

NECE Conference 2013

The European Union and the Promise of Democracy: What can Citizenship Education and Civil Society contribute?

14 - 16 November 2013
The Hague, the Netherlands

www.nece.eu

Conference Venues:

Oude Zaal, (Tweede Kamer) Binnenhof 1A

The Tweede Kamer and the Oude Zaal are both located in the Binnenhof, which is a famous tourist attraction of The Hague. It is the centre of power in the Netherlands and it is the place where the House of Representatives meets, where the Prime Minister works and where the Ministers hold their weekly consultations.

ProDemos – House for Democracy and the Rule of Law, Hofweg 1-H

ProDemos is an independent national organisation whose aim is to provide citizens with information on the democratic rule of law and encourage them to play an active part in the country's political and judicial system.

A conference organised by



In co-operation with



and the fellowship programme "Shaping Europe – Civic Education in Action" for young Europeans – a co-operation between the bpb and the Robert Bosch Stiftung.

Supported by:

Robert Bosch **Stiftung**



Media Partner: **euro|topics**

Background and aims

The societal and political debate concerning the future shape of the EU is entering a crucial phase. In the recent hectic years of crisis management more and more decisions have been taken by fewer and fewer co-players in the democratic machine called Europe. According to recent surveys, many citizens now take a critical or even hostile stance towards the European Union, as it seems to have nothing to offer them but austerity and social sacrifices. National and populist feelings demonstrate the extent of a great collective uncertainty in European societies. We believe European Citizenship educators are facing at least two major challenges resulting from this state of the European Union.

Firstly, Europe's ongoing economic crisis has engendered a crisis of confidence in the European project and the costs and benefits of further European integration. Fewer and fewer citizens are prepared to transfer power and competences to 'Europe'. The democratic deficit of the European Union (once hidden by the 'implicit consensus' of European citizens in the early decades of the EU) has now become more and more visible and contributes to the backlash in support for the EU.

Secondly, the economic crisis is dividing Europe and may ultimately lead to the break up of the EU. Centrifugal forces are pulling European public opinion apart, separating the French from the Germans and the Germans from everyone else. The southern nations of Spain, Italy and Greece are becoming ever more estranged as evidenced by their frustration with Brussels, Berlin and the perceived unfairness of the economic system.

This is where the central questions begin that will be the focus of NECE 2013. "Participation Now!" was the motto of NECE 2012 in Córdoba (Spain), which concentrated on dialogue with grassroots movements of the Arab Spring. With an eye to the elections to the European Parliament in May 2014, NECE 2013 will continue to explore the topics of participation and democratisation and focus on the EU's democratic deficit. However, deploring the democratic deficit in the EU is one thing. Citizenship education, on the other hand, must critically examine its European policy campaigns and projects in terms of their coverage and effectiveness. And it should concentrate more on the criticism and doubts of frustrated European citizens. The conference in The Hague will offer opportunities for a critical debate on four levels:

1. Scenarios and outlines for the future of the EU

We will discuss scenarios for the future of the EU with European experts. Key questions will be the following:

- What type of a Europe do we want?
- How do alternative future concepts for the EU look like?
- What economic and political problems need to be overcome?
- What will define a 'European citizen' of the 21st century?
- Will transnational spheres of life and experiences such as new mobility and migration patterns create a 'European identity'? and
- What role can the EU play in a world that will be mainly defined by non-European states and societies in the next 30 years?
- How can dialogues and co-operation with the neighbours in the Mediterranean region, in particular North Africa's transformation states, be organised?

2. European civil society and the 'democratic deficit' of the European Union

Key questions will be the following:

- How can citizenship initiatives and other civil society alliances bring their social and political interests into the political process at the European level?
- What options will arise as a result of the upcoming European Parliament elections in June 2014?
- What should be the next steps on the way to a democratisation of the EU?
- What recommendations and demands are of crucial importance?

3. Role of citizenship education in the European crisis

Key questions will be the following:

- How can citizenship education contribute to the repoliticization of the European debate and illustrate Europe's plurality?
- What are the prerequisites?
- Do we need a common understanding of European citizenship education?
- Can a transnationally active citizenship education work together with civil society initiatives in order to restore confidence in democracy and help to overcome the democratic deficit?
- What role is attached to citizenship education by EU institutions and how are young people in particular prepared for their role as EU citizens?

4. Practical approaches and projects of citizenship education

Key questions will be the following:

- What practical approaches and instruments can be used to broaden the debate surrounding Europe and the crisis and to close the participation gap?
- How can citizenship education across Europe accompany the elections to the European Parliament?
- What role will approaches such as Vote Match as a transnational accompaniment to European election campaigns play?

