the school as a ‘community regenerator’ approach is to turn a school into a catalyst for community renewal by making it the strategic focus for a range of development initiatives both within the school and in the community beyond its gates – through its curriculum as well as its human resources and facilities. In this way the activities of the school becomes a symbol of and a means of identification for the whole community.

Freudenberg Foundation

The Freudenberg Foundation is a German non-profit organization founded in 1984. It exists to promote science, the humanities and education and the strengthening of peaceful coexistence in society and culture. Its main areas of work include the integration of migrant families and cultural minorities, the promotion of democratic culture, and support for young people and people with mental illness.

A collective effort

For the school genuinely to become a community regenerator, a number of activities needed to be carried out at the same time. The coordination of these activities and the actors and agencies involved would therefore be central to the success of the project.

The Freudenberg Foundation invited potential partners and members of the community to become involved. The role of the Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme (YEPP) was vital for stimulating local effort, especially among young people. Before this, the dissemination of new interactive learning and teaching methods for use in the school was led by organizations like UNICEF. An Austrian organization provided support for school development and the Robert Bosch Foundation funded two supplementary teachers to support students with special needs and transform the school club into a student

Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme

The Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme (YEPP) is an international community-based partnership programme that aims to empower communities and young people to improve their lives through gaining greater control of and better access to education, training and employment, having more choices and better options, and becoming active and responsible citizens. Launched by the Network of European Foundations in 2001, YEPP is a joint transnational project of a consortium of ten European and US foundations in partnership with OECD and the International Academy at the Free University of Berlin.

council. The Freudenberg Foundation helped with fundraising and the provision of specialist training for different projects as well as offering its research facilities for the evaluation of the overall project. It also helped to establish a community support group, Community Foundation Simin Han, with which it worked in cooperation.

The project

The project proceeded in a number of stages:

1 Initial steps – before the intervention of the Freudenberg Foundation

Thanks to a charismatic head teacher, Osman Hasic, the school had already organized training for teachers in interactive and participative teaching methods appropriate for democratic education. Parents were invited to act as partners in the classrooms assisting with lessons, encouraging them to become active members of the wider school community. A steering group for school development was formed to plan and carry out changes at the school.

All these initiatives helped to establish better communication and relationships between members of the community around the school and made it easier to react to the circumstances of the school and its students in a flexible and dynamic way.

2 A community support group

As the school gradually opened itself up to the community, the Freudenberg Foundation began to involve the YEPP Programme and to make the school the centre of its activities in Simin Han. The YEPP project management, with the support of the Foundation, contacted important groups in the local community and organized

a range of meetings at the school – including for students, parents, teachers, community and ministerial administration, a women's group, youth organizations, the football club, an entrepreneurial chamber and so on. Thus a community support group was formed.

3 Joint projects

The community support group – later transformed into the Community Foundation – met regularly to discuss the needs of the school and the wider community. It identified key areas for projects which it has since been carrying out, together with other actors and agencies – for example:

- ▶ As many members of the community, especially students and their families, were concerned about traffic safety around the school, a project and campaign called 'Safe Children in Traffic' was set up.
- ▶ A school cooperative was set up in the primary school called 'Bee', to engage in honey production.
- ▶ Primary school students were given opportunities to visit educational and training institutions to help them decide their future educational and professional orientation.

Breathing new life into a war-torn community

Those involved described how the work of the project was gradually able to breathe new life into the war-torn community in Simin Han. Members of the community were able to unite over common goals. The school environment became much more dynamic and positive, democratic values were much more in evidence, and students and teachers could act and learn together to more purpose. Young people and adults alike reported a greater sense of personal

effectiveness and confidence in the future, and the community itself become a more active and self-conscious one.

'The war brought changes to the way people related to one another here in Simin Han. We turned to one another for support and changed our old habits.'

Teacher (Bassler, 2005)

Summary

Country	<i>Bosnia and Herzegovina</i>
Lead organization	<i>Freudenberg Foundation, Germany</i>
Approach	<i>The school as a 'community regenerator'</i>
Focus	<i>Using a school as a catalyst for community renewal</i>
Age group	<i>Primary school, adult</i>
Duration	<i>2001–06</i>

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E.4 MitWirkung Germany

What are the factors that increase the likelihood of children and young people participating in the democratic life of their local communities? This was the question that the Bertelsmann Foundation sought to answer and test out in practice through its MitWirkung initiative.

