

Abstracts from papers presented during the seminar Young people and active European Citizenship

Panel 1: Constructing European Citizenship: Meanings and Understandings
Chaired by Miguel Ángel García López

Abstracts of presentations:

A) “European Citizenship between sentiments and universal rights”, based on the input by Jan Dobbernack, Free University Berlin, Germany

A statement attributed to Jacques Delors says: “no one falls in love with a common market”. But, do we require a sentiment such as *love* in order to further civic commitment, active participation and an internalisation of European values beyond the common market? Isn't love a stance reserved for outdated notions of how individuals relate to their overarching polity, i.e. patriotic feeling towards the nation-state?

The debate on potential virtues and dangers of patriotic sentiments can inform the approach towards the concept of European citizenship in civic education.

The benefit of non-exclusive forms of patriotism consists in their potential for rendering civic values tangible to young people and conveying a sense of their immediacy by drawing on principles, (hi)stories and role models present in the respective national contexts. But there is the danger of grounding citizenship education and active participation in particular - non-universal values, such as human rights, argues Dobbernack.

Contemporary approaches towards citizenship are situated in between, on the one side, notions of universal values and, on the opposite, the reference to shared identities predominantly conceived of through cultural affinities.

This contrast may be unhelpful if we consider it a dichotomy of mutually exclusive viewpoints. However, it becomes crucial in terms of creating awareness for the in-betweens of European Citizenship Education. Citizenship Education faces the choice of appealing to issues of identity or issues of universal rights - or, above all, how to appeal to both of them at the same time. Consequently, the intricate task of non-formal Citizenship education is to find ways that take the best of both worlds in order to provide points of passionate identification situated within ideas of universal human rights.

B) Theorisations of European Identity: The case of Eastern European countries, based on the input by Oana Balescu, University of Bucharest, Romania

The issue of European integration arose in Central European countries after the collapse of the communism in early nineties. The discussion about the European integration emerged in relation to the practical realities such as the formal integration criteria. But, besides this, there were other issues to be tackled, issues that previously could not be touched, such as: identity, citizenship, or nationality.

During the European integration process, many scholars enquired about ways how the former communist countries would find their place in the already started European project.

European Identity in Relation to National Identity

As a group of researchers argued in their research (Antonia M. Ruiz Jimenez, Jaroslaw Josef Gorniak, Ankica Kotic, Paszkal Kiss, Maren Kandulla, 2004) national and European identity are compatible because they are considered as identities of a different level, bearing different meanings. The fact that Europeans continue to feel, primarily the national identities might facilitate the fusion of the type of European identity that is being currently resisted by some member states, as it expresses their concerns that their sovereignty and the loyalty of their citizens may be eroded.

National Identities in Central and Eastern Europe and their Views about European Integration

The evidence presented in the Martin Brusis' book suggests that in Estonia, Hungary and Slovenia, integration is primarily seen as a policy toolkit to overcome socio-economic backwardness. Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia, advocates of EU integration, view it as a strategy to promote civic and modern identities. This emphasis can be related to the rather partisan role of the European identity and EU integration in some of these countries. However, considering how weak this correlation is, the strong Communist past provides another easy explanation why the integration in the Baltic States and Slovenia has been understood as a form of protection against their hegemonic neighbour.

While the EU integration is usually perceived as a transfer of sovereignty and rights from the national to supranational level, the contrary perspective is also plausible: the transfer of decision-making rights to the EU could reinforce statehood; the integration could represent a strategic move towards the re-establishment and enhancement of national sovereignty. This specific function of the EU integration has been noticed only in relation to Estonia.

In Eastern European countries, there are also Euro-sceptic tendencies. The most prominent form of Euro-scepticism argues that European Union jeopardizes the cultural distinctiveness of "our" nation, the regained national sovereignty and dignity. A second form of Euro-scepticism ponders that Brussels represents an "étatist-bureaucratic form" that harms dynamic reforms and liberalisation promoted in the transition countries. The third form of Euro-scepticism views the economic integration with Western Europe, as a sell out of national assets and hard-earned values, which sacrifice the country to the forces of global capitalism.