Opportunities to actively take part will be provided in numerous workshops and forums. At the end of the conference, the participants will draw up a public 'Conference Paper' comprising recommendations on the topic of democratisation and participation in the EU.

Programme

Conference moderation:

Paul de Ruijter & Renate Kenter, de Ruijter Strategy (the Netherlands)*

Thursday, 14 November 2013

Venue: Oude Zaal (Tweede Kamer)

4:00 pm	Registration & Welcome Coffee
5:00 pm	<p>Welcome Addresses</p> <p>Kars Veling, Director of Pro Demos – House for Democracy and the Rule of Law (the Netherlands)</p> <p>Thomas Krüger, President of the Federal Agency for Civic Education (Germany)</p>
5:15 pm	<p>Opening Speech</p> <p>Frans Timmermans, Minister of Foreign Affairs (the Netherlands)</p>

- 5:30 pm **Keynotes**
 “The EU and the promise of democracy – Where do we stand a few months before the European elections?”
- Paul Scheffer**, Publicist (the Netherlands)
Lorenzo Marsili, European Alternatives (Italy)
- 6:15 pm Discussion
- 7:00 pm Reception

Friday, 15 November 2013

Venue: Oude Zaal (Tweede Kamer)

- 9:00 am Entrance at Oude Zaal
- Plenary Session**
From Córdoba to The Hague: Risks and opportunities for NECE and citizenship education in Europe
- Petra Grüne**, Federal Agency for Civic Education (Germany) &
Tatjana Meijvogel-Volk, ProDemos - House for Democracy and the Rule of Law (the Netherlands)
- interviewed by**
Paul de Ruijter & Renate Kenter, de Ruijter Strategy (the Netherlands)*
- 9:30 am **Introduction of the World Café**
- Four different scenarios on the future of the EU will be presented to serve as a frame of reference for the following World Café. Participants are asked to identify most important aspects and topics on the 'democratic deficit' of the EU, the role of citizenship education and practical approaches and projects. These will be summarised and fed into the conference workshops in the afternoon. Three key topics identified as important to discuss in more detail will also be used as a basis for three additional workshops in the afternoon.

Venue: Statenpassage (Tweede Kamer)

- 10:15 am - **World Café: Open dialogue with all participants on the future of**
 12:15 pm **the European Union and the role of citizenship education**

Venue: Oude Zaal (Tweede Kamer)

12:30 pm **Plenary Session
Project-Pitch-Session - Preview**

A quick run-through of the NECE Focus Groups and the Open Forum workshops on Saturday will be performed in the plenary session.

1:00 pm **Summary of the World Café**

1:30 pm Lunch snack

2:45 pm

Change to the conference venue ProDemos – House for Democracy and the Rule of Law

Parallel to the conference programme, a project market of good practice projects on citizenship education is offered on the 3rd floor.

3:00 - 6:30 pm **Parallel workshop sessions on the role of citizenship education in Europe**

After the World Café session, the parallel workshop sessions focus on the role of citizenship education in the European crisis as well as on practical approaches of citizenship education. Brief expert presentations will be the starting point for the debate. The results of the workshop discussions may be included into a “**Conference Paper**”.
There will be no re-run of the parallel workshops.

3rd floor, De Haagse Redactie

Workshop 1: Creating a bottom-up Europe: Can citizenship education interact or cooperate with civil society movements?

3rd floor, Paleis

Workshop 2: European Parliament elections 2014: How to increase voters’ turnout?

3rd floor, Parlement

Workshop 3: Diversity of concepts of citizenship education in Europe: Is there a need for a common understanding?

4th floor, Statenzaal

Workshop 4: The EU as a topic of citizenship education: The democracy deficit and the loss of trust in the European project as new challenges

4th floor, Europa

Workshop 5: Citizenship education on the political agenda of the EU: How much is it valued and what does this mean for the role of citizenship education in the EU?

4th floor, Trêveszaal, Rechtszaal, Senaat

Workshop 6-8: Topics and scenarios of citizenship education for the future of the EU

The topics of these workshops will be developed from the World Café debates and will be defined by the participants on site.

4:30 -
5:00 pm

Coffee break

6:30 pm

Evening at your free disposal

Saturday, 16 November 2013

Venue: ProDemos – House for Democracy and the Rule of Law

Parallel to the conference programme, a project market of good practice projects on citizenship education is offered on the 3rd floor.

