



TOOLKIT

Teaching civic education and democracy

*Tools and methods
for teachers*

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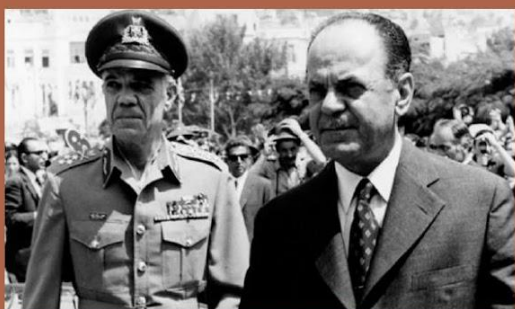


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INTRODUCTION

This tool-kit was created as part of the "Visible Past" project between February and April 2025. The project aims to contribute to the promotion of basic democratic values and to the communication of European politics. A special focus is set on the history of democracy and dictatorships in different European countries and common fundamental European values of democracy and human rights. More information about the project "Visible Past" can be found on the webpage <http://visiblepast.eu/>.

HOW TO USE THE TOOL-KIT

In the first part of the tool-kit you will find some background information on the topic of civic education and teaching democratic values in a European context. In the second part of the tool-kit, we have collected teaching methods that are suitable for working on different topics of civic education with students and young adults (starting from the age of 16 years) in analogue or digital settings. The teaching methods are divided into 5 modules and in different topics. Each module consists of around three teaching units (2.5 to 3 hours) and is dedicated to different relevant topics of civic and democracy education. The methods are intended for the school sector, but have also been tested in practice with youth groups from the extracurricular sector. Of course, you can also adapt the methods according to your needs or according to your specific target group.

In the third part of the handout, we have collected a number of digital teaching tools that can help you to transfer the presented methods into the digital space.

PART 1: Background information on Civic Education

CIVIC EDUCATION IN AUSTRIA: APPROACHES AND UNDERSTANDING OF ROLES

In Austria, civic education is one of several teaching principles, which means that it should be taught across disciplines at all types of schools and in all subjects. It is often taught as a combination of subjects and at vocational schools also as a separate subject. However, civic education only takes up a small part of teacher training in Austria and is often taught by "non-specialist" people. For a long time, the "victim thesis", which is the view that Austria was the first victim of "Hitler's Germany" during the National Socialist era, was formative for civic education but also for the understanding of history in Austria after the Second World War. Of course, the "victim thesis" thesis is historically wrong, but remained a myth in many people's minds and in the public perception of Austria until the mid-1980s. It was not until the 1980s that this picture changed, which was subsequently to have an impact on civic education and history lessons in schools.

Sources:

<https://www.bmbwf.gv.at/Themen/schule/schulpraxis/prinz.html>

<https://www.demokratiezentrum.org/bildung/ressourcen/timelines/der-opfermythos-in-oesterreich-entstehung-und-entwicklung/>

CIVIC EDUCATION IN EUROPE

The situation of civic education in other European countries is very diverse. In Germany, for example, there are important and financially well-positioned public bodies in the form of the federal and state offices that maintain projects and offers for civic education. This circumstance is also due to the fact that Germany, partly due to geopolitical pressure, built up an education system after the Second World War, in which "education for democracy" in the sense of civic education has a great significance. At the European level, the Council of Europe has an important role to play in promoting civic education. At the end of the 1990s, at the meeting of European heads of state and government, there were defined educational goals for the first time that focused on civic education (1997). According to this, "education for democratic citizenship on the basis of the rights and duties of citizens" and the "participation of young people in civic life in society" should be made possible in all the European states. It was also at this time that the term "Education for Democratic Citizenship" (EDC) was used for the first time. As a result, a multi-year action program was adopted to promote the concept of "democratic citizenship".

At the level of the European Union, political civic in the similar concepts of "active citizenship" and "European citizenship" did not receive attention until a few years later. In the meantime, elements of civic education in the concept of "civic competence" are regarded as one of the key competences of the EU and are part of binding education policy regulations.

Sources:

<https://www.bpb.de/shop/zeitschriften/apuz/148214/politische-bildung-in-europa?p=all>

<https://education.ec.europa.eu/news/insightful-issue-paper-on-citizenship-education>

WHAT IS CIVIC EDUCATION AND HOW IS IT LINKED TO THE IDEA OF DEMOCRACY?

There is no exact definition of what is meant by civic education. A didactically useful approach is to get to the topic by defining the term "politics" instead. For most of the target groups the understanding of the word politics is way more relevant for their everyday life. Pedagogically, this definition of politics has proven to be very helpful for the authors of Sapere Aude:

"Politics is the way, how humans do regulate their coexistence."

So logically civic education then means to teach people about the way we do this regulation and which ideas and tools are there to form our coexistence in society.

This definition of politics is deliberately broad and value-neutral. Politics is therefore neither good nor bad, but simply necessary so that we as a society or as a group of humans can decide or argue about how we should or want to live together. So, with civic education, you can address a wide variety of events, social problems or topics.

Another question that follows this, is that of the way in which civic education should be taught and what specifications and quality standards there should be.

In the German-speaking world, the so-called **"Beutelsbach Consensus" (1976)** has established itself as one of the central documents for this, which establishes three basic rules for teaching:

1. Prohibition of indoctrination: It is not allowed to indoctrinate pupils - in the sense of desired opinions and thus prevent him from "gaining an independent judgment".

2. Controversy requirement: "What is controversial in science and politics must also appear controversial in the classroom...."

3. Interest orientation: "Pupils must be put in a position to analyze a political situation and their own interests, as well as to look for ways and means to influence the political situation in their own interests."

Although the text refers to the school context, the three basic rules mentioned above have now also been recognized in extracurricular youth and adult education for many years.

Another important aspect, which is not explicitly mentioned in the rulebook above, but which plays an important role in EDC (European Democratic Citizenship) in many European documents, are aspects of intercultural and human rights education.

Therefore, political education can also be understood as follows:

- Education for democracy
- Commitment to human rights and the protection of minorities
- Participation in society and political participation
- Fostering own judgement, civic maturity and critical thinking
- Promotion of intercultural education
- Media literacy
- Dealing with social diversity
- Understanding the concept of the rule of law
- Intercultural Education

Sources:

https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beutelsbacher_Konsens

<https://www.bpb.de/shop/zeitschriften/apuz/148214/politische-bildung-in-europa/?p=all>

Part 2: Method and tools for practice

MODULE 1: POLITICS AND DEMOCRACY

In this module, we have collected a number of methods and teaching suggestions for the school and extracurricular sector, which deal with various aspects of politics and democracy.

Possible **learning objectives** of this module are:

- Knowledge of the importance of political decisions for your everyday life
- Basic understanding of the term democracy
- Recognizing the connection between democracy and human rights and minority rights
- Reflection on the importance of human rights and minority rights for your everyday life on the basis of concrete examples
- Reflecting different aspects of politics, democracy and participation

METHOD "WHAT IS APOLITICAL?"

- Topics and pedagogical goals: Knowledge of the importance of political decisions for your everyday life

- Time required: 30 to 40 minutes

- Material: Flipchart and pens (alternatively blackboard or whiteboard), moderation cards.

- Instructions (step by step):

- 1) The exercise starts in the plenary (large group). You start it by writing "What is apolitical" on the blackboard or the flipchart.
- 2) The participants are now given the task of brainstorming this question in the plenary session or optionally in small groups. They should search for or name as many things as possible that they think have nothing to do with politics. The things found can be objects (e.g. pen, car, backpack, make-up...) as well as activities (swimming, skiing, listening to music...).
- 3) Now write down all the things found by the participants on the board or the flipchart until you have at least 10 different things written down there.

Tip 1: Perhaps there is already contradiction with some of the terms mentioned by individual participants, who already find cross-connections to politics in the examples mentioned. In this case, ask the participants to save their comments for the next part of the exercise.

- 4) Once the terms have been mentioned by the participants, start the second part of the brainstorming with the following question:

"Are there contradictions regarding the flipchart? Are there things on it, that may have something to do with politics when you look at them closely?"

The participants may now name cross-connections between the things written down on the flipchart and the field of politics. If you find at least 2 cross-connections for one of the terms, you can cross it out. Go on finding connections word by word (term by term).

If the participants have problems finding cross-connections at the beginning, give them tips to bring them on the right track.

Tip 2: This part of the exercise requires some experience on the part of the trainers, so that you can guide the group to the appropriate cross-connections if necessary.

We have collected a number of frequently mentioned terms here. You can practice with these terms in advance. For each of the terms, think in advance about the specific connections to politics and explain them as simply or precisely, so that they are also understandable for your target group:

Work – Sleep – Sports – Party – Smoking – Drink alcohol – Shopping – Food – Drink – Music – Smartphone – Netflix – Family – Friends – School

5) At the end, when you crossed out all or almost all of the terms mentioned, ask the participants why there are so many connections to politics with so many different things and whether anyone can now think of an explanation of the word politics.