MitWirkung

MitWirkung literally means 'participation'. It is an initiative of the Bertelsmann Foundation designed to encourage children and young people to become more involved in their local environment – starting with school and reaching out to the wider community – by helping to set up support structures within the local community.

Underpinning the initiative is a strong belief that the future of democracy depends on the participation of citizens and that children and young people should be given the opportunity to get involved and learn how to participate from an early age. The local community is where children and young people can get their first experience of democratic participation and where their efforts can have most direct impact.

Bertelsmann Foundation

The Bertelsmann Foundation is a private operating non-profit foundation created in Germany in 1977. Its work is based on the conviction that competition and civic engagement are fundamental for ensuring social change.

Scientific research

The MitWirkung initiative is based on detailed scientific research. The Bertelsmann Foundation commissioned a countrywide empirical research study of the participation of children and young people in their local communities. Over 14,000 children and young people were involved in 42 cities.

One of the main questions the research sought to answer was how local public authorities might best enhance and foster participation by children and young people, and how existing opportunities might be adapted to meet the specific needs of this group.

The research found that a large number of participatory structures already existed for children and young people in German cities, but that the extent and quality of their participation depended upon a number of clearly identifiable factors:

- ▶ the possession of participatory competencies;

- ▶ the quality of the participatory opportunities available at school;
- ▶ knowledge about the participatory opportunities that exist;
- ▶ previous positive experience of participation;
- ▶ support from voluntary associations;
- ▶ having friends involved in active participation;
- ▶ a desire to effect change.

The 'participation spiral'

From the findings of the research the Bertelsmann Foundation was able to draw up a model of how participation might best be promoted among children and young people. The model is called the 'participation spiral' (see diagram, Appendix 4). It helps promoters of young people's participation to identify the factors that they can directly influence and distinguish these from others that are normally not open to external manipulation.

Model projects

Using the 'participation spiral', the Foundation set up a number of model participation projects in selected cities. Steering groups were established, bringing together a range of officials from local administration, schools and youth welfare services to plan and coordinate the projects. The aim was to develop transferable resources and activities that could be adapted for implementation in a range of different settings.

Saalfeld

One of the model projects was set up in the Förderschule in Saalfeld. Saalfeld is a small town with 28,000 inhabitants in eastern Germany, about 140 kilometres south-west of Leipzig, with a history of innovation in youth participation – and also, since the early 1990s, of right-wing

'Process moderators'

With the support and advice of experts in the field, the Bertelsmann Foundation created a one-year course to train 'process moderators' – adults working in local administration, schools and youth services to act as facilitators for young people's democratic participation. Process moderators try to influence the kinds of factors that support young people's participation, as identified in the 'participation spiral', and help them to develop participatory competencies.

The course is made up of several modules, during which the process moderators plan, implement and evaluate participation projects in their own locality. The training provides them with coaching, support, advice and the opportunity to reflect critically on their projects.

extremism, which a network of local people has been working to undermine.

Förderschule Saalfeld is a school for children and young people with learning disabilities. There are about 110 students from year 4 to year 11, leaving with a final exam equivalent to the Hauptschulabschluss – the lowest final qualification in the German school system.

Teachers as 'process moderators'

Ten teachers at the Förderschule Saalfeld underwent training as process moderators. This proved to be extremely successful and led to a significant change in the quality of young people's participation in school life there. The training enabled the teachers to provide students with a range of opportunities to initiate and implement their own participatory projects, including a new design for the playground and ways of preventing vandalism and bullying.

Some of the students became involved in a community project where children and young people were allowed to 'occupy' disused houses and other spaces in the town and use them for their own projects, eg a graffiti academy or music events.

Cooperation with the wider community

A number of these projects involved cooperation between teachers and people from outside the school, eg youth workers. The additional knowledge and experience opened up new possibilities for the students and extended their participatory competencies significantly. A highlight of the project was being able to present their experiences at a public participation forum for Thüringen.

What they said . . .

'That was cool . . . Now they [politicians and other people in responsible positions] know what we are able to do.'

