

Citizenship education

with children
aged 8 - 12 in Austria

Conceptual research findings
Empirical study

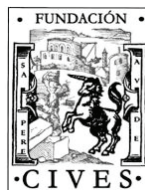
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Citizenship education with children aged 8 - 12 in Austria

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Credits to the members of the Austrian National Consortium, who contributed to the compilation of data and information on citizenship education for this report: Thomas Hellmuth (University of Salzburg / Didactics of History and Citizenship Education), Gabriele Lener (Head of a primary school in Vienna), Philipp Mittnik (Center for Citizenship Education at the University College of Teacher Education, Vienna), Elisabeth Schaffelhofer García Marquez (Managing director of the National Coalition for Children's Rights in Austria, Workshop trainer for EDC/HRE), Sigrid Steininger (Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs / Department Citizenship Education, Austrian coordinator for the Council of Europe's "Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights" program), Erika Tiefenbacher (Head of a secondary school in Vienna)

Conceptual research findings

1. History of citizenship education in Austria ¹⁰

1.1 Citizenship education after the Second World War

After the liberation from National Socialism by the Allied in 1945, Austria aimed to reinstall its educational orientation from before 1938. In contrast to Germany, where the Allied implemented programs of "reeducation" and "reorientation", the Moscow Declaration regarded Austria as the "first victim" of National Socialist expansion. Therefore, Austria was considered to be free to organize its educational system autonomously. For a short period after the war, some initiatives were set up by the "Federal Department for Public Enlightenment, Education and Cultural Affairs" to put a special emphasis on the significance of education for "democratic thinking" and to revise the curricula of subjects that were especially misused by National Socialist propaganda (e.g. languages, history, biology, philosophy, physical education). However, following the first elections and the building of a grand coalition, these attempts were no longer pursued and the discussion of the dimension of the penetration of National Socialist ideas within the educational system – as well as within the teaching staff – receded into the background for the years to follow. Citizenship education in these years was based on the "General ordinance on Civic Education"¹¹, which put a special emphasis on the emotional attachment to the "native homeland", including one knowing its culture, respecting its symbols etc.

1.2 Towards an education for democracy

Discussions and reforms within politics and higher education, as well as ongoing debates in civil society throughout the 1960s (e.g. Frankfurt School, student protests, the realization that other countries – especially Germany – were quite ahead in debates and developments concerning citizenship education) led to a gradual change in the direction of citizenship education in Austria. The following reforms included among others

- the implementation of the school subject "History and Social Studies – Geography and Economics" for Academic Secondary school, which should contribute to a "contemporary education of citizens" and to the development of "critical judgment" as well as "rationally guided decisions" about political, social and historical issues in 1970,
- the implementation of the subject "Citizenship Education" for Part-time vocational school/apprenticeship (Berufsschulen), replacing the former subject "State and Society Education" in 1976,
- the integration of citizenship education into several University Colleges of Teacher Education, starting with 1970,
- the establishment of a department for citizenship education within the Federal Ministry of Education in 1973.

Additionally, the Federal Ministry of Education started an initiative to implement a compulsory subject "Citizenship Education" for all types of school, which was met with considerable resistance from different sides (e.g. representatives of other school subjects, who feared to lose lesson-time; various parties that suspected that teachers could use the subject to indoctrinate students with their political views). Since the revision of "relevant educational issues" demanded a two-third majority within the National Assembly, it was obvious that the legislative proposal would not pass the parliament. Thus, the department of citizenship education within the Federal Ministry of Education developed a draft that suggested installing citizenship education as a cross-curricular educational principle for all types of schools and every level. The draft of the general ordinance marked a significant break in contrast to former documents on citizenship education, as it put emphasis on learning "democracy" instead of learning about "the state". It took nearly three years, until – after the discussion and revision by different interest groups and through a party committee – the Minister of Education published the final version of the general ordinance in 1978. Whereas the final version lacks quite some aspects that were suggested in the draft version of the general ordinance (e.g. a special emphasis on the methods of teaching, or "democratic teaching"), the achieved compromise initiated a shift towards a much broader understanding of citizenship education in Austria.