Today evidence shows us that the Euroscepticism was weaker than the wish of belonging to the European family because EEC countries are already members of the European Union. No matter what the foreseen pluses or minuses of the integration were and are the will to belong to the EU, to finally feel Europeans and treated like such was stronger. The hidden wish of the EEC countries to feel Europeans has finally come out and found its inner voice.

How to support the emerging European identities in the Eastern European Countries?

If the EU wants to promote European identity strengthening in the newly accessed, as well as countries in the process of accession, it should involve them on the basis of equality, and consider them as partners. This would enable them to perceive the problems of the EU as their own, and internalise them.

The EU should attempt complementing the accession by focusing on the public debates through a membership-guided perspective.

The EEC countries need to feel as they are full members of the EU and this can be done only by involving them in the process of leading the European Union. Otherwise, not being involved in this process would mean for these countries they were favoured to join the EU. The EEC should feel in this process they are fully members of the EU, not guests that were invited and the challenges/problems that might occur in this leading process will be internalised by them and treated like their internal problems.

A suitable political strategy could facilitate an open debate on the final result of the EU and European integration, framing it as an open constitutional process that extends to all European countries. This would encourage the Eastern European countries to reflect on their role as a member of the EU and to redefine their national interests, a debate that has been clearly avoided.

The Europeanisation only at the political and legislative levels, under the pressure of the economic factors, would necessarily lead to transformation of societies as well as the essence of their institutional forms. Currently, it is believed that cultural integration will come out finally as a consequence of the unification introduced by mass communication. The circulation of economic goods represents at the same time the flow of symbolic goods that may lead to the standardisation of behaviours. This type of integration has its negative consequences of homogenising culture and excluding modern as well as traditional values.

Re-organising Europe needs to start by taking into consideration that Europe is made of nations. Central and Eastern European countries that dealt with profound transformations in their recent history are more sensitive to the tensions of the economic re-organisation. In this way, under the pressure of adapting to the Western way of life, Central and Eastern European countries are more inclined to nationalist views.

The purpose is not to debate the dismantling of national states and national identities in Europe but rather their redefinition as a response to the challenges these countries need to confront. Finally, paraphrasing a well-known aphorism, “Unified Europe will be democratic, multi-identity, will accept collective memories, or otherwise it will not be at all”.

C) No Myth - No Love? European Identity beyond Emotions, based on the input by Tamara Ehs, University of Vienna, Austria

What holds Europe together? What can one define as a common identity, as a common spirit that constitutes a feeling of unity and therefore a feeling of citizenship that activates engagement with politics? Jacques Delors’ well-known remark “You can’t fall in love with the single market” is still today an often-cited reference to the European longing for identity that transcends the common market. It was and is said (e.g. by R. Aron) that Europe has no narrative, no substance and therefore no lasting feeling of solidarity. Compared to the nation-state Europe is a secular project without any (foundation) myth, a rational construct without an emotional fundament.

Today, as the regulative power of the European Union questions the classic nation-state national identities rekindle. All over Europe we experience nationalist movements which operate with slogans calling the EU a threat to their freedom and self-determination as a nation. To understand this phenomenon we have to bear in mind that every European nation was born out of a struggle for freedom, the self-assertion against “alien power”. Each of these often bloody struggles for freedom and independence created a myth that became part of the nation’s history, of its “collective memory” (A. Assmann). The integration of heterogeneous individuals as a homogeneous nation was mostly built upon

such a foundation myth. Every European nation has its “lieux de mémoires” (P. Nora) and its national heroes that can be found on banknotes, in schoolbooks, songs etc.

