

NETWORKING EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Rethinking Citizenship Education in European Migration Societies

Political Strategies - Social Changes - Educational Concepts

Conference Paper

Contribution to Workshop 4, Session 2: Religious Identities and Citizenship

“Youth Culture, Religion and Democracy: New educational materials to prevent Islamism and Antisemitism among youths of Muslim origin”

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I. Background: Germany as an Immigration Society:

- Immigrants (mostly of Turkish background) will not leave but stay in Germany
- Specific debates concerning the integration of immigrants of Muslim origin (Turkish and Arab): values, attitudes, convictions, tradition, religion...
- Among other phenomenons: Reislamization as well as radical ideologies, i.e. Islamism and anti-Semitism

We should be very careful in order not to mix Islam and Islamism or even terrorism; and there is no empirical data yet about radical ideologies, in particular about Islamism and anti-Semitism, among immigrants of Muslim origin.

But – at least in Germany (or lets say Berlin) - there is enough evidence (i.e. reports from teachers, social pedagogues or youth care workers) to realize that both are gaining ground among young people of Muslim origin.

This is a new challenge for political education, and this is where our project starts from because until this day we do not have any concepts or instruments to systematically prevent and counter Islamism and Anti-Semitism in the field (school classes, youth clubs...).

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II. The Project is based on the Following Ideas:

First Pillar: Intervention needs Knowledge

Collecting and presenting information and knowledge about:

- Islamic youth culture,
- typical Islamist and Anti-Semitic attitudes among youths of Muslim origin,
- origins, background and ways of dissemination of radical and antidemocratic thought (namely the role of Arab and Turkish media)

Second Pillar: Intervention needs specific Target Areas and Target Groups

Target Areas:

- Target areas are districts with a high proportion of Muslim inhabitants and a high number of Muslim institutions (mosques, educational institutions, associations...),
- and with networks of cooperating public and official institutions (local administration and services, schools, institutes...)

Target Groups:

- Marginalized/underprivileged Muslim youngsters and young adults
- Youngsters with a higher level of education to become role models in areas where social problems are concentrated ("soziale Brennpunkte")
- Youths from Islamist milieu
- Mosques which are willing and able to cooperate in the project
- Multipliers/educators (teachers, social pedagogues and workers, Imams, associations of immigrants)

Third Pillar: Intervention needs Skills and Tools (Teaching Teachers)

- Promoting awareness and qualification of teachers/educators/social workers
- developing and offering information, materials and seminars for and to them
- offering professional support in class or in the field to them
- developing educational concepts and instruments to prevent and counter Islamism and Anti-Semitism among youths of Muslim origin

III. Means of Implementation:

- I. Intervention needs knowledge:
Monitoring of Manifestations of Radical Ideologies, Youth Culture and Media
- II. Intervention needs target areas and target groups:
Mobile teams for action and consulting in the field (on demand of groups, organizations, institutions in the area)
- III. Intervention needs skills and instruments:
Seminars, materials and instruments for educators

IV. Summary:

For the first time – at least in Germany – a systematical examination of the manifestations of Islamism and Anti-Semitism within the milieu of young Muslims is being carried out. And for the first time products/materials to prevent and counter Islamism and Anti-Semitism among young people of Muslim origin will be developed, distributed and implemented. The integrated approach of the project assures access to the target groups as well as effectivity and sustainability of the efforts:

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Parties involved are:

- scientific researchers to gain empirical data and reliable knowledge
- public institutions and administrative bodies to gain access to schools and other institutions and associations, and to distribute products among and via them
- mosques and other immigrant institutions to gain credibility and access to the target group of Muslim youngsters
- multipliers in these organizations (teachers, social pedagogues, representatives of Muslim and immigrant associations) who do practical educational work with the target group

With the help of the (I+II+III) above mentioned actions, instruments and other products it is the aim of the project:

- to integrate the mentioned parties in common efforts against radicalization
- to develop cross-cultural expertise and capacities among multipliers
- to enable them to prevent and counter manifestations of radical thinking
- to further competence in media and capacities in political thinking of the target group
- to strengthen moderate and pluralist voices among Muslim immigrants