2. Implementation of citizenship education in the school system

2.1 Citizenship Education as a Cross-curricular Educational Principle – General Ordinance

The General Ordinance on the Cross-curricular Educational Principle of Citizenship Education (Grundsatzlerlass Politische Bildung) must be considered at all school types, each level and every subject. The general ordinance was first introduced in 1978 and republished in a revised and updated version in 2015 by the Ministry of Education¹². Being a crosscutting issue, every teacher is encouraged to teach citizenship education – even at primary level and independently of the subject, he/she teaches. According to the educational principle, major goals of citizenship education in school are that citizenship education ¹³

- offers an important contribution to the stability and development of democracy and human rights;
- empowers individuals to recognize social structures, power relationships and the potential for further development, and to examine underlying interests and values, as well as to evaluate and to change them if need be in terms of their own opinions;
- demonstrates democratic means of participation on all social and political levels and enables individuals to take an active part as individuals, as members of social groups, or as a part

- of society;
- promotes an interest in social issues and the readiness to participate in political life in order to advocate one's own interests, the concerns of others, and matters of general welfare;
- addresses fundamental political questions, e.g. the legitimization of political power and its control, a just distribution of resources, a responsible and resource-friendly approach to nature and the environment, the equality of political rights, etc.;
- enables individuals to recognize, understand and evaluate different political concepts and alternatives, and leads to a critical and reflected engagement with one's own values and the political beliefs of others;
- is based on democratic principles and values such as peace, freedom, equality, justice and solidarity; in this context, overcoming prejudice, stereotypes, racism, xenophobia and antisemitism as well as sexism and homophobia is a specific aim;
- highlights the role of Austria in Europe and globally, and communicates an understanding of existential and global relationships and problems of humanity;
- shows that a just order of peace and a fair distribution of resources are necessary for humanity's survival, and that these demand a global, concerted effort, but also need to be understood as a personal obligation.

The general ordinance also stresses the importance of competences with regard to citizenship education: expert knowledge, methodological competence, competence in judgement and agency¹⁴. Competency-based teaching and learning should therefore promote an interest in political events and the willingness to actively participate in politics through concrete experience. According to the general ordinance, citizenship education should also enable students to critically evaluate the opinions of others and the media presentation of content, and (...) to (responsibly and) consciously deal with the new media in particular. School democracy and a democratic school governance are considered to be essential for fostering citizenship education: School should be a place of democratic action as an everyday practice. This allows children and young people to experience at an early age that they not only have a right to participate, but also that each and every individual can bring about change through active commitment. The general ordinance also discusses the requirements for teachers with regard to citizenship education, e.g. controversy imperative, prohibition of indoctrination and supporting students in forming independent judgements. Subsequently, the educational principle sets the standard for various curricula of school subjects with regard to citizenship education (see below).

2.2 Citizenship education within the curricula of different school subjects

The Austrian school system offers a variety of school types with different focuses, especially in upper secondary level (e.g. Secondary technical and vocational schools). Hence, there is a range of various curricula with regard to citizenship education. As mentioned above, besides part-time vocational school/apprenticeship no other type of school offers citizenship education as an exclusive compulsory subject. In primary school the subject "General and Social Studies" (Sachunterricht) most notably offers multiple possibilities to integrate citizenship education (e.g. "experiencing community", intercultural learning, getting to know the local community¹⁵. In lower secondary level, citizenship education is implemented as the subject "History, Social Studies and Citizenship Education"¹⁶. In upper secondary level, citizenship education is taught in com-

ination with other subjects as well (e.g. "History, Social Studies and Citizenship Education"¹⁷, "Citizenship Education and Law", "Citizenship Education and Contemporary History", "Geography, History and Citizenship Education"¹⁸). Accordingly, the amount of hours dedicated to citizenship education within these combined subjects differs a lot.

All curricula of citizenship education cover topics like democracy, human rights, equity and justice, cultural diversity, tolerance and anti-discrimination, the political system, the functioning of international institutions and confederations, the role of the European Union, the process of the European integration, European citizenship and European economy.