Who is the European hero? Do we as Europeans identify with Schuman as Hungarians do with Kossuth? Actually, there is no practicable European myth! But that can be great as it gives a chance to a totally new form of citizenship and political engagement. An utilitarian, cognitive approach, an “amour de tête” for Europe, a kind of cerebral love is less spectacular than the emotional, affective approach but therefore less bellicose, more diversity-oriented and - most important in this context - does not come into conflict with national myths as it addresses another level of affiliation.

Whereas the national citizenship is based on blood and soil (*ius sanguinis*, *ius solis*) and naturalised citizens hardly ever are regarded “true” citizens by the natives, the cognitive approach to European citizenship can be open for all (migrants, asylum seekers etc.) that are willing to build a united, peaceful Europe.

Concerning the promotion of active European citizenship for all those living in Europe we have to stress that “Europe” does not challenge the national identity and does not want to replace the love for your country, but “Europe” is a way of thinking and acting. Acting as a European means seeking the compromise, promoting solidarity and democracy, acting for participation in a project that has no mythological heroes but rational institutions to build upon: Europe is not an *old* collective memory but a *young* collective work in progress.

Panel 2: To be or not to be? - Citizens or non-citizens?

Chaired by Rui Gomes

Abstracts of presentations:

A) “The approach of the Netherlands towards immigrants: cause of ‘exclusion?’”, based on the input by Syuzanna Vasilyan, Ghent University, Belgium

The Netherlands have been known to be the most open and tolerant European country where immigrants of different ethnic groups, religious confession and sexual orientation could find a safe haven from persecution. However, over the past years, this image has been shattered, due to various problems. As a result, the Dutch government started to reconsider the phenomenon of migration and is adopting new laws.

It is assumed that the cause of ‘exclusion’ or perception of exclusion stems from the approach the Netherlands has been employing towards immigrants. To manifest respect for difference, the Dutch government supported building places of worship, providing education in native languages, and so on. Despite the governmental subsidies for satisfying the demands of the immigrants, their attitude and their treatment as different may have generated a feeling of discrimination. Although the Dutch government has offered free language courses and lower level vocational training in order to facilitate the integration of the immigrants in the Dutch society, the former have managed to cling to their communities by remaining alienated. Another factor, which could have led to social exclusion, is the Dutch social welfare system, which ensures that the unemployment benefits are only a little lower than the minimum salary, which an immigrant with low education (while most of the immigrants in the Netherlands have low education) would most probably receive. Thus, there is no social stimulus for the immigrant to look for a job and, by doing so, finds oneself in a Dutch setting, which would not help him/her integrate with the society. In this way, the positive actions implemented by the Dutch government

have become replete with negative consequences, which have inhibited the freedom reigning in the Netherlands.

This development has made both the Dutch citizens and the academics to ponder whether the so-much-admired Dutch system would prove to be a fiasco in the 21st century. It is to be seen whether the new policies will solve the 'crisis' and put the country back in its orbit. If successful, it could be recommended to other EU member-states or even the European Commission to replicate the Dutch policies.

B) The effect of citizenship status on political action participation of immigrant youth living in Germany, based on the input by Meral Gezici Yalcin, Philipps-Universität Marburg, Germany

A fundamental aspect of the boundary between a native ethnic majority and an immigrant minority concerns citizenship. Because citizenship governs access to fundamental rights in a society and confers not only political rights but also greater freedom to leave and re-enter a society along with protection from deportation. More subtly, it affects the sense of membership and the willingness to make claims asserting rights. In terms of bright versus blurred boundaries, Germany has until recently exemplified the former in the domain of citizenship. The recent fundamental changes created *provisional* birthright citizenship for all second-generation children born after 1999.

One important factor that may affect active political participation is the citizenship status of immigrants in host countries: enjoying the basic rights as citizens or being excluded from the socio-political system of the host society as non-citizens. Since the social psychological literature has shown that under certain circumstances disadvantaged groups act to protect group's interests when they share a common identity and hence a sense of common fate with this group. When this happens, active political participation by immigrants can be expected. In this respect, issues of identity represent a crucial factor in determining responses to disadvantaged. Do they identify with their ethnic background (sending country) or with the "natives" (receiving country) or with immigrant groups? What is the role of in-group identification in relation to their participation in political action?