Förderschule Saalfeld student involved in the participation forum in Thüringen

Higher levels of participation and self-esteem

As a result of these initiatives, teachers at the Förderschule reported a significantly higher level of democratic participation by their students and of self-esteem – especially important among special needs students. Cooperation between schools, local administration and youth welfare services has increased, leading to more orchestrated and sustainable forms of participation becoming available in the locality for young people. The secret, they say, lies in adult training and a long-term strategic approach adapted to suit local conditions.

Summary

Country	<i>Germany</i>
Lead organization	<i>Bertelsmann Foundation</i>
Approach	<i>Training for adults as participation facilitators based on empirical research</i>
Focus	<i>Increasing children's and young people's participation in local schools and their communities</i>
Age group	<i>Primary and secondary school</i>
Duration	<i>2004–08</i>

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E.5 Service Learning Germany

How can you help young people to learn that citizens have responsibilities as well as rights? One way is to give them a chance to get involved in an aspect of community life for themselves. This was the approach adopted by the Franz-Ludwig Gymnasium in Bamberg, Germany, with support from the Freudenberg Foundation.

Lebenshilfe Werkstätten

In 2001, a class of Year 10 (9. Klasse) students from the Franz-Ludwig Gymnasium became involved in the local sheltered workshop, Lebenshilfe Werkstätten. They had looked at opportunities of working with disadvantaged people in their town, and chose the sheltered workshop because the school already had contacts there and because of its focus on disability.

With the support of the Freudenberg Foundation, the school entered into an agreement with the sheltered workshop with a view to making links between the student involvement there and the school curriculum, creating a partnership that would add value both to the lives of local disabled people and to the students' learning. This approach to democratic education is sometimes known as 'service learning'. Behind it lies the belief that young people evolve into responsible citizens only if they are given *real* opportunities to get involved

in their local community and are genuinely allowed to take responsibility for themselves.

Service learning

Service learning is an approach to democratic education that integrates service to the community into the school curriculum. Students learn through the experience of taking responsibility for some aspect of community life, either within or beyond the school.

The project

The sheltered workshops of Lebenshilfe produce a musical instrument called a 'veeh-harp'. So it was decided to focus student activity on ways of promoting the production of the harp. Among other things, this involved:

1 Developing accompanying products

In music lessons students transcribed pieces of music so that they could be played on the veeh-harps. They also worked out arrangements for concerts of veeh-harp music and produced 'play-along' CDs to make it easier and more interesting to learn to play the instrument.

2 Marketing

In economics lessons students developed a marketing concept for all the products produced by the Lebenshilfe sheltered workshops. One student volunteered to design a website for customer information and sales purposes. This part of the project was allowed to count as an assignment for A-levels.

3 Investigating disability issues

In German language lessons, students researched and wrote articles about disability issues and the work of Lebenshilfe, in cooperation with a local newspaper.

4 Designing new products

In art lessons students developed and designed a range of toys and other products that could

Figure 5 Student involvement in the sheltered workshop linked to subjects in the school curriculum

<p>füreinander voneinander miteinander</p>	<p>Wirtschafts- und Rechtslehre</p> <p>Marketingkonzept Produkte, Weihnachtsmarkt Internetportal für BLW Facharbeit</p>	<p>verantworten lernen arbeiten</p>
<p>Musik</p> <p>Schul- und Werkstatt-Konzerte Transkriptionen u. Play-along-CDs Big-Band, diverse Kleingruppen Gemeinsames Musizieren</p>	<p>Zentrales Produkt Die Veeh-Harfe der Bamberger Lebenshilfe-Werkstätten</p>	<p>Deutsch</p> <p>Fragebogenaktion Berichte, Reportagen Journalistische Betreuung Facharbeit</p>
<p>alte und neue Unterrichtstechniken</p> <p>Begegnungen, Auftritte etc. Projektorientiertes Arbeiten Teamarbeit, Schulentwicklung Begleitende Homepage</p>	<p>Kunst und Sport</p> <p>Produktdesign, Masken Basketball, Klettern, Fachwerkbau gemeinsame Freizeiten Facharbeit</p>	<p>fächer-, schul- und institutionenübergreifend</p> <p>WR, Mu, D, Sp u. a. Fränkischer Tag, Cantus</p>

be produced in the workshops and broaden the product range on offer.