In addition, topics such as the Austrian economy, Austrian social politics as well as information about the process of globalization are tackled throughout various curricula. Regarding the teaching methods, teachers are relatively free to choose their teaching approaches and methods themselves. However, the curricula contain some examples, which methods and approaches teachers could use regarding different learning areas. The Austrian Ministry of Education also released a general ordinance on project-centered forms of teaching (Grundsatzrlass zum Projektunterricht), which applies to all levels of education. It contains many objectives in line with citizenship education, e.g. independent learning, cultivating open-mindedness, developing communicative and cooperative competencies and conflict-cultures etc.¹⁹

2.3 Citizenship education and teacher education/training

Corresponding to the diversity of school subjects and school types, teacher training in the framework of citizenship education can also be considered to be quite diverse. Additionally, primary and lower secondary level schoolteachers – besides teachers of Academic secondary school in lower level – used to attend University Colleges of Teacher Education, whereas prospective teachers of Academic secondary schools graduated from universities. Starting with the school year 2015/2016, a new law on teacher training aims at improving the standardization of education for schoolteachers as well as emphasizing a close cooperation of University Colleges of Teacher Education with universities.²⁰ Concerning in-service teacher training there also exists a variety of workshops and trainings on topics with regard to citizenship education offered by colleges, universities and other educational institutions as well as non-governmental organizations that focus on specific topics.

3. Major reforms and recommendations

3.1 The Democracy Initiative (2007/2008)

In line with the Austrian election reform in 2007, the voting age for young people was lowered from 18 to 16 years. A so-called "Democracy Initiative" – launched by the Federal Ministry of Education and the Federal Ministry of Science and Research – accompanied the reform.

The initiative included several measures with regard to citizenship education, such as an awareness raising campaign empowering first-time voters. A project fund supported innovative school projects fostering "learning and living democracy" (e.g. the setting up of a student's parliament; meetings with politicians, holocaust survivors, asylum seekers or representatives of various religions; projects focusing on intercultural dialog or equal opportunities). Another contribution to the initiative was the establishment of a new department for the teaching of citizenship education at the University of Vienna.

The implementation of "Citizenship Education" as part of a new combined school subject "History, Social Studies and Citizenship Education", starting in grade 8, was another contribution to the "Democracy Initiative". Along with the new subject, the "Com-

petency Model for citizenship education" was introduced, aiming at enabling young people's integration into political life without third-party guidance.²¹

3.2 The Competency Model for citizenship education (2008)

The aim of the model is to strengthen competence-oriented teaching and learning in order to support active citizenship and to encourage young people to get actively involved in democracy and society as a whole. The model – developed by a group of experts in line with the "Democracy Initiative" of the Austrian Government in 2008 – wants to impart the following competencies: expert knowledge, methodological competence, competence in judgement and agency. The primal objective is not the acquisition of the broadest possible range of knowledge, but the development of competencies. Students are encouraged to develop abilities and the willingness to find solutions to problems independently. The learning activities should therefore be closely linked to the lives and experiences of the students themselves. Another requirement of competence-oriented teaching is that these competencies should be acquired by means of examples of content. The specific working knowledge necessary for this, however, will not dominate the learning process, but will rather have an instrumental character²².

3.3 The new curriculum on "History, Social Studies and Citizenship Education" (2015)

In line with the two previously mentioned reforms, the Federal Ministry of Education published a draft of a new curriculum for the subject "History, Social Studies and Citizenship Education" for grade 6 to grade 8 in August 2015. Within a pilot phase in school year 2015/2016, the new curriculum and its implementation will be tested and evaluated.

The curriculum is based on nine "modules" for each grade that are dedicated to "historical education", "historical-political education" and "citizenship education". Two of the modules for each school year focus specifically on citizenship education²³ with the aim to foster a reflective and (self)-reflexive awareness of history and politics. Again, the curriculum puts an emphasis on competencies as well as on „basic terms and concepts“ in citizenship education, such as power, norms, diversity, perspective, distribution, scope of action or communication²⁴. In contrast to former curricula, the new curriculum leaves the chronological order aside and focuses on a longitudinal as well as on a cross-sectional analysis with regard to history, politics and citizenship education²⁵. Relevant spheres of politics covered by the new curriculum are the constitution and political institutions (formal dimension = "polity"), goals and functions of politics as well as competing interests and ideologies (content = "policy") and the process of the implementation of political ideas as well as political conflict resolution and consensus building (process-related dimension = "politics"). The modules for citizenship education focus on the following core areas: possibilities for political action; laws, rules and values; identities (e.g. identity formation, self-conception and external perception, national and European identity formation); elections and voting; political participation; media and political communication²⁶.