Two studies were presented. The first study involved 18-25 year olds of which 845 were Italians, 822 Greeks and 825 were Turkish youth immigrants. The second study on the other hand, consisted only of immigrants of Turkish background aged between the ages of 18 and 28. The results of those studies were discussed in relation to the assumptions of social identity theory. These discussions lead to the following conclusions:

- Even without formal citizenship status, immigrants are incorporated into various legal and organizational structures of Germany.
- However, the organizational life of immigrants is fragmented not only by nationality (Greeks, Italians, Turks, and Kurds *etc.*), but also by political stances (let-wingers, nationalists, religious fundamentalists).
- Although there is a high level of organizational activity among immigrants, it does not have a centralized and representative character.
- Most of the organizations are very locally grounded; they are not even nationwide, not internationally organized.
- Nonetheless, in the last decade, immigrant groups have started to orient themselves toward their life in Europe, and the organizations established since then reflect this orientation.

C) The culture of Islam and the concept of European Citizenship: antagonism and compatibility, based on the input by Emin Amrullayev, Qafqaz University, Baku, Azerbaijan

The impact of modern western cultures on Islamic societies has created an interesting debate regarding the compatibility of democracy and secularization with Islamic values. The rise of political Islam in the 1970s has intensified this debate leading it towards new perspectives regarding the compatibility of Islam with issues such as development, citizenship, identity, democracy and globalization. Western Academic discourse about the relationship between Islam and modernity revolves around the distinction between essentialist and reductionist approaches. While Orientalists (or essentialists) claim that the essential background of Islam opposes modernization, secularisation and democracy, reductionists argue that Islam does not represent a significant factor in preventing the development of secularisation.

The process of European Integration has led to the establishment of secular societies in predominantly Muslim populated countries of Europe by enhancing national identities. Moreover, the secular political system in Europe has a strict separation of the religion from the state and furthermore relies on secular phenomena such as democracy, citizenship, equality, positive rights etc. However, considering that Islam includes only the existence of religious identity (the concept of “ummat”) denying national identities, and emphasizes the faith as a crucial element of life and after life period, the deterioration of this main factor is understood as the ruin of the entire system. Examining the level of secularization of the Islamic societies and the political implications of secularization process (i.e. national identities, separation of the state from religion, “religious disinvolvement” etc) in these countries play an important role in the European Integration process.

In what ways therefore, is the European Citizenship concept compatible with Islamic values?

Their compatibility can be achieved by specific youth policies addressing education and cultural issues, including education for diversity, active citizenship, intercultural learning and many other issues that relate to both concepts. To achieve the integrity of those living in Europe as well as the inclusion of Muslim population of Europe the concept of Active European Citizenship can be the best policy option to be promoted at different levels of youth work.

International and national youth organizations could more effectively engage and address the needs of the society so as to establish conditions that might eventually facilitate contact and interaction between young people of European community and Muslim societies. In this direction some issues would be particularly interesting to tackle: the democratic development within the societies with predominant Islamic influence, the development of civil society within the Muslim communities, the creation of information and communication linkages between two communities and the prevention of Islamophobia.

Panel 3: Young people and participation in civic life

Chaired by Ditta Dolejšiová

Abstracts of presentations:

A) “Participation of young people in civic life: the role of sense of community”, based on the input by Elvira Cicognani, University of Bologna, Italy

This paper addresses the role of some psycho-social variables affecting young people participation in civic life. Specifically, moving from theoretical perspectives within

Community Psychology, it focuses on the role of social relationships within the community and the sense of community. The sense of community is characterised by dimensions of membership (the feeling of being part of a community), influence (the opportunity of individuals to participate to community life, giving their own contribution in a reciprocal relationship); integration and fulfilment of needs (the benefits that people derive from their membership to a community) and shared emotional connection (sharing of a common history, significant events and the quality of social ties). Some authors consider a sense of community as a catalyst for social involvement and participation among adults. The relation between Sense of Community and the different forms that participation can take during adolescence is a relatively understudied topic. Da Silva et al. (2004) found that community attachment plays a role, even if smaller compared to the role of peers' pressure and attachment, by adopting behaviours that reflect civic responsibility.