Tip 3: A simple explanation of politics can be: "Politics is the way we regulate our coexistence. Because almost everything is regulated politically, we find politics in almost everything. That's why you can say "I'm not interested in politics. But I can't say that politics doesn't affect me."

METHOD "THE ISLAND"

- Topics and pedagogical goals: Getting to know politics and different forms of politics (democracy, dictatorship...), decision-making in a group

- Time required: 30 to 50 minutes

- Material: Flipchart and pens (alternatively blackboard or whiteboard), worksheet "The island"

- Instructions (step by step):

1) The participants should come together in small groups (3-4 people).

2) Then the following short story will be read out to all small group participants in the plenary:

"It's one day before the summer holidays and you're looking forward to nine weeks of vacation! When you wake up the first day, you find a letter in the mail: You have won a competition and you can therefore go take a two-week free vacation in Hawaii! Full of joy you start packing your things. You are supposed to start with the plane on the same day. So, you get on the plane on the way to Hawaii. Since it is already evening, you all fall asleep to arrive rested on the island. After a few hours of sleep - you are just over the middle of the Atlantic - there is severe turbulence and your plane crashes.

When you wake up, you are lying on the beach of a desert island. Next to you are other people (those from your small group) as well as a few things from the plane. Fortunately, no one is injured. You must survive together now, because you don't know when you might be saved."

3) Now output the "The Island" worksheet to the groups. The small groups have the task of putting together a kind of "island constitution" based on the questions on the worksheet (15-20 minutes time).

4) The groups get to present their “island constitutions” at the end.

5) When all presentations are finished a discussion in the plenary on the basis of the following key questions can take place:

- What does this exercise have to do with politics and democracy?
- Do the tasks and problems on the island also exist in real life? (in real politics)
- Who takes on these tasks in real lives (in real politics)?
- How do we come to decisions in politics and how do we deal with people who do not adhere to the agreed rules?
- What works better or worse in real life (in politics) than on an island and why?

WORKSHEET: “THE ISLAND”

Task 1: Your plane has crashed and you land on a desert island. There you are now supposed to survive as a group and think about rules for your life together. Write down these rules and tasks on a piece of paper.

The following rules have to be established:

1. How do we come to common rules?

a) How are decisions made? b) Who makes which decisions?

2. How do we want to live together/what should life on the island look like?

a) What tasks are necessary? b) Who takes on which tasks? c) How is the food used and distributed?

3. What happens if someone does not follow the rules?

Task 2: Apart from you, there are still some things on the island and some other things have also been washed onto the island by the plane. Decide what to do with these things:

Available on the island:

Some fruit trees - A water source on a mountain that is very high - A small forest

Things still usable from the plane:

- A box of Coke (24 pieces) - Three 5-kilo bags of rice (=15 kilos) - Four packs of vegetable seeds - A hardcover bible edition - A CD with classical music

Copyright: This exercise was created according to an idea of the [Austrian Society for Civic Education](#) and was adapted by Sapere Aude

METHOD: BAROMETER "POLITICS, DEMOCRACY AND PARTICIPATION"

- Topics and pedagogical goals: Reflecting different aspects of politics, democracy and participation introduction to the topic

- Time required: 30 to 40 minutes

- Material: Adhesive tape, moderation cards, pens, reading template "Opinion barometer"

- Instructions (step by step):

1) Stick a long strip of tape on the floor. Now write "0 percent" on one moderation card and "100 percent" on a second one. Now place the labeled cards at one end of each adhesive tape. This is how the "opinion barometer" for this exercise is created.

Tip 1: Make sure that the barometer is long enough so that the participants do not have to hustle for the barometer. If you don't have enough space in the room, you can also do the exercise in the hallway or outdoors.

2) Now explain to the participants that you will read out various statements about politics and democracy to them. Each and every one of the participants should start to move quietly around in the room now and after each round and statement as well.

3) You now read out a statement from the "Opinion Barometer Reading Template" one after the other. The participants are asked to position themselves according to their agreement with the statement on the barometer: If they move to "0 percent" on the barometer, it means they do not agree. If someone stands next to "100 percent", then the person completely agrees with the statement read aloud. However, the participants can also position themselves at any other place on the barometer-strip, depending on their approval.

4) After all participants have found their position on the statements, ask individual participants where they stand and why. At this point, also say that you can change your position during the exercise if you hear about other arguments that make you rethink.

Tip 2: For each of the statements from the template, ask different participants (different positions) on the barometer for their statements. In this way, the group hears different points of view and a discussion can arise.

5) Follow the same procedure with 2-3 different statements from the template.

READING TEMPLATE: BAROMETER "POLITICS, DEMOCRACY AND PARTICIPATION"

Possible statements:

- I have the impression that I can make a real change in society.
- If you don't vote, you don't have to complain.
- Those who are not well informed about politics should not be allowed to vote.
- I am satisfied with the politics in my country.
- I am satisfied with the politics in my country when I compare it with other countries.
- The world is a fairer place today than it used to be before.
- You don't have to abide by laws that are unjust.

- If there were more young politicians, more young people would be interested.
- I can imagine going into politics myself.
- At 16, you're still too young to vote.
- At 14, you are still too young to vote.
- At 85, you're already too old to vote.

MODULE 2: HISTORY OF DEMOCRACY AND DICTATORSHIP

In this module, we have collected a number of methods and teaching suggestions for the school sector, which deal with various historical aspects of democratic and authoritarian regimes.

Possible **learning objectives** of this module are:

- Fostering basic knowledge of the history of democracy
- Identify distinguishing features between democracy and dictatorships
- Recognizing and naming warning signs of authoritarian developments
- Dealing with authoritarian language

METHOD "MILESTONES IN THE HISTORY OF DEMOCRACY"

- Topics and pedagogical goals: Fostering basic knowledge about the history of democracy, identifying distinguishing features between democracy and dictatorships

- Time required: 30 to 50 minutes

- Material: Notes, pens, internet access, factsheet "Milestones of Democracy" (Austria)

- Instructions (step by step):

1) Divide the participants into small groups and hand out the factsheet "Milestones of Democracy" (Austria) plus a few blank pieces of paper and pens for every group. The small groups are told to read through the worksheet.

2) Afterwards, the small groups get the following task: They are asked to create "milestones of democracy" for their own country, similar to the factsheet they got. Give the groups enough time (15 to 20 minutes). It is also allowed or desired for the groups to use the smartphone or the Internet.

3) Once all groups are finished, they present their results or milestones in a plenary session.

4) The exercise can be extended with some of the following reflection questions:

- How will the milestones of democracy in your country proceed? What do you think will change for the better in the future?
- Where are there still deficits, what things or developments necessary for democracy have not yet been achieved?
- Is our country more democratic or less democratic today than it used to be 20 to 30 years ago?

Tip 1: Democracy is not a fixed term, but democracies are constantly changing. Whereas in the 1960s or 1970s a country in Europe was considered democratic in which women did not yet have full legal capacity or full suffrage, today this is unthinkable in most countries and would be a sign of strong discrimination.

5) Finally, you can do a short brainstorming session or a mind map with "Characteristics of Democracies" in the plenary.

INFO-SHEET "MILESTONES OF DEMOCRACY IN AUSTRIA"

- 1897:** Women are allowed to attend certain courses at the universities for the first time.
- 1909:** Men are allowed to vote in Austria, regardless of income (= universal suffrage for men)
- 1918:** Women are allowed to vote in Austria, regardless of income (= universal suffrage for women)
- 1948:** Zenzi Hölzl becomes the first woman in Austria to be elected mayor
- 1970:** Vienna's tram company employ a woman as a driver for the first time.
- 1971:** Introduction of free travel for schoolchildren.
- 1971:** Homosexuality is decriminalized.
- 1978:** Opening of the first Austrian women's shelter. There women find protection from violent men.
- 1989:** Children born outside marriage are given equal rights in inheritance law.
- 1989:** Rape and sexual coercion in marriage or in a cohabitation becomes punishable.
- 1989:** Parents are no longer allowed to use violence against their children.
- 1991:** For the first time, Austria has an independent Ministry of Women's Affairs (Ministry of Women's Affairs) and a Minister of Women's Affairs (Johanna Dohnal).
- 1991:** Men are given the opportunity to take parental leave.
- 1993:** The Equal Treatment Act comes into force: Discrimination in working life on the basis of gender, age, religion or sexual orientation is prohibited.
- 1993:** 300,000 people visit the "Sea of Lights" in Vienna. It was the largest demonstration in Austria at the time and was directed as a protest against a referendum that demanded a stop to immigration and fewer rights for "foreigners".
- 1995:** Austria's accession to the European Union: Austrians are given the freedom to live and work in any other EU country.
- 1995:** Men are allowed to complete training as midwives.
- 2005:** Adoption of the Disability Equality Act: People with disabilities must not be discriminated against in daily life. Barrier-free access to public offices, information and services will be facilitated.
- 2011:** Solution to the "town sign dispute": Installation of 164 bilingual town signs for the Slovenian minority in Carinthia.
- 2019:** Homosexual couples are also allowed to marry.
- 2020:** Brigitte Bierlein (independent) becomes Austria's first female chancellor.
- 2022:** Homosexual people are allowed to donate blood.