9:00 am

Plenary Session: Introduction of the day

9:30 am
- 11.00 am

Parallel sessions: NECE Focus Groups & Open Forum

In this session you can either participate in one of the NECE Focus Groups or alternatively in one of the Open Forum workshops.

1. NECE Focus Groups

4th floor, Statenzaal

Focus Group 1: Hard-to-reach learners and youth

This focus group tries to bring practitioners and academic experts together in order to find out about possible common approaches about HTR learners in European countries. We will present results of a first workshop in October 2013 and discuss a working programme for 2014 and beyond.

Moderation: Benjamin Wunsch-Grafton, Trainer (Austria)*

4th floor, Senaat

Focus Group 2: Participatory Budgeting

Moderation: Roelof Martens, ProDemos - House for Democracy and the Rule of Law (the Netherlands)*

4th floor, Trêveszaal

Focus Group 3: CLEAR: Concept Learning for Empowerment through Analysis and Reflection

The project includes the following dimensions: the development of methods for concept learning, the cooperative development of conceptual knowledge and understanding as well as to initiate a field of research. At the workshop, the conference participants will have the opportunity to get familiar with the participatory and reflective methodology developed in the project, the online learning platform and ongoing learning activities organized by partner institutions in six different countries.

Moderation: Claudia Lenz, The European Wergeland Center (Norway)

4th floor, Europa

Focus Group 4: Exchange between Europe and North Africa

This time the focus group will firstly open a specific discussion on two questions "How can dialogues and cooperation with the neighbours in the Mediterranean region, in particular North Africa's transformation states, be organised" and "What role can the EU play in a world that will be mainly defined by non-European states and societies". Afterwards all participants will discussed key issues for the focus group meeting on 11 December within the framework of the Civic Education Conference Egypt (CECE).

Inputs

Candace Hetchler, El Sadat Association for Social Development & Welfare (Egypt) & **Hatem Hassan**, Theatre director and culture projects manager (Egypt)

Moderation: Magrita Petrikova, MitOst e.V. (Germany)* & **Petra Grüne**, Federal Agency for Civic Education (Germany) & **Markus Lux**, Robert Bosch Stiftung (Germany)

Focus Group 5: Vote Match Europe (non public)

Vote Match is an educational tool. It has the potential to promote European citizenship, to better inform citizens about elections for the European Parliament, teach voters about the programmatic differences between the contesting parties and to increase the voter turn out. By realizing Vote Match in all EU-member states, the Vote Match network will create a platform through which all users can get acquainted to the different opinions on all important European issues in the participating countries. More information at: www.votematch.eu

Moderation: Jochum de Graaf, ProDemos - House for Democracy and the Rule of Law (the Netherlands) & **Pamela Brandt**, Federal Agency for Civic Education (Germany)

2. Open Forums

3rd floor, Parlement

Open Forum 1: Citizenship (education) in young European democracies: Have the dreams come true and what are the outlooks?

Based on good practices the workshop looks back at the developments of almost ten years since the ten, and later two more Central and Eastern European countries joined the EU. Within this timeframe we take a look at the developments in the field of active citizenship, citizens participation and citizenship education - formal and non-formal trends related to the political developments, as well as changing attitudes towards the EU membership. Based on the biggest challenges of today, the workshop strives to outline possible solutions for the future of citizenship education and the democratic deficit within these countries.

Moderation & Presentation: **N.N.**, Alumni of the Fellowship Programme “Shaping Europe - Civic Education in Action”

3rd floor, Paleis

Open Forum 2: How transnational media discourses on the euro crisis affect the thinking of European citizens

Economic crisis, austerity programs, and social tensions have triggered an anti-European atmosphere and put to test solidarity in many countries in Europe. Numerous citizens feel ignored and left out of the decision-making process. How do the European media perceive missing solidarity, unemployment, recession as well as the spread of right-wing populist and anti-European parties? Has the media contributed to indifference towards the European project? Or has the enormous reporting on the euro crisis even led to an enhanced European public sphere? Andreas Bock will try to answer these questions by presenting eurotopics.net - a press review that comprises newspapers and blogs of 30 European countries and cites the most influential and interesting voices.

Moderation & Presentation: **Andreas Bock**, euro I topics (Germany)

3rd floor, De Haagse Redactie

Open Forum 3: A citizen-driven European convention – mapping campaigns and developing synergies

Once again the future political architecture of the European Union is at a crossroads – either more power to bureaucrats and experts or to citizens and parliaments. European political elites are waiting in the wings to call out a new convention to amend current treaties and to integrate the intergovernmental financial policies of the last five years in to the EU's legal frame. Citizens and civil society have to stand up against the idea of a hasty, elitist, non-participatory and intransparent convention and claim their rights to set agenda, the pace and collectively decide among alternative proposals.

