

NECE 2020

Re-connecting in a post pandemic world. Citizenship education for democracy and sustainability

Berlin, 5 - 7 November 2020

About NECE 2020

"There has never been so much knowledge about our ignorance and about the compulsion to act and live under uncertainty." (Jürgen Habermas)

The coronavirus pandemic has profoundly affected the way we live and work. Many people continue to face uncertainty, and we are a long way from returning to normality.

The NECE conference 2020 will be held in Berlin against the background of the German EU Presidency and its goal to open up new channels for citizen's participation in Europe. As a run-up to the conference, NECE 2020 will offer a series of digital events such as online seminars, trainings, panels and a barcamp on the various aspects of the conference theme.

NECE 2020 aims to re-connect the public good of citizenship education to democracy and sustainability. As an international platform for teachers and students, as well as civil society activists from Germany, Europe, Arab and African countries, **NECE 2020** will be a hybrid event with as many real-life meetings as possible and numerous digital channels. Its main objective is to send a strong signal to policy makers in Europe on how to support the *political* recovery of our democracies. Participants are invited to prepare a joint declaration on the value of citizenship education for democracy and sustainability.

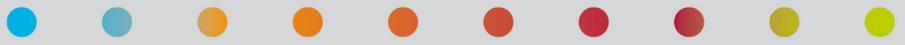
We see citizenship education as a key profession and essential contributor in this process:

- It uses reliable and evidence-based information to promote resilience and self-efficacy of citizens in a complex world.
- It enables citizens to claim their rights and get involved in politics.
- It creates spaces for learning, controversy and solidarity.
- It offers a rich diversity of learning methods and best practices in both formal, non-formal and informal settings.

In view of the vulnerabilities and shortcomings of our societies, a solid and sustainable infrastructure for participation and learning for democracy will be an important public good.

The German Council for Sustainable Development (RNE), a high-level expert body, will deliver a keynote and provide expertise. **'Bridge 47'**, a major transnational initiative for lifelong learning, transformative education and the Sustainable Development Goal 4.7, will be joining NECE in Berlin to stress the importance of a global approach to citizenship education. The **Goethe-Institut**, as well as think tanks such as **'Das Progressive Zentrum'** and **'Zentrum für Liberale Moderne'** will be presenting their inputs, projects and work – off- and online!

Hosted by the **Federal Agency for Civic Education (bpb)**, its European **NECE partners** and corresponding networks in eastern Europe and Africa, the conference and preparatory meetings will be supported by other important networks such as **DARE the European**



network for Democracy and Human Rights. Major civic foundations such as **Stiftung Mercator** and **Robert Bosch Stiftung** will be supporting the conference. Furthermore, the education department of the **Council of Europe (CoE)** and the **European Wergeland Centre (Oslo)** have expressed their interest in joining NECE 2020.

Preparing the conference on the NECE CAMPUS (June –October 2020)

The main purpose of the conference and its preparatory process is to create spaces for transnational networking, dialogue and learning, centred around the ideas and practices of citizenship education, understood as an agora - encompassing a variety of stakeholders, activists, academic experts and practitioners.

A **NECE CAMPUS**, starting on June 10 and active until the end of October, will create digital spaces for an interactive process to prepare the conference day in Berlin, November 5 -7. From online seminars and panel discussions to training sessions and bar camps – the **NECE CAMPUS** will use the possibilities of the virtual space to discuss visions, values and practices for a educational and civic engagement in a postpandemic world.

Working with experts, trainers and practitioners, we want to introduce **skills and tools** that may help us to work together in digital spaces – without forgetting the invaluable role of real-life human interaction for democracies.

The NECE CAMPUS aims at offering at opportunities and trainings for building trust and a collaborative spirit among the often fragmented actors in citizenship education and civil society.

Apart from these cross-cutting objectives, we propose **three clusters** in which the fundamental questions we will be facing in the remaining decade, as well as models of new practice, can be presented and discussed.

1) Citizenship education and democracy in a post-pandemic world: Ideas, formats, practices

Key questions: How to ensure learning for democracy and civic activity in an age of uncertainty and authoritarian tendencies? How can we address widening educational gaps and inequalities in accessing citizenship rights and education? What are the consequences of social distancing and restricting the freedom of assembly for all kinds of civic political activity? What are the possibilities and limitations of distance learning?

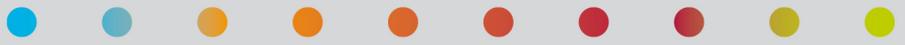
2) The Future of Europe: Civic engagement and citizenship education in the European Union today and beyond 2020

Key questions: How can the ‘temporary fragility’ of the European Union be transformed towards greater citizens’ participation and institutional transparency? How can we best equip European citizens to take part in the civil renewal of Europe? How could and should the European Union and the Council of Europe better support learning for democracy and citizenship education? What could be effective next steps for promoting and advocating European citizenship in the 2020’s - also in the context of the ‘Conference for the Future of Europe’?

3) Sustainability and interdependence: Citizenship education in a global framework

Key questions: What role can citizenship education play in a complex world of facts vs. fiction? How can we manage controversies surrounding climate change and the ‘great transformation’ of our societies? Can the standstill of a world affected by the coronavirus





serve as a blueprint for a new green deal? How can the impatience of extra-parliamentary movements and the inertia of decision-making processes be reconciled? How is climate change debated in Africa, India, China, and other regions of the 'global south'?

NECE 2020 – the timeline

June 2020: kick-off of the NECE CAMPUS 10 June 2020

- **1st Digital Dialogue: „Nachhaltigkeit - Europa - Demokratie: Politische Bildung neu denken – jetzt!“** with Thomas Krüger (bpb), German Council for Sustainable Development (RNE), Stiftung Mercator, Progressives Zentrum and Zentrum für Liberale Moderne (*language: German*)
- **11 June 2020**
 - **Online seminar: “Restarting Europe: The role of civil society and citizenship education”**

July/ August 2020

- **Online seminar: Sustainability and Interdependence: Citizenship education in a global framework (WT)**

September/ October 2020

- **2nd Digital Dialogue: Transnational collaboration in a post-pandemic world (WT)**
- **Tools for citizenship education in the virtual world: Trainings and online seminars**

October 2020

- **Digital barcamp: Ideas, topics and projects for the Berlin conference and beyond**

** 5 – 7 November 2020 **

- **NECE 2020 Conference in Berlin (on- & offline)**

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