In this context, social participation is conceptualized in a broad sense including political participation, but also voluntary activities, participation to social, cultural, recreational events and activities. These are generally pursued within formal groups. Research evidence confirms the positive relationships between the different forms of social participation, and the continuity between civic involvement during adolescence, and political participation during adulthood.

Despite the different forms that active participation can assume, it is generally considered to have positive effects on an individuals' well being, and to produce positive outcomes. For our purposes, social well-being has been conceptualized, following recent perspectives on "positive youth development", to include dimensions like social integration, social contribution, social acceptance, social coherence and social realization (cf. Keyes, 1998; 2005).

The discussion was partly based on research data collected during the last five years (Project of "Relevant National Interest", sponsored by the Italian Ministry of University and Scientific Research), on samples of Italian adolescents and young adults (university students) and on comparative samples of young adults from the USA and Iran (Albanesi, Cicognani, Zani).

Results confirm the important role of social ties within the community, and sense of community in increasing social participation also during adolescence. However, cross-national comparisons confirm the role of social participation in enhancing social well-being only among Italian participants (not among USA and Iranian students). It considered as well the implications of results for interventions aimed at increasing youngsters' involvement in civic life (e.g. by strengthening sense of community).

B).....“Engagement in political action, survey results”, based on the input by Bram van Houtte, Free University of Brussels, Belgium

“The decline of traditional forms of political action is an indicator for the rise of political apathy”- the validity of this statement has been questioned by stating that young people do behave politically, but in different ways. Through new networks such as the Internet and life-style politics, young people find new ways to get involved and participate in social and civic life. Signing petitions, consuming ethically, boycotting products and donating to charity are all activities, part of the whole range of civil behaviour, aimed at directly or indirectly influencing the government and its policy, but are traditionally not viewed as political. These alternative forms of political participation are assumed to diminish the democratic deficit, and as such bring politics closer to the citizen.

But do these new forms of political action really broaden the basis of political activity? Do they succeed in bridging the gap between the political field and the citizen? Do alternative forms of political action attract people who are excluded to some extent from the political system, such as young people, the women and the lower educated? Or do they mainly belong to the cultural repertoire of an audience that is already politically interested. Most research on this topic has been qualitative. The quantitative studies so far were limited to student populations mainly. This presentation was based on the results of the first wave of the Flemish Youth Survey organized by the Youth Research Platform. It is a representative cross-sectional survey studying the living conditions; the convictions and behaviours of young people in Flanders aged 14 to 25. The survey asked some questions regarding alternative forms of political participation such as consulting political websites, participating in advisory councils, signing petitions, ethical consuming, boycotting products, striking, manifesting, talking about politics with friends, financial support to charity etc. The survey also used more traditional indicators of political participation, like political interest and voting intention. Finally, the patterns in these different forms of political action were explored.

The analysis of the results showed that:

- Men tend to be more conventional or not politically engaged.
- Woman favour more alternative political expressions.
- Different forms of politics do not replace traditional ways, but reinforce them.
- Alternative political action can emancipate => to become politically engaged, even if only temporary.
- With age most people get more interested in politics.

C) “Limited access to active citizenship: the case of young LGBT people”, based on the input by Judit Takacs, the Institute of Sociology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Hungary

LGBT people as social minority group members can suffer from various forms of socio-economic and cultural injustice, but their exclusion tends to follow mostly from lack of recognition of their identity as a lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender person. This lack of social recognition has an effect on the capacity of LGBT people to fully access and enjoy their rights as citizens.

