

## **Multilayered Democracy and European Citizenship**

The European Communities were established with the treaty of Rome in 1957 with the main aim of preventing future military conflict in Europe through the promotion of industrial and economic cooperation. Education in general and civic education in particular were issues for nations to deal with.

In 2005, almost 50 years later, after several enlargements and a dramatic deepening of the cooperation, the European Union tried to adopt a constitutional treaty and stumbled with the referenda in France and the Netherlands. Now we have the “period for reflection” – and among other initiatives we have seen Margot Wallstrom's plan D. D for democracy in Europe. Quite a radical development. Democracy and civic education have become essential issues for the future functioning of the EU.

The main reason for this change lies outside Europe – in the double process of the information-technology revolution and globalization that has occurred since around 1970. From a world system of nation states we have moved to a global environment where the old boundaries have dwindling importance. National states have experienced a governance vacuum – a greatly diminished ability to exercise sovereign decisions. Governments have had to divert their focus still more towards a change of institutions and policies to adjust to global economy and other global developments. Formal and non-formal supranational institutions and policies have emerged.

Fifty years ago democracy and citizenship were concepts linked to the national – and sometimes local – arenas. Now more arenas are emerging. Democracy and citizenship must be considered on at least four levels: Local; National; Regional (i.e. European etc.); Global. We have concepts and practical experiences with democracy and citizenship on local and national levels – and a great diversity of different cultures and countries. On the regional and especially on the global level we still have to develop sustainable ideas and institutions – if possible.

We will have to realize that we have a great diversity of concepts and practices of democracy and citizenship in the national states in the world – and that most of them are legitimate and operational. This diversity will also apply to regional and global institutions and policies – which will have to be able to accommodate a great variety of cultures and traditions.

The issues of democracy and citizenship at multiple layers in the start of the 21st century are not clear-cut or obvious. We will need dialogue and experiments. We will have to accept failures – and we will have to learn and create.

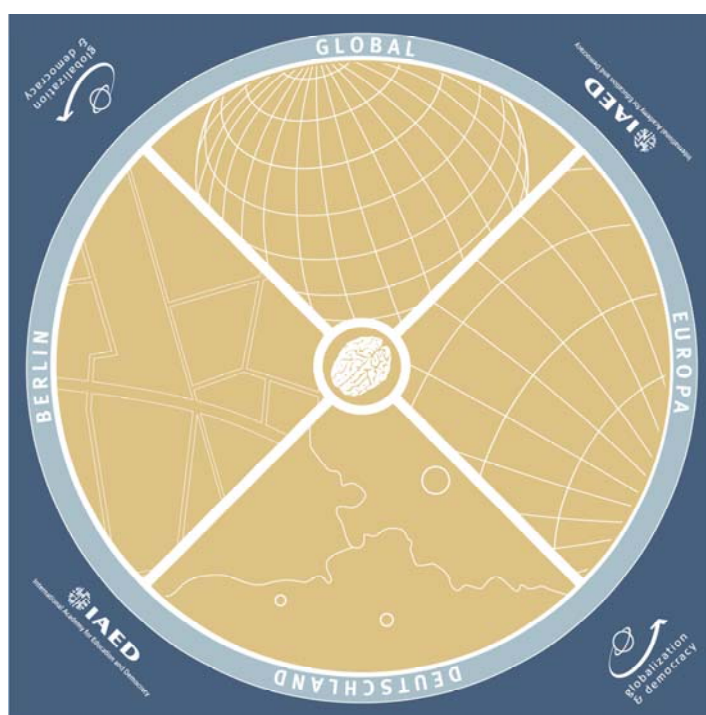
### **The multilayered democracy edu-game**

The International Academy for Education and Democracy has developed an edu-game or dialogue tool that helps facilitate dialogue processes on multilayered democracy. The workspace is a game-board representing the four arenas for democracy and citizenship in today's world. In the centre an image of a brain represents the active person or group.

The layout of the board represents a reality where global issues are just as close to us as are local or national issues. Global issues such as interest rates, energy prices and climate change have direct impact on our lives – just like local issues as zoning laws or kindergarten prices.

The learning process starts with deliberations on what challenges the participants feel are most important now –

and which arena they belong to – i.e. it has to be decided whether a challenge is primarily local, national, regional or global. After the identification of challenges and their distribution in the four arenas we will move to a dialogue on governance and institutions of governance on the four levels. Which institutions do we actually have? Are they efficient? Are they legitimate? Are important challenges that we have identified earlier on taken properly care of by existing institutions? Which expectations and proposals do the participants have for institutional change in the future? The process ends with a dialogue on participation – how can we ensure and contribute to transparency and accountability of institutions and social partners. What forms of participation are relevant and possible?



## **Outcomes**

The immediate results for the participants are a process of learning on globalization, democracy and citizenship. The experience with the presentation of the paradigm with the four arenas of challenges, governance and participation is that participants respond to it as an obvious representation of the world. The active process creates an optimal learning environment for the participants. The set up makes room for the expression of very diverse experiences and opinions.

The openness of the learning environment and the room for diversity has further potentials. When a group of participants go through the edu-game they will express a set of views on democracy and citizenship that can be recorded, analyzed, published and compared with the views of other groups, in other places. Thus we can relate to the challenges of developing new forms of democracy and citizenship that correspond to the new developing diversity at the national level – and to the challenges of developing democracy and citizenship at regional and global levels. If these developments are to be successful they will have to build on an active representation and dialogue of the enormous diversity at hand.

This tool is under development and testing, and an initial global network with partners in Canada, South Africa, India, Philippines and China is under formation for the first comparative process.

## **Moderators, participants and organization**

The multilayered democracy edu-game needs well trained moderators to work. The moderator must have a good deal of insight in globalization, contemporary society and history, and experience as a moderator of open ended group processes. The optimal process will last at least 6-8 hours – and works best with a group of around 8 participants and one moderator per game board. The process works very well with many parallel groups with one moderator for each group. The groups should be composed to be as homogenous as possible – this will create the basis of a good dialogue among diverse views developed by diverse groups.

The experience is that the edu-game can work with almost any group of participants. The precondition is that the themes of the dialogues in the different arenas must correspond to issues relevant to the participants. This means that moderators or organizers should do research in preparation of the process.



International Academy for Education and Democracy

The edu game is distributed by the IAED – but only in connection with training of moderators/organizers. It is understood that users of the edu-game will take part in the development of the network around the tool, to contribute in providing a diversity of ideas on what democracy and citizenship can be.

Jakob Erle

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International Academy for Education and Democracy  
Vestergade 18E  
1456 Copenhagen K  
Denmark  
[www.iaed.info](http://www.iaed.info)  
[info@iaed.info](mailto:info@iaed.info)