Sources:

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https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vertrag_von_Maastricht#Unionsb%C3%BCrgerschaft

METHOD "DEMOCRACY CHECK"

- Topics and pedagogical goals: Recognizing the characteristics and different aspects of democracy, testing ideals of democracy and the meaning of minority rights on the basis of concrete examples.

- Time required: 30 to 50 minutes

- Material: Flipchart and pens (alternatively blackboard or whiteboard), worksheet or reading template "Democracy check"

- Instructions (step by step):

1) Announce to the participants that you will soon read out two or three stories on the topic of democracy in the plenary. To get to this topic, you start a short brainstorming in the plenary with the whole group. Write centrally on the board "Democratic is..."

The participants are now asked to name characteristics of an ideal democracy by shouting them out in the plenary session. Write down the characteristics mentioned by the participants.

Tip 1: In any case, make sure that two terms are mentioned in any case: 1. minority protection or human rights and 2. common good (or decisions for the benefit of all). These two terms show important aspects of the concept of democracy and are often forgotten by groups that believe that democracy is above all the rule of the majority.

2) Once the brainstorming is complete, start reading one of the stories from the "Democracy Check" reading template. As soon as you have finished reading the story, the participants are asked to use their thumbs (up, down, or in the middle, intermediate gradations possible) to indicate how democratic the actions of certain people in the story are in one's personal opinions.

3) After each story and after the participants have raised or lowered their thumbs, ask individual people in the group what they think about the story and why they raised or lowered their thumbs.

Tip 2: It is quite normal for the participants to make different assessments of one and the same story and to have different positions here. The stories are also intended to show how difficult it is to come to a political solution sometimes and that often it is not possible to satisfy all needs and demands from all the different groups or people involved.

Tip 3: In none of the cases there is a clear "solution" or answer intended, if the case is clearly democratic or anti-democratic. This decision depends on one's personal understanding of democracy, or on the aspect of democracy that is more important for oneself personally (rule of law, common good, minority rights, majority decisions).

READING TEMPLATE "DEMOCRACY CHECK"

Task: After each of the stories, decide how democratic the actions of certain people were in the story. Thumbs up means very democratic, giving the thumbs down means that you find the procedure totally antidemocratic. Everything in between is also possible.

Story 1: Drug Advisory Service

An advisory center for drug addicts is to be set up near a school in a small town called "Special City". Here, addicts can receive medical and psychological care. Many young people in town do have drug problems. In the entire district, there is still no other facility for young addicts. Advisory centers from the same provider are successful in other cities, and the number of drug addicts there has demonstrably decreased. There are also fewer deaths after drug use. An inquiry among the local neighborhood has shown that the majority of the neighbors are clearly against the advisory center. Therefore, the local council then decides not to set up the advisory center.

Question: How democratic is the decision of the local council?

Possible points of discussion: Dealing with minorities in a city – When is local political participation legitimate? Who is allowed to vote? When do politicians have to make decisions themselves and when can decisions be left directly to the citizens?

Story 2: Homelessness

In a small town called "Special City" housing prices have rapidly increased within the last years. At the same time, the number of homeless people has risen sharply. As a result, a citizens' initiative founded by a private association called "Apartment for All" has been founded. It organizes information events and has recently occupied an empty house that belongs to the city. There the association provides accommodation and food for the homeless people. The association "Apartment for All" is completely financed by donations. The association refuses to pay rent for the occupied house, to the city administration.

Question: How democratic is the behavior of the association "Apartment for All"?

Possible points of discussion: How do you deal with squatting? In which situations is house squatting justified? What role do associations and civil society play in a democracy? When is protest and resistance against laws or the violation of laws allowed?

Story 3: Nuclear power plant

According to local government plans, the first nuclear power plant in the country is to be put into operation in a small town called "Special City". There is massive resistance among the local population and several large demonstrations against the power plant with 1000 of people are organized. But the construction of the power plant begins. Again, there are demonstrations and some demonstrators try to occupy the construction site. While doing so, a female construction worker is injured: She gets hit by a stone thrown by one of the demonstrators. The woman gets seriously injured and is taken to hospital. There she dies.

As a result, the local police, in consultation with the responsible municipal council, prohibits all demonstrations in the immediate vicinity of the power plant until the construction works are finished.

Question: How democratic is the behavior of the municipal council?

Possible points of discussion: How do politicians deal with protests? How is the right to demonstrate structured? When is it okay to ban public demonstrations?

METHOD "AUTHORITARIAN LANGUAGE"

- Topics and pedagogical goals: Dealing with authoritarian language

- Time required: 30 to 50 minutes

- Material: flipchart and pens (alternatively blackboard and chalk), cut-out reading template "populist quotes"

- Instructions (step by step):

1) Divide the participants into small groups (2-4 people). The small groups then receive one or more quotes from the "populist quotes" template. The task of the group is now to answer the following questions for their selected quote:

- Is this statement okay or is it problematic to say something like that in a democratic country?
- If it's problematic, why do you think so?

2) The small groups have about 10 minutes to work on their own quotes.

3) Afterwards, the small groups present their quotes and findings to each other.

4) At the end, you can conclude the exercise with a brainstorming session on the topic of "Characteristics of authoritarian language" (characteristics of populism) in plenary.

Tip 1: In the specialist literature, the following characteristics of authoritarian (populist language) are mentioned regularly.

- Idea of a homogeneous opinion (will of the people): The idea that there is an only one opinion of regarding a certain topic. It is quite normal and also logical that in a society there are different opinions on even very simple questions ("Should you be allowed to smoke in restaurants?"). These different opinions are often denied by populists, or there are ideas that dissent opinions pose a danger.

- Us against the others (good against evil): In authoritarian rhetoric, politics is often described as a fight "good" against "evil" ("us against the others"). People who think differently politically are often referred to as "enemies" or "enemies of the people".

- Dehumanization of certain groups: This logic often continues in the dehumanization of certain social groups (migrants, political opposition, homosexuals, rich or poor people). Certain groups are rhetorically equated with natural disasters ("migrant waves") or with animals or diseases ("rats", "vermin"...).

- Incitement or toleration of violence: In authoritarian rhetoric, politicians often call for or at least tolerate violence. An example of this, from the recent past, is Donald Trump's rhetoric around the riots in the U.S. Capitol on January 6 ("We will go there and I will be with you.... We will stop the theft.").

- Delegitimization of democratic institutions: Democratic institutions are often directly attacked rhetorically or their public value is questioned. These include, for example, creating doubts about election processes, the recognition of other political parties, court decisions or even fundamental civil rights, such as freedom of expression and freedom of the press.

5) You can deepen the exercise further if you wish. One idea would be by letting the participants research new quotes for themselves, which you then discuss together the same way you did before with the ones from the reading template.

Sources:

<https://www.mimikama.org/populismus-und-extremismus/>

<https://www.lpb-bw.de/populismus#c69664>

<https://www.tagesanzeiger.ch/wir-werden-dort-hingehen-und-ich-werde-bei-euch-sein-895584003475>

READING TEMPLATE "AUTHORITARIAN LANGUAGE"

Your task: Read through quotes below. Then discuss the following questions in your group about the quotes:

- Which politician do you think this quote stems from?
- Is the quote okay, or is it problematic to say something like that in a democratic country?
- If it's problematic, why do you think so?

Quote 1: "Of course, we have to depollute this kind of people."

(Peter Bystrom, Member of the German Parliament (AFD) on the Integration Commissioner of the Federal Government, whose family comes from Turkey.)

Quote 2: "We must speak out, that a democracy no longer has to be liberal. It only has to protect Christian freedom."

(Viktor Orban, Prime Minister of Hungary, during a speech at a Hungarian summer university in 2014)

Quote 3: "This country is our country. It is not there for everyone and cannot be there for everyone."

(Milos Zeman, former president of the Czech Republic in 2015 during a Christmas speech about Syrian refugees, whom he recommends to travel home and fight Islamists)

Quote 4: "We are the new Jews."

(Heinz Christian Strache, former politician (FPÖ) and Austrian Vice-Chancellor in 2012 on the treatment of his party, against which there are fierce protests at that time)

Quote 5: "It is not a crime if you beat up a gypsy who steals something. Are you on my side?"