Many models of citizenship introduced in the 1990s - such as feminist citizenship, sexual citizenship, and intimate citizenship - have emphasised the need to broaden the scope of modern citizenship in order to allow for the full participation of social groups, such LGBT people, who are deprived of full community membership.

Proponents of *sexual citizenship* and *intimate citizenship* have explored the genders, sexualities and bodies of citizens that “matter in politics”. They have drawn attention to forms of social exclusion that LGBT people can experience in relation to, for example, free expression, bodily autonomy and institutional inclusion, and have pointed to the necessity of challenging the heterosexist assumptions that govern most societies.

Political scientists have emphasized the benefits for the whole society of working towards this goal of inclusion of marginalised groups like LGBT people, arguing that, while exclusion undermines promises of equal opportunity and political equality implied in democratic commitments, more inclusion of and influence for currently under-represented social groups can help a society confront and find some remedies for structural social inequality.

As young people and LGBT people, LGBT youth often become victims of multidimensional mechanisms of social exclusion and multiple forms of discrimination on the basis of age and sexual orientation. These overlapping aspects of vulnerability imply that European LGBT youth can be socially excluded as a result of their low incomes, their unemployment, their poor education, health, and housing conditions, their gender, religion, ethnic origin, as well as their inability to realise their autonomy and citizenship rights because of their LGBT status.

The research focused on barriers preventing LGBT youth from accessing active citizenship. From the individual responses reflecting real life experiences of young LGBT people in 37 European countries similar patterns of social exclusion emerged: families, schools, religious communities, workplaces, and symbolic media environments were shown to be potentially threatening places to grow up and live in/with for young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

D) "The participation of organized civil society interests in the open method of coordination as the new avenue for the EU input legitimacy". based on the input by Kamila Czerwińska, European Volunteer Centre, Brussels, Belgium

In the 2000 the Lisbon strategy established the strategic goals for the European Union and introduced a new tool to achieve them - the Open Method of Coordination (OMC). The OMC was supposed to be complementary to the so-called Community method and already existing instruments.

It is often called the "new mode of governance" or the "soft governance" as it uses mainly the non-obligatory regulations; also it is called the "third way" between the obligatory Community method (supranational governance) and the loose intergovernmental cooperation.

One of the purposes of introducing of OMC to the EU legislation was to strengthen the involvement of the Member States in the policy/decision-making and "mobilise all relevant actors" on the different levels - local, national and European. The new Modes of Governance like OMC were designed to increase the contribution of the civil society in the European governance and therefore enhance the EU legitimacy and contribute itself to this big debate about the legitimate or democratic deficit, the active citizenship and European governance. Has this method had really an impact on the above-mentioned issues? What are the outcomes? How does the OMC work in the youth policy and how does it influence the organised youth interests? In this paper it was argued that, although OMC provides new possibilities to enhance the EU input legitimacy (especially in the employment policy) it does not meet the expectations for a strengthened coordination in all areas of the youth field. In order to develop this hypothesis, firstly, the paper described the legitimate problem and to what extent the OMC provides the possibility of participation of the civil society interests on the different levels of the policy-making process.

Secondly, it examined and evaluated how the OMC works on the European level and in the European youth policy (in the context of Youth Programme) by showing the practise and the desired, ideal policy option.

More specifically, the OMC opens the new possibilities simply by giving the chance to "jump" into the process of policy-making and therefore it has a potential to foster the active citizenship. The youth policy case shows that there must be the clear rules and procedures applied. Moreover, it does not necessarily mean that the legitimacy will be strengthened. The new possibilities provided by this method in the youth field often are not fully exploited by both political institutions and (youth) civil society actors.

There are, however some good heralds and the effort on the improvement of OMC in the youth field should be continued.

Panel 4: Citizenship in (formal and non-formal) educational practice

Chaired by Marta Mędlińska

Abstracts of presentations:

A) “Choice, voice and engagement: an exploration of models, methods which promote active youth citizenship in the new Europe”, based on the input by Terry Barber, University of Dundee, Scotland, UK

This presentation offered a refreshed view on youth citizenship and its potential to liberate new thinking and action in the field of youth work.