Moderation & Presentation: **Martin Wilhelm**, Citizens for Europe (Germany) & **Carsten Berg**, The ECI Campaign (Germany)

4th floor, Rechtszaal

Open Forum 4: An Evening with the Ombudsman

The main goal of the project is to empower rural communities in the EU through knowledge on their rights stated in the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Participants will take part in "Evenings with Ombudsman" - local meetings with theatre forum workshops and open discussions with Ombudsman representatives. The project is performed by five partner organizations - three of them take part in the NECE Initiative: Civic Education Centre at the Masaryk University (Czech Republic), Centre for Citizenship Education (Poland) and University of Ljubljana (Slovenia). More information about the project you can find at www.evening-ombudsman.eu

Moderation & Presentation: **Kacper Nowacki**, Center for Citizenship Education (Poland)

11:00 am	Coffee break
11:30 pm	Presentation & Discussion of the ' Conference Paper '
12:00 pm	Keynote Ylva Tiveus , European Commission (Brussels)*
12:30 pm	Fish Bowl format with conference remarks & discussion <i>A small group of people seated in a circle, having a conversation in full view of a larger group of listeners. One or more chairs are open to "visitors" (i.e., members of the audience) who want to ask questions or make comments.</i> amongst others with Ylva Tiveus , European Commission (Brussels)* Lorenzo Marsili , European Alternatives (Italy) Farewell by the organisers Petra Grüne , Federal Agency for Civic Education (Germany), Tatjana Meijvogel-Volk , ProDemos - House for Democracy and the Rule of Law (the Netherlands) & Manfred Wirtitsch , Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture (Austria)
1:30 pm	Lunch snack
2:30 pm	Optional: Sight seeing tour

**Parallel Workshop Session on 15 November 2013
 (03:00 pm - 4:30 pm & 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm)**

Workshop 1: Creating a bottom-up Europe: Can citizenship education interact or co-operate with civil society movements?

The forms of European initiatives, which call for more direct citizen participation on the EU level and the inclusion of transnational debates in political decision processes, are many and varied and have constantly expanded in the recent years of the EU crisis. It is hoped that the positions formulated here will help to overcome the prevailing democracy deficit and contribute to a bottom-up citizens' Europe. Based on two examples, the workshop will pursue the question of how a European civil society can be strengthened and can help to overcome the crisis. What should be the next steps on the way to a democratisation of the EU? What recommendations and demands are of crucial importance? And finally, how can citizenship initiatives and other civil society alliances integrate their social and political interests into the political process on the European level? The issue of whether citizenship education can work together with civil society initiatives will also be discussed. Can alliances amplify the respective effects and does cooperation thus offer itself up? Are European initiatives the ideal hotbed for critical European citizenship education or should education and action always be thought of as strictly separated from each other?

Presentations

“Citizen’s Pact”

The “Citizen’s Pact” is a three-year long effort to bridge the infamous democratic deficit in Europe and provide bottom-up feedback to the 2014 European elections. Through more than 70 panels, 13 international forums and 2 hearings in the European Parliament, thousands of citizens, networks and organisations from throughout the continent have participated in the bottom-up drafting of a Manifesto presenting specific policy proposals for an alternative Europe.

by **Lorenzo Marsili**, European Alternatives (Italy)

European Citizens’ Initiative (ECI)

The ECI is one of the major innovations of the Treaty of Lisbon, aimed at increasing direct democracy in the European Union. The new democracy instrument enables one million EU citizens, who are nationals of a significant number of Member States, to call directly on the European Commission to bring forward an initiative of interest to them in an area of EU competence. The ECI is for 18 months in place now but has it unfolded already its potential to democratize the EU?

by **Carsten Berg**, The ECI Campaign (Germany)

Introduction & Moderation: **Alicja Pacewicz**, Center for Citizenship Education (Poland)

Rapporteur: **Christine Rose**, Freelancer (Germany)

Workshop 2: European Parliament elections 2014: How to increase voters' turnout?