(Matteo Salvini, Italian politician (Lega) and Minister of Infrastructure 2015)

Sources:

<https://correctiv.org/faktencheck/politik/2020/02/05/die-meisten-dieser-zitate-stammen-von-afd-politikern-einige-sind-aber-unbelegt/>

<https://www.diepresse.com/5879182/der-giftige-reiz-der-illiberalen-demokratie>

<https://www.zeit.de/politik/ausland/2015-12/migration-tschechien-praesident-zeman-fluechtlinge>

<https://www.derstandard.at/story/1326504047903/standard-bericht-strache-auf-wkr-ball-wir-sind-die-neuen-juden>

MODULE 3: EUROPE AND EUROPEAN VALUES

In this module we have compiled a series of methods and teaching suggestions for the school and extracurricular sector, which deal with different aspects of the European Union, European politics and the reflection of fundamental European values.

Possible **learning objectives** of this module are:

- Dealing with European history and European politics
- Dealing with events in European history
- Dealing with fundamental European values
- Dealing with different European policy areas

METHOD “EUROPEAN TIME TRAVEL”

- Topics and pedagogical goals: Dealing with European history and European politics

- Time required: 30 to 50 minutes

- Material: Notes, pens, worksheet "European Time Travel", mobile phone or internet access, Info sheet “Milestones for Europe”

- Instructions (step by step):

1) Divide the participants into groups of 2 to 4 people. Each group gets two or more pieces of paper plus pens and a cut-out template "European Time Travel".

Tip 1: Cut the worksheet into 3 parts and output only the first part of questions in the first round, then the second part in the second, etc.

Tip 2: If you want to spend less time on this exercise, you can also output only one or two parts of the worksheet and work on them afterwards.

2) Have the participants answer the questions on the worksheet "European Time Travel" in rounds and give the small groups enough time to work on them in the respective rounds (5 to 15 minutes, depending on the dynamics and group).

3) Once all small groups have completed their worksheets, you can work out key findings in the plenary session using the following guiding questions:

- How have the political challenges in Europe changed over the last few years?
- What can we learn from the past? What challenges has Europe (the EU) successfully mastered and how did it happen?

Tip 3: If the groups find it difficult to write things down, or alternatively as preparation for this exercise, you can hand out the worksheet “Milestones for Europe” in plenary.

WORKSHEET "EUROPEAN TIME TRAVEL"

Task 1: We are now taking a little journey through time. Please answer the following questions:

- What year were your grandparents born? Please write down the years of birth here:
- What has Europe looked like this year(s)?
- What challenges, problems or fears for the future did your grandparents have to deal with in their youth or many other people at that time? Write down the 2 to 3 most important challenges here.
- How have the challenges or fears developed over time? Have there been solutions for this? If so, write them down briefly (you can also do some research on the Internet).

Task 2: Now we travel further in time. Please answer the next questions:

- What year were your parents born? Please write down the years of birth here:
- What has Europe looked like this year(s)?
- What challenges, problems or fears for the future did your grandparents have to deal with in their youth or many other people at that time? Write down the 2 to 3 most important challenges here.
- How have the challenges or fears developed over time? Have there been solutions for this? If so, write them down briefly (you can also do some research on the Internet).

Task 3: Now we come to the last round of our time travel. Please answer the following questions

- Please write down your own years of birth here.
- What challenges, problems or fears for the future do you have to deal with yourself? list the 2 to 3 most important challenges here.
- Make a trip about 10 to 20 years into the future. Please imagine that the problems and challenges you described earlier are suddenly solved. Think about what happened for it, or what the world around you look like in which your fears for the future are solved.

INFORMATION SHEET "MILESTONES FOR EUROPE" (SELECTION)

-1945: Germany surrenders on May 8. In September 1945, the first two atomic bombs are dropped in Japan. 60 to 80 million people lost their lives in the war. This makes the Second World War the war with the greatest number of victims in the history of mankind.

-1946: British Prime Minister Winston Churchill calls for the founding of a United States of Europe.

-1951: The European Coal and Steel Community is founded by Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg in order to jointly regulate this important area for the war economy.

- 1957: "Treaties of Rome": Two new organizations are created in the treaties: The European Economic Community (EEC) is created with the aim of organizing a common market among the member countries. The EURATOM organization is founded for the joint peaceful use of nuclear energy and for joint scientific research into nuclear power.

- 1968:** Abolition of all internal tariffs between the countries of the EEC.
- 1973:** Enlargement of the EEC with the accession of the United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark. The number of member countries increases from six to nine. Norway rejects accession in a referendum.
- **1979:** Members of the European Parliament are directly elected for the first time in June 1979
- **1981:** Greece joins the European Community on January 1, 1981. Since the fall of the military dictatorship and the restoration of democracy in 1974, it fulfills the accession criteria.
- 1986:** In January Spain and Portugal join the European Community. From now on, people talk about the "Europe of the Twelve".
- 1989:** "Fall of the Berlin Wall": Peaceful protests gradually abolish the separation of East and West Germany. The so-called "Iron Curtain", i.e. the strict political separation of Eastern and Western Europe, comes to an end.
- 1992:** Treaty of Maastricht: There are now uniform regulations on EU citizenship, the desire to create a common currency and a common European foreign and security policy.
- 1995:** Finland, Austria and Sweden join the EU. The European Union now comprises 15 members. The "Schengen Agreement" comes into force. Visa controls are abolished and free movement of people within the EU is made possible.
- 2002:** The EURO is introduced as common currency in 12 EU countries
- 2004:** Accession of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Cyprus. The EU now has 25 member states.
- 2007:** Bulgaria and Romania join the EU. The Union now has 27 member states.
- 2010:** "Euro crisis" following the 2008 financial crisis. Aid packages and austerity measures mainly affect countries such as Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal and Spain.
- 2013:** Croatia joins the European Union.
- **2015:** "Asylum crisis" in the EU. Over 2 million migrants arrive in the European Union in 2015 and 2016, significantly more than in previous years.
- **2016:** Brexit vote: In June 2016, the majority of UK citizens (51%) vote to leave the European Union.
- **2020:** The United Kingdom has left the European Union.
- **2022:** Russia attacks Ukraine militarily. Ukraine applies to join the EU a few days after the start of the Russian war of aggression.
- **2023:** Croatia becomes the 20th country to adopt the euro.

Sources:

https://learning-corner.learning.europa.eu/eu-timeline_de#/years/1901
<https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/de/landerinformationen/europa/deutschland/neuigkeiten/article/handschlag-zwischen-francois-mitterrand-und-helmut-kohl-die-kulissen-eines>
<https://www.strasbourg-europe.eu/die-wichtigsten-etappen-des-aufbaus-der-europaeischen-union/>

METHOD "EU-QUIZ"

- Topics and pedagogical objectives: Playful examination of the topic of Europe

- Time required: 10 to 20 minutes

- Material: Red and green cards, Reading Template EU Quiz

Instructions (step by step):

1) Take a quiz with the group on the topic of the European Union in plenary. To do this, divide into teams of 2 or 3 people each. Each team receives a red and a green card.

2) Now read out some statements from the "EU Quiz Template". The groups are asked to guess whether the statement is true (green card) or false (red card). If necessary, you can provide background information on the respective statement.

READING TEMPLATE "EU QUIZ"

Statement: The flag of the EU has 27 stars.

Solution: False.

Explanation: The flag has 12 stars. The number of stars has nothing to do with the number of EU member states. They are supposed to represent European values such as unity, solidarity and harmony, which is why the stars were arranged in a circle.

Sources:

https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/symbols/flag_de

Statement: Austria was the first country in Europe where 16- and 17-year-olds were allowed to vote.

Solution Correct.

Explanation: Since 2008, 16 and 17-year-olds have also been allowed to vote in Austria. This option is otherwise only available for under 18-year-olds in Greece and Malta within the EU. In Greece at the age of 17, in Malta already at the age of 16. In Greece, Belgium and Austria, 16-year-olds are allowed to vote in the elections to the EU Parliament. At the regional level, other countries also have the right to vote partly at the age of 16.

Sources:

https://youth.europa.eu/get-involved/democratic-participation/what-age-should-one-be-able-vote-elections_de

<https://taz.de/Parlamentswahl-in-Griechenland/!5931994/>

https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Griechisches_Parlament#Wahlsystem

Statement: The Vatican cannot join the EU because it is not a democratic state.

Solution: Correct.

Explanation: The Pope rules absolutely in the Vatican, so he can determine all laws alone and execute them. The Vatican is not part of the EU. Although it has its own euro coins, it cannot join the EU because it does not meet the criteria for the rule of law. In the Vatican, citizens have no right to vote. However, democracy and the rule of law are imperative prerequisite for an EU accession ("Copenhagen criteria").