The three foundational principles of the Treaty of Rome were *liberty, equality and social justice*. But Accepting the EU as it is (*acquis communautaire*) may need to be revised in the light of unequal access opportunities for young people aspiring to new forms of citizenship.

The contemporary view of citizenship, describes adult rights as a citizen and responsibilities within a framework of community or state membership. This is held together under a system of representative democracy. The classic contemporary analysis by Marshall (1950) argues from a reformist perspective, which suggests that social policy reform can challenge the worst aspects of economic and social inequality. The three core elements of citizenship he describes are: Civil rights, Political rights and Social rights.

The concept of citizenship is contested by many. Willow (1995) has developed an explanatory framework, which draws upon Marshall's three core elements but with a clear focus on participation by young people as the means to real citizenship.

- The political case. The so-called democratic deficit is often highlighted as a major outcome arising out of youth alienation and disenchantment.
- The legal case. This focuses primarily upon the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Willow categorises Legal rights under three headings: participation rights, protection rights and provision rights
- The social case. Young people have real concerns which to a great extent mirror the adult community but also display a greater sense of urgency e.g. bullying, parental arguments, violence etc.

In many adult dominated 'learning' situations young people have been passive consumers receiving the wisdom of their elders. At the root of this domestication is the assumption that young people are in some way deficient, and can be made good by youth work. The liberatory approach is concerned with the development of critical and reflective thinking and understandings about the nature and complexity of the world they live in, creating the opportunity to take action for change. Education in this approach is not assumed to be neutral.

Citizenship is the product of a process - one based on a mutual relationship between the individual and community. The reasons some young people fail to engage with their communities are because they feel these communities have rejected them.

There is a difference between that which is 'citizenlike' and 'citizenship' itself. Being citizenlike implies an altruistic, helping, but more passive approach to social change. Sparks refers to the notion of 'dissident citizenship': the oppositional democratic practices

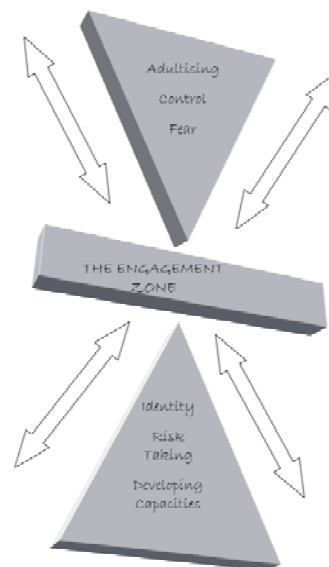
through which dissident citizens constitute alternative public spaces to pursue non-violent protest outside the formal democratic channels.

The ideology of ‘third way’ politics in Europe draws upon a social democratic philosophy of governance, which in many ways is entirely compatible with progressive forms of youth citizenship. Central to the Lisbon strategy (2000) is the notion of a ‘knowledge economy’, based on innovation and new forms of democratic governance. Youth Citizenship is not a luxury but a necessary prerequisite to the achievement of this ideal. A more devolved government, which champions deregulation, decentralisation and the renewal of civil society, is something we all seek, but if this style of government perpetuates a ‘deficit’ model of citizenship based upon a fear of young people then it must be challenged.

The following dialogue model of youth explores short, medium and long-term change in the youth citizenship context.

Top - Down Pressures:

- Adultising... refers to behaviour by adults who do not fully accept young people as they are.
- Control...refers to the much held view that young people must be kept in check at all costs if social order is to remain intact
- Fear.... refers to the socially constructed perception of youth as synonymous with rebellion and deviancy.



Bottom-Up Pressures:

- Identity - Finding Self, Being Self....refers to the need for young people to develop their own identity internally and through social interaction with others in a diverse range of contexts.
- Risk Taking....The possibility of challenging the status quo and the ‘wisdom’ of adults is a fundamental part of being young.
- Developing Capacities...proposes that young people are in a state of transition; their needs, wants and capabilities in a high state of flux.