3.4 Ongoing Debates and Recommendations²⁷

The most frequent discussion regards the implementation of a separate subject "Citizenship Education" in schools in all school types. Throughout the years, several initiatives by special interest groups, non-governmental organizations, youth representations and political parties addressed the need for an exclusive compulsory subject. The proponents also expect that the implementation of the separate subject would have a positive impact on teacher training, by facilitating more standardized and consistent contents

within teacher training courses. Most of these initiatives demand a separate subject in addition to the already existing cross-curricular educational principle and stress the fact that citizenship education is (only) one of several other cross-curricular educational principles (such as health education, reading competencies, vocational orientation, consumer education, media literacy, gender equality etc.) that compete for being taken into account at school²⁸.

Another debate in recent years regarded the discontinuance of the department for the teaching of citizenship education at the University of Vienna that was implemented with financial support of the federal government within the "Democracy Initiative" in 2008.

The University of Vienna did not reoccupy the professorship after the first period expired in 2011. Following continuous critique and negotiations, in 2014 the position was called for tender again and the university is currently assessing the applicants for the head of the department²⁹.

The International Civic and Citizenship Study (ICCS), carried out in 2009, contained a special module designed for analyzing the Austrian educational context with a special emphasis on school democracy, student participation and student's attitudes towards politics as well as the development of competencies for active citizenship. The results illustrated a special phenomenon regarding the Austrian educational system that can be observed in other contexts as well: When analyzing the self-assessment as well as the performance of students concerning their abilities and knowledge with regard to citizenship education, the study revealed a very broad range between high performers and low performers. More than 40 % of the students were subsumed in the group of low performers, a particularly high rate in comparison to other western European countries. One explanation may be found within the diverse Austrian school system, with different types of schools for compulsory education even at lower secondary level that influences student's educational pathways from early on³⁰.

In 2014 a study initiated by the Centre for Citizenship Education, located at the University College of Teacher Education in Vienna, and the Chamber of Labour assessed the attitudes, approaches and needs of about 500 primary and lower secondary level teachers in Vienna. The results of the study show that teachers differ quite a lot in their approach to citizenship education according to a) their own level of political interest and involvement and b) the teacher training they received during their studies. The authors recommend that in-service teacher training should take into account the different starting positions and previous knowledge of teachers and offer the courses accordingly. In order to address these varying levels of knowledge, another recommendation demands for a standardization of teacher training for prospective teachers that provides them with the required competences, knowledge and methods in order to feel confident to teach citizenship education³¹.

4. (Formal) Participation of young people in Austria

4.1 Representation of young citizens

Currently, out of 183 representatives within the National Assembly only eight are younger than 30 years (4,4 %). The average member of the parliament is 50 years old³². When examining the parliaments of the nine provinces, in 2009 again only eight out of 448 members were younger than 30 years (1,8 %) ³³. When analyzing municipal councils, young people up to the age of 30 are represented slightly better, accounting to 6,6 % in 2012. As young people in Austria account for 18,8 % of the population, they are clearly underrepresented within (formal) politics³⁴.

4.2 Participation of young people in elections

As already mentioned above, Austria lowered the active voting age for young people from 18 to 16 years in 2007. Following the reform, several studies closely monitored the group of young first-time voters. While in 2008 – the first national elections following the reform – the participation rate of young voters was quite similar to other age groups, in 2013 the participation rate of 16 to 18 year-olds at 63 % dropped clearly below the overall participation rate of 75 %. According to the authors of one post-election study, one main reason for the decline is that politicians as well as educational institutions offered a lot of information and support for young people ahead of the elections in 2008. Because of that, young people felt well informed and taken seriously regarding the national elections in 2008. Five years later, in 2013, there was no special effort with regard to first time and young voters and thus, the participation rate fell ³⁵.