Sources:

<https://osteuropa.lpb-bw.de/kopenhagener-kriterien>

Statement: If I vote invalidly during the EU elections, I harm the other elected parliamentary parties.

Solution: False.

Explanation: Your vote then has a positive effect on voter turnout. However, it has no effect on the final result, because the seats to be allocated are only determined by the valid votes cast. So, the election result remains the same.

Sources:

www.derstandard.at/1242317026211/wenn-waehler-weiss-waehlen

Statement: All EU citizens are allowed to travel through their own country without ID.

Solution: False.

Explanation: As an EU citizen, you are free to travel to and stay in the different EU countries. However, whether you have to carry an ID card with you is decided by the laws of the different EU-countries.

Sources:

https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/travel/entry-exit/eu-citizen/index_de.htm

Statement: The EU Parliament has its seat in Brussels.

Solution: False.

Explanation: The European Parliament has its seat in Strasbourg (France). The approximately 700 members of parliament work there. Other important EU institutions such as the European Council, the EU Commission or the European Court of Justice meet and work in Brussels. That is why Brussels is repeatedly referred to as the EU capital.

Sources:

https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/travel/entry-exit/eu-citizen/index_de.htm

Statement: THE EU employs about 500,000 civil servants.

Solution: False.

Explanation: The European Union employs between 30,000 and 50,000 people. In comparison, this is significantly less than f.e. civil servants in Austria (=150,000 civil servants, 9 million inhabitants). In Austria and many other countries, civil servants also include teachers in public schools, police officers or health workers.

Sources:

<https://www.diepresse.com/592250/mythos-5-wien-hat-mehr-beamte-als-die-eu-in-bruessel>

Statement: Foods containing insects are allowed in the European Union.

Solution: Correct.

Explanation: Currently, 4 insect species are approved as food: mealworms, house crickets, migratory locusts and the so-called buffalo beetle. Food producers, whether they want to sell insects or other new foods in supermarkets and stores, can apply for EU-approval. If the food authorities consider the food to be harmless to health, it will be admitted to the market. If a product contains insects, it must be marked (as of February 2025).

Sources:

https://germany.representation.ec.europa.eu/news/insekten-lebensmitteln-die-fakten-2023-01-19_de
<https://www.ages.at/mensch/ernaehrung-lebensmittel/lebensmittelinformationen/insekten-in-lebensmitteln>

Statement: Brussels is the largest city in the EU.

Solution: False.

Explanation: The largest city in the EU is Berlin with about 3.8 million inhabitants, ahead of Madrid and Rome. Brussels has only about 200,000 inhabitants

Sources:

https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liste_der_gro%C3%B6%C3%9Ften_St%C3%A4dte_der_Europ%C3%A4ischen_Union

Statement: Berlin is the largest city in Europe.

Solution: False.

Explanation: Istanbul has about 15 million inhabitants, with part of the city geographically located on the Asian side of Istanbul. Moscow and London are located exclusively on European soil and have significantly more inhabitants than Berlin.

Sources:

https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liste_der_gro%C3%B6%C3%9Ften_St%C3%A4dte_Europas

Statement: There are 5 official languages in the EU.

Solution: False.

Explanation: There are 24 official languages in the European Union. They offer the citizens of a country the right to contact state authorities in these languages, for example to submit applications, make inquiries or receive documents in this language from the state.

Sources:

https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amtssprachen_der_Europ%C3%A4ischen_Union

Statement: Luxembourg is the only country in the EU where women earn more than men.

Solution: Correct.

Explanation: On average in the EU, the pay gap between women and men narrowed from 16% to 13% between 2015 and 2022. In Luxembourg, women earn an average of 2 percent more than men. In all other countries, women earn less (when working in the same industry and with the same qualifications).

Sources:

<https://www.destatis.de/Europa/DE/Thema/Bevoelkerung-Arbeit-Soziales/Arbeitsmarkt/GenderPayGap.html>

Statement: The EU organizes the European Football Championships every four years.

Solution: False.

Explanation: The European Football Championships are organized by UEFA. UEFA is a not-for-profit association made up of members of the national football associations

Sources:

<https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/UEFA#Geschichte>

METHOD "POSTCARDS FROM EUROPE"

- Topics and pedagogical goals: Dealing with events in European history, reflecting on fundamental European values

- Time required: 30 to 40 minutes

- Material: Mobile phone or internet access or printed pictures "Postcards from Europe", flipchart and pens (or blackboard and chalk or whiteboard), notes and pens, Padlet-Link "Postcards from Europe"

- Instructions (step by step):

1) Divide small groups of 2 to 4 people. The small groups receive pens and papers. On the piece of paper, you tell them to complete the following sentence: "That's what Europe means for me..." The small groups can name one or more things that Europe means to you.

2) Afterwards, the small group should look at a series of printed templates "Postcards from Europe" and reflect together on whether one of the postcards selected symbolizes "typically European" things or values for groups.

Tip 1: You can either print out the postcards for the small groups or present them to the groups digitally.

Tip 2: A digital version of all postcards can be found in the Padlet program via the following link:
<https://padlet.com/sapereaudeat/postcards-from-europa-english-tool-kit-visible-past-txrzvoo1m7xabfd>

3) Now you can collect the results of the small groups in plenary. To do this, let the small groups present their findings. Afterwards, you can create a mind map entitled "European Values" together with the participants, which summarizes their findings.

4) You can extend the exercise by finally giving the small groups the task of looking for their own picture that symbolizes typical European values and share them with the group.

ADDITIONAL PADLET "POSTCARD FROM EUROPE"

Info: Possible pictures for the exercise can be found via the padlet link here:

<https://padlet.com/sapereaudeat/postcards-from-europa-english-tool-kit-visible-past-txrzvoo1m7xabfd>

Note Copyright: Wikimedia and Pixabay (all images).

METHOD "EUROPEAN ISSUES" (PROS AND CONS-DEBATE)

- Topics and pedagogical objectives: Dealing with different European policy areas

- Time required: 30 to 50 minutes

- Material: Papers, pens, template "European issues", Internet access

- Instructions (step by step):

1) Create a pro and con debate on various European policy topics. To do this, divide the group into two or more small groups, depending on the number of participants. Afterwards select one or more decisive questions for the debate from the template "Issues for Europe".

2) The small groups are divided into a "pro" and a "contra" group for each of the Issues. The groups then have about 10 to 20 minutes to find as many arguments as possible for (pro group) or against (contra group) a selected issue. Each arguments needs to be written on an extra piece of paper. The groups can also use the Internet to research the arguments.

3) Then two small groups (one pro and one contra group each on the same issue) start the discussion. All the groups that are not currently in turn observe the discussion as an objective audience. One group (pro or contra) is allowed to start and present one of its arguments. The arguments always be clearly visible to the audience. The second group now has the task of reacting to the argument put forward by finding a counter-argument and then bringing another argument, to which the other group is now supposed to react with a counter-argument etc. etc. The debate comes to an end when both groups have exchanged all arguments.

4) You can conclude the exercise with the following guiding questions:

- Which group objectively had the better arguments?
- Which argument worked best on the pro side and which on the con side?

- What discussion techniques have been used by the groups?
- What could a compromise between the pro and con group look like, (=A political solution that takes into account the different arguments)?

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS FOR DEBATE "EUROPEAN ISSUES"

Issue 1: Should the EU work with authoritarian countries to limit migration to Europe? (Yes/No)

Issue 2: Should there be a common European army? (Yes/No)

Issue 3: Should the principle of unanimity in European decisions be abolished? (Yes/No)

Issue 4: Should the EU permanently ban digital platforms that regularly spread false information and hate online? (Yes/No)

Issue 5: Should the police or intelligence services be allowed to monitor messenger services such as WhatsApp or Telegram in the event of a risk of serious crime? (Yes/No)

Issue 6: Should young people from the age of 16 be allowed to vote in all EU states? (Yes/No)

Issue 7: Should there be a Europe-wide ban on the use of nuclear power? (Yes/No)

Issue 8: Should there be a Europe-wide compulsory military service (civilian service) for young men and women? (Yes/No)

MODULE 4: MEDIA, FAKE NEWS AND CONSPIRACY NARRATIVES

In this module, we have collected a number of methods and teaching suggestions for the school and extracurricular sector, which deal with various elements of the topics of politics and media, fake news and conspiracy narratives.

