

Workshop C - Europäische Jugendbildungs- und Jugendbegegnungsstätte Weimar (EJBW)

Topic: Accessibility of civic education/human rights education and educational institutions

In Workshop C, participants discussed the accessibility of civic / human rights education in Germany. As part of understanding the topic of discussion, some questions were posed to the participants to express their viewpoints. Below are the questions raised and some of the responses provided by the participants, building upon the context provided.

Question 1. Migrants as Human Rights Educator: What are the barriers and challenges migrants face in Human Right Education in Germany?

Preamble: Discuss your answers based on these five aspects.

Formalities

- legal status Right to work (freelance)
- asyl law
- taxes & Bureaucracy
- language barriers
- lack of financial stability in project work / civic education

Organizational Access & Network

- finding the right institution
- contacts
- knowing the (professional) field of Civic Education
- organizational inequality/discrimination
- resource access (in various languages)
- unclear motivation to enter the field

Discrimination, Empowerment & Safety

- lack of Allyship/Powersharing
- institutional, structural & individual discrimination
- where is it safe to work
- specific: Rural Area
- distraction through challenges as a migrant
- intersectionality (eg. disabled migrants)

Expected Knowledge & Competencies

- expected prior knowledge (eg in German History)
- expected competences (eg. in non-formal education)
- migrated knowledge often not as much valued
- selection of topics

Participants' Feedback:

1. Formalities

- Legal Access to work: Restrictions imposed by immigration authorities (local restrictions, or only for one occupational field, or only one specific job.

- Work bans: Depending on status or length of stay (current work permit from 6 months)
- Unattractiveness: A relatively large amount of prior knowledge and skills are required with relatively low pay. Also freelance work is not ideal in the context of securing a residence permit hence possibly no secure future prospects for a permanent job.
- Recognition of foreign degrees: it is a major hurdle to recognizing formal foreign qualifications in Germany. Also informal knowledge is usually not valued.

2. Organizational Access & Network

- Lack of information
- Less networks and institutions in rural areas.
- Limited movements (ÖPNV)
- Access in different languages are not always given.
- Networks are sometimes not open to everyone
- Organizational inequalities between institutions located in rural areas and those in the cities.

3. Discrimination, Empowerment & Safety

- Lack of Solidarity: As karim Fereidooni once said in his lecture: *'Solidarity is often linked to conditions or expectations and can be withdrawn at any time (power relationship)'* In addition, people often primarily show solidarity with other people with similar realities for instance, same gender, sexual orientation, etc.

4. Expected Knowledge & Competencies

- Language barrier: Some people may be unable to participate in some events due to language barrier.
- Structural and organizational issues: There are sometimes some barriers to accessing and participating in events - Who knows who, how do you get to the event?, who can be contacted?. All these raises the question of how political education processes can be designed so that people feel invited to participate. Also more open spaces are needed to formulate and negotiate issues.

Question 2. How can educational institutions / civic education in Germany become more accessible to migrants and refugees as speakers and target groups? Based on your answers provided, write a checklist for educational institutions in civic education.

Participants' Feedback:

- Provide more information about educational institutions. Share offers about this work on many channels (including social media).
- Providing consultations/ training.
- Frequent contact with migrant organizations. It is very important to have personal contact - it is about knowing people - not so much about the informational - keep real contact with people.

- Provide information in different languages.
- As an institution change the job requirements (e.g. master degree, non formal education). Don't reduce people to their degrees - German job requirements is all about degrees - to be passionate about a job is also a job requirement.
- Have a closer look at the skills people bring and how it can help them individually - also help them to help themselves
- Cooperation between non-formal organization and formal educational institutions.
- Forming car pools or similar if there are safety concerns regarding the location (e.g. in the far east).
- Support in obtaining work permits from immigration authorities, support in the bureaucratic jungle, e.g. when registering a small business or similar.
- All access points are equal access points to education, all educational processes are equal, networking and empowerment are also educational processes, not just the access points of professors and academics.
- Knowledge that should be recognised: How is life in Germany, everyday life, assessments, experiences, knowledge that is not academic, but is important knowledge only for certain groups, so people have to organise themselves so that this knowledge/this kind of knowledge transfer comes through and is offered to all.
- Provide end devices, internet access, rooms (especially for people living in accommodation)
- Encourage Job-Sharings, Job-Swappings, Rotations, Job enrichments and Job enlargements in educational institutions.