5 Refereeing sport events

Students acted as referees in disabled sports competitions.

Service learning and the Freudenberg Foundation

Influenced by North American thinking, the Freudenberg Foundation has been developing and disseminating forms of service learning for several years.

In 2001 it set up pilot projects in ten secondary schools in Germany. Then in 2002, using its position as coordinator for the Learning and Living Democracy Programme in Baden-Württemberg, the Foundation was able to introduce a service learning approach into many of the participant schools there. This produced much valuable information on how service learning may be adapted to the context in German schools.

The Foundation provides interested schools with training, coaching and consultancy on service learning in different practical situations and arranges a yearly conference on the subject. In recent years it has set up a service learning network, giving practitioners a chance to exchange information and experience as well as publicize opportunities for training and partnership working. The network has developed a set of quality standards for service learning projects – the most important of which are that the project:

- ▶ takes place out of school and opens the school up to the wider community;
- ▶ is responding to a real problem in the community;

- ▶ is not an extra-curricular activity but links directly to the formal school curriculum, ie to one or more subject areas;
- ▶ involves students in regular reflection on what they are learning, both in and out of class.

Freudenberg Foundation

The Freudenberg Foundation is a German non-profit organization founded in 1984. It exists to promote science, the humanities and education and the strengthening of peaceful coexistence in society and culture. Its main areas of work included the integration of migrant families and cultural minorities, the promotion of democratic culture, and support for young people and people with mental illness.

Lessons from the Franz-Ludwig Gymnasium

Teachers at the Franz-Ludwig Gymnasium reported that, since being involved in the service learning project, the performance of students in subjects linked to the project has improved. In particular, it seems to have deepened students' understanding of the more theoretical elements in these subjects. The people involved – students,

What they said . . .

'I could apply all the theoretical knowledge we have to learn every day to a practical and useful context.'

'The contact with disabled people has taught me a quality of respect and esteem.'

'I have realized that mentally and physically handicapped people are equal to so-called "normal" people. I was fascinated by the vitality they have shown.'

Students, Franz-Ludwig Gymnasium

teachers and the disabled workers – now feel closer to and are prepared to take more responsibility for each other. There is a more definite sense of community and democratic atmosphere within the school, and a greater awareness of the role of the school in educating citizens to take responsibility for themselves and for others.

Summary

Country	<i>Germany</i>
Lead organization	<i>Freudenberg Foundation</i>
Approach	<i>Service learning</i>
Focus	<i>Giving students the opportunity to solve real-life problems in their local community as a way of developing their learning in formal subjects</i>
Age group	<i>Secondary school level</i>
Duration	<i>2001–</i>