Possible **learning objectives** of this module are:

- Recognizing the central functioning of different media and information flows
- Dealing with fake news
- Promotion of media literacy
- Examination characteristics of fake news and conspiracy narratives
- Dealing with media and press freedom

METHOD "HISTORICAL FAKE NEWS"

- Topics and pedagogical goals: Dealing with fake news, promoting media literacy

- Time required: 30 to 50 minutes

- Material: Internet access, Printed images from the Padlet "Historical Fake News", Padlet "Resolution of Historical Fake News", Background Information "Historical Fake News"

- Instructions (step by step):

1) Divide the participants into small groups (2 to 4 people). Each group now receives a printed image from the "historical fake news" padlet. The participants are asked to guess how this picture is linked to the issue of fake news. The small groups are allowed to use the Internet for their research.

2) Let the small groups present their results and, if necessary, give the groups assistance and necessary additional information, using the background information "historical fake news".

3) Now bring together the information you have said and do a brainstorming session entitled "Why do people create or spread fake news?". Also refer to the examples of the fotos and stories discussed earlier.

4) Finally, deal with the question of how to detect fake news. You can do this again in the form of a brainstorming session or a mind map.

Tip: In any case, point out different fact-checking websites at this point. Without help, it is often impossible for a single person to detect different fake news.

Link to the padlet "Historical Fake News": <https://padlet.com/sapereaudeat/historical-fake-news-english-tool-kit-visible-past-kq685xpckapb2te5>

Link to the Padlet Solution "Historical Fake News": <https://padlet.com/sapereaudeat/solution-historical-fake-news-tool-kit-visible-past-english-g8oz8et6yhjpk0za>

BACKGROUND INFOS "HISTORICAL FAKE NEWS"

Image 1: Monster (1934)

Background information: For a long time, there has been a rumor that a water monster lives in a Scottish lake (Loch Ness). A famous photo showing an alleged water monster is one of the main reasons that justifies the hype around "Nessie". But the photo is fake: The photo was taken and spread publicly by the well-known British doctor Robert Wilson. Many people believed in the authenticity of the image for years. But in fact, Wilson had told his stepson, a model builder, to build a "mini monster" with a toy submarine as a base before he photographed it. The history of the forgery did not come to light until the 1990s.

Sources:

<https://www.photoscala.de/2007/10/03/wie-das-beruehmteste-nessie-foto-gefaelscht-wurde>

<https://www.welt.de/kmpkt/article246571294/Loch-Ness-Theorie-widerlegt-warum-Nessie-doch-kein-Aal-sein-koennte.html>

Image 2: Moon (1835)

Background information: In the 19th century, there was a great enthusiasm for science in the USA. The American newspaper "The New York Sun" reported in 1835 that the astronomer John Herschel had discovered a new species, the so-called "bat people", through a new type of telescope on the moon. The newspaper illustrated the discovery with the drawings shown. With the "bat people"-story, the circulation of the newspaper then went through the roof and "bat people living on the moon" were on everyone's lips. It was not until days later that the newspaper announced that the story was a fake. This scam got down in fake news history as the "Great Moon Hoax".

Sources:

<https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/der-great-moon-hoax-geburtsstunde-der-fake-news-100.html>

https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Moon_Hoax

Picture 3: President 2 (1865)

Background information: Abraham Lincoln was one of the most important presidents of the United States (1861-1865). His term of office was during the American Civil War. A well-known portrait photo of him was manipulated: A photographer placed Lincoln's head on the body of John Calhoun, another politician at that time. The manipulated photo was published after Lincoln's assassination, also because there were few "presidential" and formal photos of the late President Lincoln at the time.

Sources:

<https://www.pocket-lint.com/de-de/software/news/adobe/140252-30-beruhmte-photoshop-und-bearbeitete-bilder-aus-allen-epochen/>

<https://iconicphotos.wordpress.com/2010/04/24/lincoln-calhoun-composite/>

Picture 4: President 1 (2002)

Background information: This picture shows the then U.S. President George W. Bush Jr. visiting a school, the day 9/11 happened. However, the picture was edited: The president was actually holding the book correctly in his hands. The edited image was often used as evidence to show that the president was not particularly intelligent.

Sources:

<https://www.pocket-lint.com/de-de/software/news/adobe/140252-30-beruhmte-photoshop-und-bearbeitete-bilder-aus-allen-epochen/>
<https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/learning/students/pop/articles/11imag.html>

Picture 5: Flag (1945)

Background information: The picture shows soldiers of the United States of America hoisting a U.S. flag in Japan at the end of World War II. It is intended to symbolize the victory of the United States over war opponents in Japan. However, the photo has been recreated by the photographer. At the time the photo was taken, the U.S.A. had already been there for 3 hours and had already defeated their opponents. However, the photographer felt that the hoisted original flag was too small and had a much larger one erected.

Sources:

<https://www.spiegel.de/fotostrecke/manipulierte-bilder-fotostrecke-107186.html>
https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raising_the_Flag_on_Iwo_Jima

Picture 6: President 3 (2023)

Background information: This picture shows a picture of then-U.S. President Joe Biden. The photo really exists. Biden fell down at an airport in the summer of 2023. With the help of artificial intelligence, however, diaper pants were manipulated into the picture. The manipulated image was widely shared and commented on as supposed evidence of Joe Biden's physical frailty.

Sources:

<https://www.watson.ch/digital/spass/322844798-diese-ki-fotos-haben-uns-2023-schockiert-und-verbluefft-alles-fake>

METHOD "DEVELOPING CONSPIRACY THEORIES"

- Topics and pedagogical goals: Examination characteristics of fake news and conspiracy narratives

- Time required: 30 to 50 minutes

- Material: Notes, pens, blackboard, whiteboard, Reading Template "Conspiracy bingo"

- Instructions (step by step):

1) Start the exercise with a brainstorming session on the topic of "Characteristics of conspiracy theories". Make notes on a whiteboard or the blackboard.

Tip 1: Make sure that at least the following elements are mentioned during the brainstorming session:

- Good and evil: Conspiracy theories divide strongly into good and evil. The bad guys are usually those who supposedly make secret agreements in the background and have very evil intentions (money, do damage to society.).

- Distrust: The distrust of official declarations, state institutions and processes such as political parties, elections, courts, etc... is usually high among people who believe in conspiracy narratives.

- Freedom from facts/insistence on one's own opinion: A factual discussion with people who believe in conspiracy narratives is often difficult or impossible at all. Facts are denied ("it's all manipulated") or you get personally attacked ("you're in cahoots with them").

- No coincidences: People who believe in conspiracy theories often deny the existence of coincidences and suspect a secret plan behind all the small and large events in the world.

- Overlapping with extremism-populism-antisemitic narratives: Conspiracy theories often overlap with populist and extremist ideologies. Those narratives all divide the world and other people into a good-evil- or friend-foe schemes. Very often there are also elements of antisemitism in conspiracy theories. Many conspiracy theories are based on a supposed "Jewish world conspiracy" that must be fought.

Tip 2: The term "conspiracy theories" has recently been criticized in literature because the term "theory" actually comes from science, where logic and falsifiability of statements play an elementary role. Therefore, there has been more and more talk of "conspiracy narrative", rather than "conspiracy theories".

2) Now divide the participants into pairs or small groups. Each group needs pieces of paper and pens. The groups are now given the task of writing 10 code words on a piece of paper, which often occur in conspiracy theories or fake news.

3) Once the groups are ready, read out selected words from the "Conspiracy Lotto" template. The group is asked to mark those terms that you have read aloud in the plenary session and are also on their paper of their own small group. The group that first guessed five or marked five of the words correctly on their paper is the winner and is allowed to shout out "Bingo" aloud.

4) The small groups are now given a new task: They are asked to craft their own conspiracy narrative by answering the following questions:

- Who is the group of conspirators?
- What is the evil intent of the conspirators?
- What old images, prejudices or codes is your narrative based on?
- What absurd evidence is there for your conspiracy narrative?

5) The small groups have about 10 to 15 minutes to develop a corresponding conspiracy narrative.

6) The conspiracy theories developed are now presented in the plenary session by the different groups.

7) Conclude the method with a brainstorming session on the question: "Why do people believe in conspiracy theories?"

READING TEMPLATE "CONSPIRACY BINGO"

These terms often appear in conspiracy theories:

Chemtrails – Mainstream Media – Lying Press – Elite – HAARP – Remigration – Flat Earth – Lizards – Mind Control – New World Order (NWO) – Illuminati – Freemasons – Rothschilds – Rockefeller – Gates – Globalists – 9/11 – Conspiracy – Biological Weapons

– Intelligence – Jews – World Domination – Conspiracy – Apocalypse – Puppets – Vaccination – Microchips – Deep State – Adenochrome – Satan – WWG1WGA

METHOD “ELEMENTS OF MEDIA AND PRESS FREEDOM”

- Topics and pedagogical goals: Dealing with media and press freedom

- Time required: 40 to 60 minutes

- Material: Notes, pens, blackboard, worksheet "Recognizing reliable Information", Internet access.

