

NECE WORKSHOP

“Fragility and Resilience of Democracies in Europe. Where now for Citizenship Education and Civil Societies?”

Gdańsk, Poland, November 12-13, 2017

Venue:

Europejskie Centrum Solidarności (European Solidarity Center)
(pl. Solidarności 1, 80-863 Gdańsk, Poland)

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Background

This workshop is to discuss and reflect on the causes and impacts of the current crises of democracies, in particular the trends towards illiberal democracies in the eastern member states of the EU and electoral 'revolts' which took place in the US and the UK in 2016.

We will focus on the following questions:

- Which are the long-term trends behind the symptoms of crisis in the 'West' and the authoritarian developments in the 'East'? How are both trends connected and related with each other?
- What are the new lines of conflict: Is this primarily about cultural or social/economic issues?
- And how should citizenship education and civil societies react to these new challenges in an effective way? How can dialogues beyond the progressive mainstream be organised?

The workshop brings together NECE partners and European experts, intellectuals, and practitioners, among them Ivan Krastev, Karolina Wigura, Jan Sowa, Boris Jokic and Wolfgang Merkel. The diversity of perspectives and backgrounds will serve to shape a transnational agenda for citizenship educators and civil society in times of crises and uncertainty.

Conclusions and papers of the workshop will be published on the NECE website and be part of the preparations for the next NECE conference in Marseille in September 2018.

*The workshop will take place at the **Europejskie Centrum Solidarności (European Solidarity Center)**. The **ECS** is a cultural institution and museum that commemorates the revolution of Solidarity and the fall of communism in Europe, but it is also an educational, research and academic centre, an archive, library and multimedia library. Last but not least, it is a public meeting space for citizens who feel responsible for the development of democracy: a place where solidarity and citizenship are put into practice.*

PROGRAMME

(Date: 02.11.2017)

Moderation: Alexander Thamm

Sunday, 12 November 2017

- 2:00 pm Visit of the ECS exhibition (optional)
- 4:00 pm Welcome coffee & registration
- 4:30 pm **Welcome**
Jacek Kołtan, Deputy Director of the European Solidarity Centre, Poland
- Welcome and introduction to the NECE workshop**
Caroline Hornstein Tomic, Head of Operative Division, Federal Agency for Civic Education, Germany
Christoph Müller-Hofstede, Federal Agency for Civic Education, Germany
- 4:45 pm **Introduction of participants**, facilitated by **Alexander Thamm**
- 5:15 pm **Keynote**
...fear itself?
How to deal with the spectre of populism in European democracies?
Ivan Krastev, Centre for Liberal Strategies, Bulgaria
- 5:45 pm **Comments by Marek Cichocki and Wolfgang Merkel**
(5' each)
- 6:00 pm **Discussion/Comments** moderated by **Alexander Thamm**
- 6:45 pm Coffee break
- 7:00 pm **Inputs: Illiberal Democracies I: The Case of Poland**
Roundtable with short inputs based on papers by:
Marek Cichocki, Collegium Civitas Warsaw, Poland
Jan Sowa, Social theorist and author, Poland
Karolina Wigura, Kultura Liberalna, Poland
(10' each)
- Discussion/Comments**
- 8:30 pm Dinner (Restaurant Amber Side)

Monday, 13 November 2017

- 9:00 am **Introduction / Warming Up**
Christoph Müller-Hofstede, Federal Agency for Civic Education, Germany
Alexander Thamm

- 9:15 am **Inputs: Illiberal Democracies II: The Case of Hungary**
Roundtable with short inputs of based on papers by:
- Edit Inotai**, Centre for Euro-Atlantic Integration and Democracy (CEID), Hungary
Marc Soignet, European Humanist Federation, Belgium
- Moderation: **Alexander Thamm**
- Discussion/Comments**
- 10:30 am Coffee Break
- 11:00 am **Democracies and their Crises: A comparative perspective**
Wolfgang Merkel, Berlin Social Science Centre, Germany
- 11:30 am **Comment and discussions**
Karolina Wigura, Kultura Liberalna, Poland (5')
- 12:00 pm **Plenary debate: Preliminary conclusions, core issues, open questions**
(facilitated by **Alexander Thamm**)
- 1:00 pm Lunch (Restaurant Amber Side)
- 2:30 pm **Working Groups**
The groups will be forming themselves after the plenary debate and their findings. Participants will be asked to consider the discussion and inputs in order to define issues and draw conclusions regarding their relevance for the practice of citizenship education and civil society. The aim is to put together a list of recommendations, good practices and ideas for projects which may enhance democratic resilience and innovative practices on the local, national and transnational level. The list will be published on the NECE website.
- 4:30 pm Coffee Break
- 5:00 pm **Conclusion and Take-Aways: Where Now for Civil Societies and Citizenship Education?** (facilitated by **Alexander Thamm**)
- 7:00 pm Dinner and informal exchange (Restaurant Amber Side)
- End of the workshop