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Appendix 1

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Section E

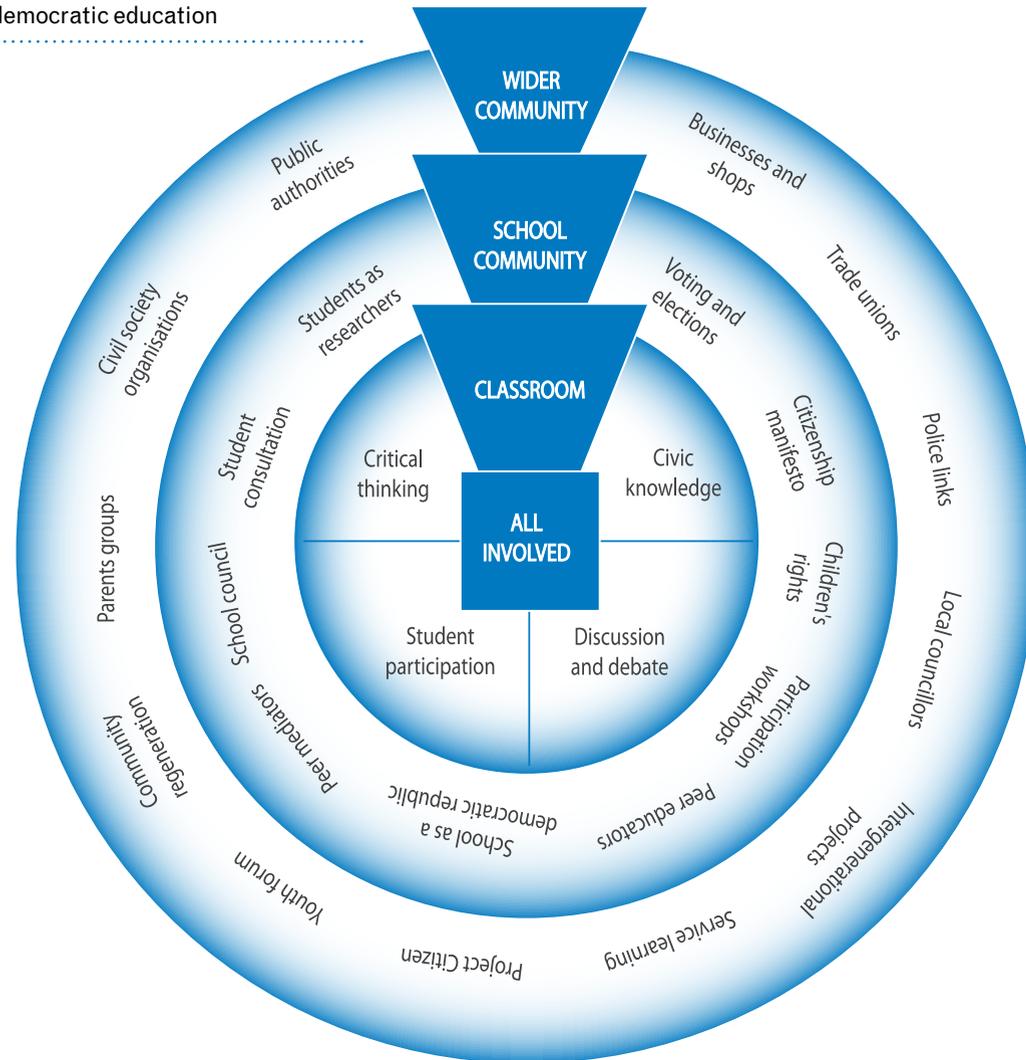
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Appendix 2

The democratic school

Figure 6 A 'whole-school' approach to democratic education



Appendix 3

Pupil participation in our school: A self-evaluation tool

'Pupil Participation in Our School' is a self-evaluation tool developed by the King Baudouin Foundation for assessing the quality of pupil participation in a school – both in the classroom and in the school's wider community – and for encouraging dialogue about this between its pupils, teachers and management.

The tool can be used in any school, regardless of the form or extent of pupil participation. It gives everyone involved a chance to think about and have a say on what is happening with regard to participation in their school.

The tool is based around a questionnaire completed by pupils, teachers and school managers. The questionnaire incorporates the findings of a pilot study in 25 secondary schools and is constructed around the elements of participation that were perceived as very important by the participants in this study. By systematically focusing on these elements, reasons for people's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the state of participation in their school can be identified – an essential prerequisite for assessing the current quality and take-up of opportunities for pupil participation in the school and what might need to be done to improve these in the future.

It is fair to assume that when filling in the questionnaire pupils will differ among themselves and that pupils, teachers and the school management will have divergent opinions. However, the question is whether they want to engage in a constructive dialogue about those opinions. This tool is intended as an invitation to all those involved to take part in such a dialogue.

Finally – and most importantly – the dialogue that results from the use of the tool needs to focus on the future: what is to be done about pupil participation in the school; what commitments the various parties involved are willing to make; and what means or working methods are regarded as suitable for achieving these objects.