- Instructions (step by step):

1) Start a short word rap on the topic of media and press freedom. In the plenary, each of the participants is asked to briefly name the first word that comes to mind when they think of freedom of the media and the press. You collect this first association of the participants on a blackboard or a flipchart.

2) The participants are now to divide themselves into small groups (2 to 4 people). They are each to choose one person from a given pool who is connected to the topic of press freedom. By means of internet research, the groups should then answer the following 2 questions:

- How is the person connected to the topic of freedom of opinion and freedom of the press?
- What important element of freedom of opinion and freedom of the press does this person's story point to us?

Tip 1: Below you will find a list of suitable people for the topic. Of course, you can also select other suitable biographies.

Possible people for research: Silvio Berlusconi – Max Schrems – Jan Kuciak – Jeff Bezos – Ilaria Alpi – Kostas Vaxevanis – Evangelos Marinakis – Elon Musk...

3) The small groups then present their research results on the different people (people's biographies) in the plenary.

Tip 2: In particular, the principle of freedom of opinion has often been misunderstood in recent years. Freedom of opinion does not mean a right to one's own facts and also no right not to receive contradiction to one's own opinion. Originally, it was introduced as a protective right of citizens against state repression. In a nutshell, there is the quote: "Democracy thrives on freedom of opinion, but breaks down with freedom of facts."

4) In the second part of the exercise, the participants can form new small groups. The groups are supposed to think briefly of "5 criteria of reliable information". The small groups write these criteria on a piece of paper (5 to 10 minutes).

5) Now you collect the results of all small groups on a blackboard or a flipchart.

6) The same small groups should now choose one or two media articles of their choice using their mobile phone or laptop. If they have found corresponding articles, they should rate these articles on the basis of their own "criteria for serious information", which they defined before. The participants should do this preferably on the basis of a point system (0 to 10 points).

Tip 3: Alternatively, you can prepare suitable media articles (1-2 per small group) yourself, which you will then hand out to the participants and let them rate them.

7) Afterwards, the small groups present their selected articles and their evaluation of the articles based on their criteria.

WORKSHEET "RECOGNIZING RELIABLE INFORMATION"

Task 1: Think about how to distinguish serious from non-serious information. Write down at least five characteristics of serious news here

Criteria 1:

Criteria 2:

Criteria 3:

Criteria 4:

Criteria 5:

Task 2: Now choose two articles from different media. Then rate them on the basis of the criteria above with a score from 0 to 10 (=10 very serious, 0= totally dubious).

MODULE 5: JUSTICE, PROTEST, RESISTANCE AND CULTURE OF REMEMBRANCE

In this module, we have collected a number of methods and teaching suggestions for the school and extracurricular sector, which deal with various aspects of protest, resistance, but also with different cultures of remembrance.

Possible **learning objectives** of this module are:

- Awareness of different population groups and their different needs
- Empathy with different social groups
- Reflection on one's own social utopias and notions of justice
- Dealing with the topics of protest and resistance
- Knowledge about historical protest movements and different forms of resistance
- Dealing with the culture of remembrance

METHOD "THE JUST SOCIETY"

- Topics and pedagogical goals: Empathy with different social groups, reflection on one's own social utopias and ideas of justice

- Time required: 35 to 60 minutes

- Material: Cut out role cards "One step further" (see previous exercise), worksheet "The just society", blackboard, flipchart or whiteboard

- Instructions (step by step):

1) Start the exercise with a short brainstorming session in plenary. The participants should complete the sentence "For me, justice means..." Note the different ideas of justice on a flipchart or the blackboard.

2) Now form small groups (2 to 5 people). Ask them to imagine that a good fairy is coming and is fulfilling the participants wishes for a just society according to their ideas. The participants now have the task of imagining this just society in concrete terms. To do so they receive the worksheet "The Just Society" and fill it out.

Tip: You can also shorten the worksheet "The Just Society" or adapt it according to your ideas.

3) The participants now have enough time (15 to 20 minutes) to fill out the worksheet. Afterwards, the results of the small groups will be presented in the plenary.

4) Optionally, you can continue the exercise here. To do this, send the participants back to the same small groups as before. Then assign the groups 2 to 3 role cards from the exercise before called "One step further". The participants are then asked to discuss the following 3 questions:

- How is the just society, as you imagined it before (= on the worksheet "The just society") changing the lives of the people on the role cards?
- What would concretely improve or worsen for the different people on the role cards, if your just society is realized?

5) Finally, take a look at the brainstorming session "For me, justice means..." at the beginning of this exercise. Ask the participants if the exercise has changed anything in their perception of justice. If so, you can add new ideas to the brainstorming "For me, justice means..." If possible, use a new colour (= differently coloured flipchart pen or different colour of blackboard chalk).

WORKSHEET "THE JUST SOCIETY"

Task: Imagine that one of your greatest wishes is fulfilled. You close your eyes and when you open them again, the society around you has changed. You now live in a "just society" as you imagine and desire it. Look around and think about what this society looks like in concrete terms. Answer the questions on this worksheet

Question 1: Should children be allowed to go to kindergarten or stay at home with their family?

Question 2: How long should pupils have to go to school?

Question 3: What kind of support should families receive from the state?

Question 4: What requirements should families fulfil in order to receive support from the state?

Question 5: Should there be compulsory civilian service for men, women or both? (If so, how long should the civilian service last?)

Question 6: Should there be compulsory military service for men, women or both? (If so, how long should it last?)

Question 7: Should access to universities be free of charge?

Question 8: Should students be allowed to study at universities for as long as they want?

Question 9: Should people who are unemployed receive state support? (If so, how much should they get?)

Question 10: Should there be a state-regulated minimum wage?

Question 11: Should asylum seekers have access to the labour market? (If so, under what conditions?)

Question 12: Should couples who marry receive financial or other benefits from the state? (If so, which ones?)

Question 13: Should homosexual couples be allowed to marry?

Question 14: Should companies be obliged to rehire women after pregnancy? (If so, how long should they be obliged to do so?)

Question 15: At what age should people regularly retire?

Question 16: Should people who care for their sick relatives at home receive state support (If so, what should it look like?)

Question 17: Should there be a legacy tax? (If so, how high should it be?) Civic education is about learning about politics and the society in which you live or in which you want to live in. Civic education allows you to understand how we live together as human beings and what opportunities we have in order to participate in this society and change it according to our interests and ideals.

METHOD "MAP OF THE PROTEST"

- Topics and pedagogical goals: Reflecting on the topics of protest and resistance, knowledge about different historical protest movements or forms of resistance.

- Time required: 25 to 40 minutes

- Material: Cut-out "Case studies of protest", Padlet "Map of protest", blackboard, flipchart or whiteboard, internet access, projector

- Instructions (step by step):

1) Start the exercise with a short brainstorming session, dealing with the question "What forms of protest and political participation do you know?". Write down the statements of the participants on a flipchart or a board.

2) Then divide the group into pairs or small groups and output different cut-out "Case Study of "Protest" for each group. Invite the groups to use their example to discuss the following questions:

- Is the protest in your story appropriate?
- What other forms of protest or political participation can you think of for the situation described?
- This story is real. Can you guess where and when it took place?

3) The groups should then present their case (story) to the other groups and share their answers found.

4) Finally, you can use a projector to show the padlet "Map of Protest". This padlet collects all case studies, including explanations of their historical circumstances.

Tip: If you turn the padlet link into a QR code and print it out, participants can access the padlet directly via their mobile phones.

Padlet link "Map of Protest": <https://padlet.com/sapereaudeat/stories-of-protest-visible-past-english-tlmr3spydwl876n>

WORKSHEET "MAP AND STORIES OF PROTEST"

Task: Choose one of the protest stories described below. Then discuss the following questions:

- Is the protest in your story appropriate?
- What other forms of protest or political participation can you think of for the situation described?
- This story is real. Can you guess where and when it took place?

Story 1: School strike

Concern of the protestors: Global warming has risen sharply in recent years. For many, especially young people, this causes concern. The young people ask themselves whether the earth will remain habitable for them in the future. Global warming has already led to an increase in extreme weather events such as storms and floods in recent years.

Form of protest: The protest is supported by many young people, including schoolchildren. A central form of protest is to hold demonstrations during school hours and thus violate compulsory attendance in schools.