The Engagement Zone

This is the term for the dynamic context where adults engage and interact with young people and structure meets personal agency. The zone is the place for dialogue, compromise, insight and a focus on possibility.

The promotion of Youth Citizenship in a new Europe is closely allied to a new ‘zeitgeist’ arising out of changing aspirations, ways of communicating and ways of being. The dominating and sometimes paternalistic attitudes of the moral majority are unlikely to be attractive to young Europeans. Restructuring across nation states, patterns of migration, mobility and a fracturing of cultural homogeneity will feed demands for Youth Citizenship as a distinctive movement. The European Youth Pact (2005) has the potential to ground the ideals of the Lisbon strategy and influence youth policy development and ultimately practice in the youth field.

B) Democratic ideals and practices; utopian dreams or what? School effects on political attitudes among upper secondary school students in Sweden, based on the input by Tiina Ekman, Goteborg University, Sweden

Swedish upper secondary school has two main tasks: first, to prepare students for active working life and, second, for active citizenship. This paper deals with upper high school education and political socialisation, by exploring these three questions:

- Why are the students at vocational study programmes so negative in their attitudes towards future political participation?
- What forms of political participation attract young persons of different characters?
- Does the Swedish school manage to prepare all students for active citizenship?

Knowledge of democracy appears to be the main predictor for future voting in all study programmes. There are differences in knowledge among the respective programmes, and besides, knowledge strongly correlates with both deliberative teaching methods and parents' SES. On the contrary, political efficacy between the different programmes does not differ. Gender seems to be a strong factor; young men are very self-confident concerning their political skills, compared to young women.

This is also the main reason why young women are less interested of party activities. Participation in school democracy has positive effects on students' political efficacy, but when controlled for political interest the effect is almost gone. A pre-requisite for a participatory effect seems to be that the person has a general political interest. Deliberative teaching methods on the other side make a positive contribution to students' democratic knowledge in all study programmes, except in male dominated vocational training, even when controlled for powerful alternative explanations.

Knowledge of democracy is a strong indicator for future voting and legal demonstrations. Political efficacy is a strong indicator for party membership, legal demonstrations, voting and blocking traffic.

In conclusion, school should pay more attention to those differences in political competence that are determined by gender, socio-economic background and the choice of study programme.

C) “Strengthening Opportunities for Citizenship Education: Examples from practice”, based on the input by Franziska Süllke, City-Council of Berlin-Neukölln, Germany

This presentation focused on the particular relevance of concrete projects (funded by the EU) for the promotion of *Active European Citizenship*, especially in the youth sector.

The main focus of the work of the City-Council of Berlin-Neukölln is the conception and implementation of projects at the municipality level to promote social inclusion, gender mainstreaming, professional integration and social and economic development. These projects have a direct impact on raising awareness on European issues. People, who take part in these EU funded projects will feel closer to Europe and become more interested in European issues. The pre-condition for *Active European Citizenship* is the interest for Europe and its policies and this interest can only be generated out of an immediate concern of the individual person, argues Franziska Süllke

A range of best practices examples to promote *Active European Citizenship* on a local level were presented during the seminar:

- Funding of micro-projects in order to support local initiatives,
- Participation of active citizens in the allocation process of local subsidies from the EU, project fairs,
- Cultural events,
- Co-operation with and advice for schools and NGOs,
- Inclusion of minorities with a migrant background,

- Raising awareness for Europe at an early stage by working together with children, promoting youth exchange programmes.

From this practice the following lessons were learnt:

- All instruments of citizenship education need to be adapted to the needs and abilities of the target group;
- It is very important that young people are involved of in the development and design of their surroundings;
- All relevant actors in the community have to be involved in the process of citizenship education. The need of awareness rising needs to be for the whole community.