How to use the tool – in seven easy steps

- 1 Form a small project team – consisting of a number of pupils and teachers already involved in participatory activities and also members of the school management.
- 2 Get the project team to complete the questionnaire before anyone else. This will help you to identify any sections where more explanation is needed or specific questions need to be added at the end of the questionnaire. But don't change the sequence and formulation of the statements: the tool has been carefully tested through a rigorous development process.
- 3 Decide how large- or small-scale the study should be. Will it cover the whole school (all pupils and teachers) or only the final year pupils or specific departments?
- 4 Decide what steps will be taken after the questionnaires have been completed. There are a number of possibilities, eg:
 - ▶ The results are processed and discussed in the classroom, under the guidance of the class representative, the teacher or a member of the project team.
 - ▶ The questionnaires are processed centrally and discussed by the project team before the results are given out, and specific questions are put to the pupils and teachers who completed the questionnaire (in the classroom, at a meeting open to all those involved, or at a general pupil council).
 - ▶ After the questionnaires have been completed, volunteers are asked to join the project team which will discuss the results and consider how the rest of the school is to be kept informed of the state of affairs.
- 5 It is very important to make clear your minimum expectations of the project – although it is quite acceptable to say that you just want to hear people's opinions and gather information without committing yourself further. A 'commitment' could simply entail promising to take account of the results or devote a meeting of the teacher council to the topic.

Placing the study in its broader context will encourage those using the tool to express their views, and will enable everyone to monitor the arrangements that have been made. Healthy participation starts there.

- 6 It is worth taking time to reflect in the project team on the effects that such a survey may have.
- 7 Finally, arrangements must be made regarding how to inform the target group – the other pupils and teachers – about what lies ahead, who will do it, and how this will be decided.

Questionnaire template 1: Pupil participation in our school

Please put a cross in the appropriate boxes:

I am a pupil a teacher a member of the management

I am involved in pupil participation
 not involved in pupil participation

Below are a number of statements about pupil participation and your school's culture. Please put the appropriate number to indicate whether you think that these statements apply or do not apply to your school, or are appropriate or inappropriate with regard to the school.

Note that Section E includes a list of work methods and channels that may contribute to pupil participation. Not all the items will occur in one and the same school, so please rate those that do exist in your school on a scale of 1–5.

The numbers indicate the following:

- 1 not at all appropriate
- 2 somewhat appropriate
- 3 more or less appropriate
- 4 quite appropriate
- 5 very appropriate

Please think about your answers carefully and put the appropriate number.

A To what extent do pupils feel that the management takes them seriously?

.....
A1 The management actively listens to pupils.

A2 Pupils can go to the management about their concerns.

A3 The management takes account of pupils' opinions and proposals.

A4 If a proposal is accepted by the management, then pupils are involved in its implementation.

A5 If a proposal is not accepted, then the management provides justification for this.

A6 The management takes a positive view of pupil participation at the school.

B To what extent do pupils feel that teachers take them seriously?

- B1** Teachers actively listen to pupils.
- B2** Pupils can go to teachers about their concerns.
- B3** Teachers take account of pupils' opinions and proposals.
- B4** Teachers take a positive view of pupil participation at the school.
- B5** Teachers are friendly in their relations with pupils.
- B6** In the classroom, teachers pay due attention to other issues apart from their subject or lesson.

C To what extent do pupils feel that they can participate in the school?

- C1** Pupils take a positive view of pupil participation.
- C2** If pupils approach management or teachers with their personal problems, they are given help.
- C3** Pupils are actively involved in classroom activities by their teachers.
- Teachers and management give pupils enough of the following for them to participate in school affairs:

- C4** time
- C5** space (rooms, etc)
- C6** money
- C7** powers
- C8** structures, clear procedures
- C9** support and stimulation

D To what extent are democratic aspects incorporated into the functioning of the school?

- D1** The school rules are seen as a guideline rather than a legal code.
- D2** The school rules apply to all members of the school community.
- D3** When there are disciplinary problems, the pupils are involved in seeking a solution.
- D4** Pupils are given greater responsibility as they move up the school.
- D5** Pupils share a sense of responsibility for their school.
- D6** Pupils spontaneously take their own initiatives.
- D7** There is a pleasant atmosphere in the school.
- D8** Pupils enjoy a lot of freedom in the school.

E What is the existing level of participation in the school?

- E1** Management surgery (also covering classroom and school problems)
- E2** Personal staff tutor; 'ombuds-teacher'
- E3** Class period: a specific time-slot set aside to discuss issues other than the teaching material
- E4** Class days: a longer time-slot to discuss issues other than the teaching material
- E5** Teacher surgeries (also covering individual problems)
- E6** Class representatives
- E7** Pupil council
- E8** Work groups
- E9** School newspaper
- E10** Survey; needs study
- E11** Idea box
- E12** Is there any other channel or work method which is not included in the list but you find important in terms of pupil participation?