Real story behind it: The story is based on the protest movement "Fridays for Future" lead by Greta Thunberg (Sweden, from 2018)

Sources:

https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fridays_for_Future#Geschichte

<https://www.dw.com/de/fridays-for-future-schulschw%C3%A4nzer-oder-rettter-des-klimas/a-48074255>

<https://www.deutschlandfunkkultur.de/schule-schwaenzen-fuer-fridays-for-future-warum-der-100.html>

Story 2: Paintings

Concern of the protestors: A certain population group in the country, is not having the right to vote although they have lived and worked in the country for a long time

Form of protest: In addition to large rallies, one tactic of this protest group is to disrupt speeches by politicians inside and outside parliament through heckling and large posters. Many supporters of the protest movement are punished by the police. Instead of paying their fine, however, many of the protesters prefer to go to prison for a substitute custodial sentence to draw attention to their situation and the lack of the right to vote. Further protest actions follow, people go on hunger strikes and protesters chain themselves in front of the parliament building. In addition, famous paintings in museums are damaged with knives by the protesters

Real story behind it: The story is based on the women's rights group "Suffragettes", which drew attention to itself with a wide variety of protest actions in Great Britain (from around 1890).

Sources:

<https://www.bpb.de/shop/zeitschriften/apuz/277333/die-suffragetten>

<https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suffragetten>

<https://www.nzz.ch/feuilleton/kunst-im-visier-der-aktivisten-die-suffragetten-machten-es-vor-ld.1710559>

Story 3: Restaurants

Concern of the protestors: A population group in the country is demanding more rights from politicians. So far, the group has had to use its own means of transport, its own restaurants and its own educational institutions, while being separated from the majority society.

Form of protest: In addition to large protest rallies and lawsuits in court, the affected group uses a various form of resistance: For example, they block the public busses. In addition, so-called "sit-ins" are organized in restaurants: The protesters sit down in restaurants that are actually forbidden for them to enter and then refuse to leave.

Real story behind it: The story ties in with the development of the civil rights movement in the U.S. from about 1950 onwards.

Sources:

<https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/B%C3%BCrgerrechtsbewegung>

Story 4: Flag

Concern of the protestors: A group of protesters is against the new government in the country, which they believe oppresses many people in the country.

Form of protest: In a secret action, the protesters climb onto important roofs and monuments in the country, where official government flags hang. They remove the flags and attach their own flags.

Real story behind it: The story is based on the protest group around Manolis Glezos and Apostolos Sandas in Greece in the 1940s, among others. At that time, Greece had recently been occupied by the National Socialists. Among other things, the two climb the well-guarded Acropolis in Athens. There they remove the Swastika flag and attach the old Greek flag instead.

Sources:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/01/world/europe/manolis-glezos-dead.html>

https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manolis_Glezos

Story 5: Flowers and Tanks

Concern of the protestors: There are protests against the authoritarian government in the country. A military coup starts, during which numerous armed soldiers and tanks begin to occupy public places. This is how the military wants to drive out the authoritarian government.

Form of protest: The protesters organize a bunch of flowers. They start walking towers the soldiers and tanks and begin to put the flowers in their rifle barrels.

Real story behind it: The story is based on the Carnation Revolution in April 1974 in Portugal. An icon of the revolution is the waitress, Celeste Caeiro. She was the first to come up with the idea of using flowers as a form of protest. Some carnations, where just there in Celestes restaurant due to a birthday party. Celeste Caeiro just took them and started putting them in the soldiers' rifles. Many other people followed her and did the same. Also because of this form of action this episode in Portugal bears the title "Carnation Revolution", which initiated the beginning of a democratization in the country.

Sources:

https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Celeste_Caeiro

Story 6: Gasoline

Concern of the protestors: Fuel prices have risen sharply in recent years. Due to a new eco-tax, which was introduced by the government at the beginning of the year, fuel prices continue to rise. Many people who are dependent on the car privately or drive a car for work (such as truck drivers) come under financial pressure as a result.

Form of protest: In addition to an online petition against the increased fuel prices, there are calls for protests and road blockades, for example at gas stations or in different cities. In some cases, these actions, in which more than 10,000 people participate, also lead to arson and violent riots against police officers.

Real story behind it: The story is based on the protests of the yellow vest movement in France (from 2018).

Sources:

<https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gelbwestenbewegung#Verlauf>

<https://www.tagesschau.de/ausland/gelbwesten-faq-101.html>

<https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gelbwestenbewegung#Verlauf>

METHOD "HOW DO WE WANT TO REMEMBER?"

- Topics and pedagogical goals: Dealing with the culture of remembrance

- Time required: 30 to 40 minutes

- Material: flipchart and pens (alternatively blackboard or whiteboard), worksheet, "How do we want to remember?".

- Instructions (step by step):

1) At the beginning, do a short brainstorming session to get into the topic and ask the following question to the group: "Which sort of public monuments do you know?". Write down the group's feedback on a board or flipchart.

2) Couples or small groups (3 to 4 people) are formed now. Each group receives a worksheet "How do we want to remember?" and fills it out.

3) Afterwards, the results will be presented to each other in the plenary.

Tip: You can also develop this method in a more artistic-creative direction. For example, by having the participants develop small pieces of art, poems or slogans for new monuments or for different public places.

WORKSHEET "HOW DO WE WANT TO REMEMBER?"

Task: Read through the examples dealing with culture of remembrance in different countries. Then answer the two questions at the end of the work sheet.

Example 1: Bologna railway station (Italy)

What happened: In 1980, a terrorist attack happened on the main train station of Bologna. A time bomb hidden in a suitcase exploded in a crowded waiting room of the train station. The explosion destroyed the western wing of the station building and damaged a whole train. The attack killed 85 people and injured more than 200. After years of investigations, however, it could be proven that the perpetrators were neo-fascists who maintained contacts with the Italian military intelligence service. The aim of the attack was to spread fear and insecurity, to justify a climate of oppression, but also to enable the conditions for the establishment of an authoritarian regime. The attack is still the most serious terrorist attack in Italy since the Second World War.

How is it remembered: The attack took place on August 2, 1980 at 10:25 a.m. Since then, the station clock has been set to 10:25 a.m., the exact time of the explosion. The damaged parts of the building were rebuilt, but the station's floor and a deep crack in the wall were retained unchanged as a memorial to the attack. A temporary repair and short operation in 2001 caused protests among citizens and the city of Bologna. So, the clock was permanently stopped at 10:25 a.m.

Sources:

https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anschlag_von_Bologna

<https://www.krone.at/2675185>

Example 2: The mayor of Vienna (Austria)

What happened: The mayor of Vienna, Karl Lueger (1897-1910), is a controversial historical figure to this day. On the one hand, his achievements for the city of Vienna at the level of local politics are undisputed (such as reform of the building regulations, successful expansion of the drinking water supply in Vienna), on the other hand, Karl Lueger was also an avowed anti-Semite and made the spread of anti-Semitism and various conspiracy narratives core part of his politics. Adolf Hitler would later refer to Karl Lueger as one of his political role models.

How is it remembered: In 1926, a large monument to Karl Lueger was built in Vienna. In recent decades, the debate about how to deal with Karl Lueger as a person has intensified. The monument is highly controversial. In 2023, the City of Vienna held a competition to redesign the monument. The winning design, which is to be implemented in the next few years, envisages tilting the existing monument by 3.5 degrees to the right, so that it partially loses its actual effect and that it starts to irritate people as they pass by, in order to point out the controversial personality of the mayor.

Sources:

<https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dr.-Karl-Lueger-Denkmal>

<https://www.derstandard.at/story/3000000172519/kunst-kulturpolitik-siegerentwurf-permanente-kuenstlerischen-kontextualisierung-lueger-denkmal-https://idostandard.at/pderstandard/articles/172519editcanvascomponentdoc-1h1oohfm50>

Question 1: What do you think is an important political issue or event that we should remember?

Question 2: Think about different ideas on how to remember this topic. Write down your ideas here. There are no limits to your creativity. You can also design your own slogans or small works of art for public spaces.

PART 3: Links to Online-Tools

The methods mentioned in the previous chapter can be carried out analogously in a wide variety of teaching settings. If you want to work digitally with a group of students or adults on the topics, we have put together a list of helpful tools for you here.

- **Flinga:** With the "Flinga" tool, you can carry out interactive content such as diagrams, brainstorming sessions or mind maps: <https://flinga.fi/>
- **Google Jamboard:** The Google Jamboard allows you to create a digital whiteboard that other participants can also work on and edit: https://workspace.google.com/intl/en_uk/intl/en_uk/products/jamboard/
- **Kahoot:** This tool can also be used to create a wide variety of interactive games and quiz formats for teaching: <https://kahoot.it/>
- **Mentimeter:** Mentimeter is a well-known program for creating a variety of live polls or to get feedback in real time: <https://www.mentimeter.com/de-DE>
- **Miro-Whitboard:** As an alternative to Google, "Miro" also offers you the possibility to use a digital whiteboard or blackboard function in an online training: <https://miro.com/online-whiteboard/>
- **Padlet:** Padlet is well suited for creating shared content in the digital space, such as timelines, interactive maps, or various mind maps. Furthermore, Padlet offers the possibility to create images with a simple AI function, which can also be used in the classroom: <https://padlet.com>