At the European Parliament elections in 2014, citizens are going to demonstrate by the way they vote and participate, how much trust they (still) have in the future viability of a European democracy. Citizenship education is particularly in demand in this context. In the practice-based workshop new interactive tools of citizenship education will be presented in order to ask: How is citizenship education across Europe accompanying the elections to the European Parliament? Which practical approaches for voter empowerment and citizens' participation does in general exist? What role will tools such as Vote Match Europe as a transnational accompaniment to European election campaigns play? In addition, there will be a discussion on the necessary framework conditions for citizenship education in order to ensure that successful work is done in this area.

Inputs

Elizabeth Drury, Open Society Foundation (UK)*

René Cuperus, Wiardi Beckmann Stichting (the Netherlands)

Project Presentation

“League of Young Voters in Europe/ MyVote2014”

The League of Young Voters in Europe is a politically neutral initiative designed by young people, for young people that aims to inform young people about the upcoming European elections and what issues are at stake for them, but also aims to push political parties and candidates to tackle youth issues during their election campaign and produce youth friendly information. The League exists at European level as well as having national branches that organise local activities in each EU member state.

Jennifer de Nijs, European Youth Forum (Belgium)

Introduction & Moderation: **Petr Cap**, Center for Civic Education (Czech Republic)

Rapporteur: **Anna Samel**, University of Warsaw (Poland)

Workshop 3: Diversity of concepts of citizenship education in Europe: Is there a need for a common understanding?

Citizenship education – education for democratic citizenship – active democratic citizenship: In this workshop focused on theory and scientific disciplines, the diversity of definitions and concepts in Europe will be the subject of a current state-of-the-art discussion. In the process, the question will be pursued of whether common understanding, a common reference framework and common overall concepts are absolutely necessary or counterproductive. And the influence this question has on European Citizenship and the day-to-day practice of citizenship education will also be thought about.

Inputs

Mikael Sundström, Lund University (Sweden)*

Andreas Karsten, <http://www.nonformality.org/> (Germany)*

Introduction & Moderation: **Marinko Banjac & Tomaz Pusnik**, University of Ljubljana (Slovenia)

Rapporteur: **Olinda Martinho Rio**, Ministry of Education and Science (Portugal)

Workshop 4: The EU as a topic of citizenship education: The democracy deficit and the loss of trust in the European project as new challenges

The EU as a topic in classroom teaching and in adult education/non-formal education has occupied a firm place in curricula and seminar programmes for years. In the face of the crisis and the emergence of Eurosceptic or anti-European movements numerous initiatives have also been taken by institutions or individuals, placing the positive aspects in the focus and launching campaigns in favour of the European project. In this situation, citizenship education must ask itself, what effects it has had so far. The workshop is intended to critically take stock of mediation approaches on the topic of the EU. Questions such as: Are we mediating Europe in an excessively abstract way, or how much criticism is permitted anyway during fulfillment of the educational mandate and to which consequences this leads, are going to be discussed in a European comparison.

Input

Andreas Eis, University of Oldenburg (Germany)

Introduction & Moderation: **Ondrej Matejka**, Civic Education Center (Czech Republic)

Rapporteur: **Lukas Pollmann**, YEPs – Young European Professionals (Germany)

Workshop 5: Citizenship education on the political agenda of the EU: How much is it valued and what does this mean for the role of citizenship education in the EU?

The European policy dimension for citizenship education will be discussed in this workshop. Based on consideration of recent citizenship education developments in the EU and their effects on structures and contents of the new generation of EU funding programmes, the following questions are going to be discussed: What goals are hereby pursued? What understanding of citizenship education at the EU level can be discerned behind this? How much support and esteem is citizenship education enjoying from the EU? What does this mean for the role of citizenship education in Europe and for a fundamental understanding of Europe today?

Input by

Helle Becker, Office for “Expertise & Kommunikation für Bildung” (Germany)

Introduction & Moderation: **Tit Neubauer** (Slovenia)*

Rapporteur: **Ondrej Horak**, Civic Education Center (Czech Republic)

Workshop 6-8: Topics and scenarios of citizenship education for the future of the EU

The contents of the workshops No 6 to 8 will arise from the World Café debates and will be defined by the participants on site.

WS 6:

Introduction & Moderation: **Renate Kenter**, de Ruijter Strategy (the Netherlands)*

Rapporteur: **Christiana Maria Mauro** (Hungary)

WS 7:

Introduction & Moderation: **Paul de Ruijter**, de Ruijter Strategy (the Netherlands)*

Rapporteur: **Leticia Diez Sanchez**, FutureLab Europe (Spain)

WS 8:

Introduction & Moderation: **Mona Quaiser**, Dialogue at School (Germany)

Rapporteur: **Tamar Zijstra**, European Alternatives (the Netherlands)