Processing the data

It is important to decide immediately whether you want to distinguish between the various sub-groups that completed the questionnaire. In other words, do you or do you not want to process separately the results for pupils who are involved in pupil participation activities and pupils who are not involved in such activities, teachers, members of the management board, and specific departments and classes? If you do, then the questionnaires must be sorted accordingly into separate bundles and processed separately.

Processing is simple:

- ▶ Make an appropriate number of copies of form 2 (Tally and total sheet for individual scores), eg one copy for pupils in their final year, one copy for fifth-year pupils and one copy for teachers.
- ▶ Transfer the scores from all the questionnaires for the group in question by making a tally chart in the appropriate box.
- ▶ Once all the questionnaires have been processed, work out the total for each box and note the number of times an item was given a score of 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5.
- ▶ The five totals together should be about the same as the number of questionnaires unless someone did not give a score for a specific item here or there.

This already provides a fairly clear idea of the distribution of the scores, meaning that you can see how much agreement or disagreement there is about a specific item.

The larger the group that is included in the processing step, the clearer such trends can become and the more sure you can be that the sample is representative of the opinion of the rest of the pupils. If only five teachers complete the questionnaire, it is risky to elevate their views to the status of the opinion of the other 70 teachers working at the school.

Bear in mind that people are particularly attracted to the 'more or less' score ('3'), meaning that this is always relatively popular.

This form in itself gives us a great deal of information, but we can also use it as a basis for further processing, eg the calculation of average scores.

E What is the existing level of participation in the school?

	Score 1	Total	Score 2	Total	Score 3	Total	Score 4	Total	Score 5	Total
E1										
E2										
E3										
E4										
E5										
E6										
E7										
E8										
E9										
E10										
E11										
E12										

Calculating average scores

Using the following form you can calculate the average score for each item. Each tally sheet covering a separately processed group of pupils or teachers is accompanied by a form for calculating the average score.

For each item, transfer the totals given in the TOTAL columns of the 'tally and total sheet' into the columns marked T (standing for total).

Then multiply these T figures by the possible value each score has (1, 2, 3, 4 or 5) and note the result in the columns marked P (standing for product).

The average for a specific item is the sum of the products divided by the total number of times that a score is given for that item. Usually that total corresponds to the number of completed forms, but there are cases in which someone did not fill in something. This means that the best way of ensuring that the average is accurate is to divide by the sum of the T totals. Note: for the items in the last block (E), the meaning of SCORE 1 is different. In this case, SCORE 1 indicates the complete absence of something, and so is not a 'valuation' like the other scores. This means that it cannot be used to calculate the average. As a result, the averages for E must be interpreted

differently and will typically be higher than for the other blocks. In this case a computer spreadsheet program can make the numerical work a lot easier.

Questionnaire template 3: Calculating average scores

T	P	T	P	T	P	T	P	T	P	Average
Score 1 total	×1=	Score 2 total	×2=	Score 3 total	×3=	Score 4 total	×4=	Score 5 total	×5=	$\frac{P+P+P+P+P}{T+T+T+T+T}$

Suggestions for a discussion about the results

Without knowing the exact situation on the ground, it is impossible to make specific suggestions on paper and from a distance regarding a good discussion about the results. This means that our suggestions below can be no more than general guidelines.

- 1 Make it clear to all participants in the discussion that statements in both the questionnaire and the discussion meeting are just opinions, views and assessments and nobody – even the majority – can claim that their view is ‘the truth’. The focus is on hearing from others why they chose a specific statement.
- 2 Give everyone the time (and the appropriate forms) to get to grips with the figures and results independently – no easy task. Ask everyone to make a list for themselves of up to five key conclusions, trends or findings they think they can deduce from the data. A discussion may take the form of someone presenting one of their conclusions and others reacting to it.
- 3 Examine the results of the survey in general and then in the specifics. In other words, first look at the collated figures on the sheet with the calculations of averages and then try to establish a trend by examining the more detailed scores on the tally sheets.
- 4 First look for similarities and overall trends. In other words, first seek out those subjects on which there is a certain level of agreement. Only then try to find contrasts and contradictions in the figures.
- 5 Try to formulate in one sentence every conclusion drawn by the group and record them in the form of minutes.
- 6 In many cases, an example will be provided to illustrate something. That is good, but then concentrate on the response the participants would consider preferable, better, more appropriate, etc. By brainstorming about alternatives, the group can work out their desired school culture. Be rigorous in assessing whether the alternative in question would also be feasible.

Appendix 4

The participation spiral

The 'participation spiral' is a heuristic model informing the planning and promotion of democratic participation opportunities for children and young people, both in schools and in the wider community. Based on empirical research, the model was created by the Bertelsmann Foundation. (Meinhold-Henschel & Schack, 2008).

Points 1, 2 and 3 represent factors affecting the successful take-up of participation opportunities that are most open to direct influence:

- 1 information about opportunities to participate;
- 2 participative competency;
- 3 positive experience of participation.

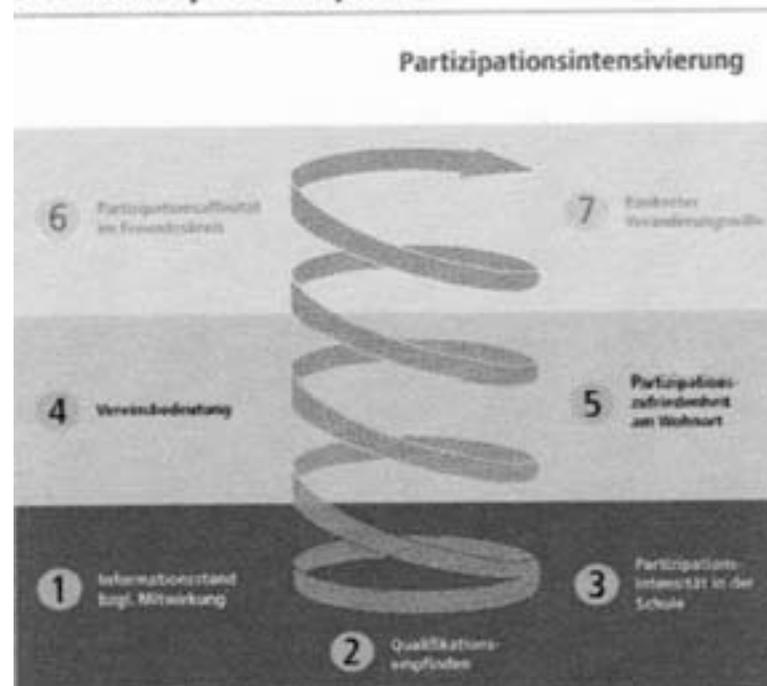
Points 4 and 5 represent factors affecting the successful take-up of participation opportunities that are less open to direct influence:

- 4 effectiveness of civil and voluntary associations;
- 5 satisfaction with one's own level of participation locally.

Points 6 and 7 represent factors affecting the successful take-up of participation opportunities that are not normally open to direct influence:

- 6 attitude towards participation among one's peers;
- 7 wish to make a difference.

Die Partizipationsspirale



Appendix 5

List of ILDE members

Bertelsmann Stiftung

Public Relations Department
 Carl-Bertelsmann-Str 256
 33311 Gütersloh, Germany
 Tel +49 5241 81 81147
www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de

Carnegie United Kingdom Trust

Comely Park House, 80 New Row
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 Tel +44 138 372 1445
www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk

Council of Europe

Avenue de l'Europe
 67075 Strasbourg Cedex
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www.coe.int

Fondation Bernheim

Place de l'Albertine 2
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www.fondationbernheim.be

Fondazione per la Scuola della Compagnia di San Paolo

Corso Ferrucci, 3, 10138 Turin, Italy
 Tel +39 11 430 6511
www.fondazione scuola.it

Education Reform Initiative

Sabancı University Bankalar Caddesi No 2, Kat 5
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www.erg.sabanciuniv.edu

Freudenberg Stiftung

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King Baudouin Foundation

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Network of European Foundations (NEF)

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Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust

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 Tel +44 1904 62 7810
www.jrct.org.uk

**For more information about the work of ILDE
 or other NEF programmes, please contact:
info@nefic.org**

Appendix 6

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