Empirical study

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Period of Investigation: March and April 2015

*Direct quotations in italics

PART I:

Investigation on Citizenship Education (CE) in Austria

Participants:

45 teachers and heads of school (grade 1 to grade 12)

Method:

online survey and paper questionnaire

(34 questionnaires were answered online, 11 paper versions)

Online survey:

www.socisurvey.de/engage/

Topics:

general information / understanding of Citizenship Education (CE) / obstacles in teaching CE / challenges / shortcomings / training and in-service education / material and methods, positive examples/wishes/needs

1. General information

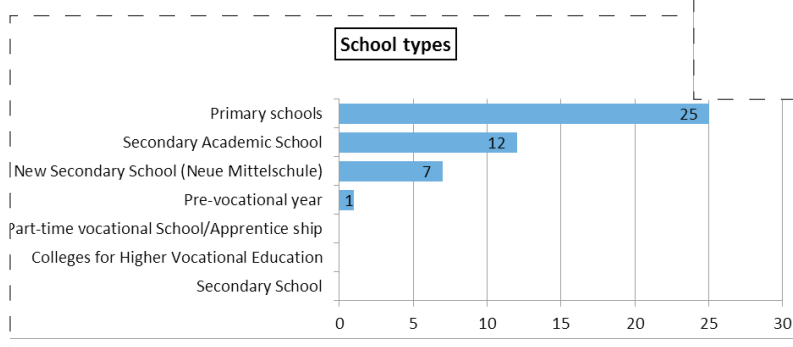
1.1. Sex of participants

Female 38

Male 7

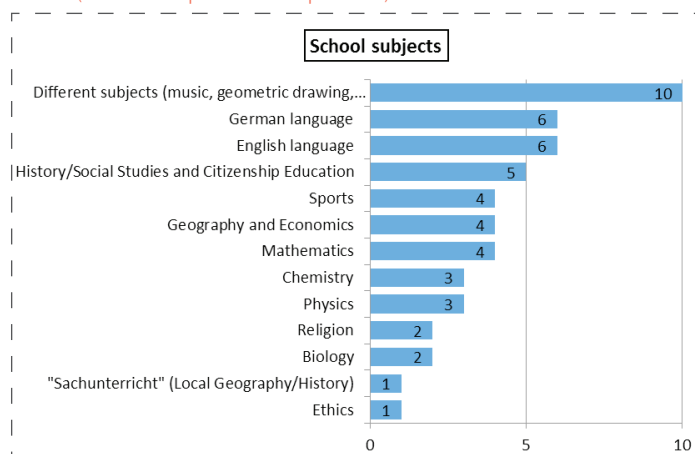
The distribution of men and women in this survey represents the proportioning of sex within the Austrian school system, illustrating a majority of female educators (approx. 70 % female educators in general education system). In Austrian Primary School women were even accounting for over 90 % of educators in 2013/2014 (see: *Statistiken im Bereich Schule und Erwachsenenbildung in Österreich: Zahlenspiegel 2014, BMBF*)

1.2. School types the participants work in (grade 1 to grade 12)



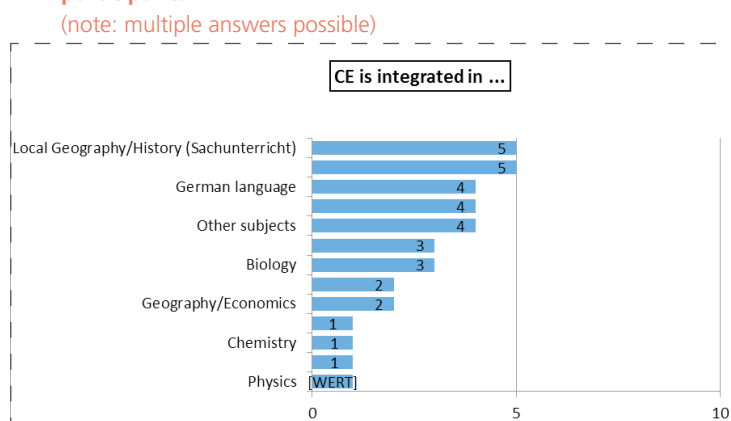
25 of the participants teach in Primary School, 12 in Secondary Academic School (grade 5 to 12), 7 in the New Secondary School (grade 5 to 8) and one in the so-called „Pre-vocational year“ (grade 9, one year, after finishing (New) Secondary School).

1.3. Range of subjects (grade 5 to 12) taught by participants (note: multiple answers possible)



The participants in this survey teach a broad range of school subjects. Most of the Primary School respondents did not mention specific categories of subjects, they are teaching at school, as they teach a variety of subjects in their class.

1.4. Subjects in which content of CE is integrated by the participants (note: multiple answers possible)

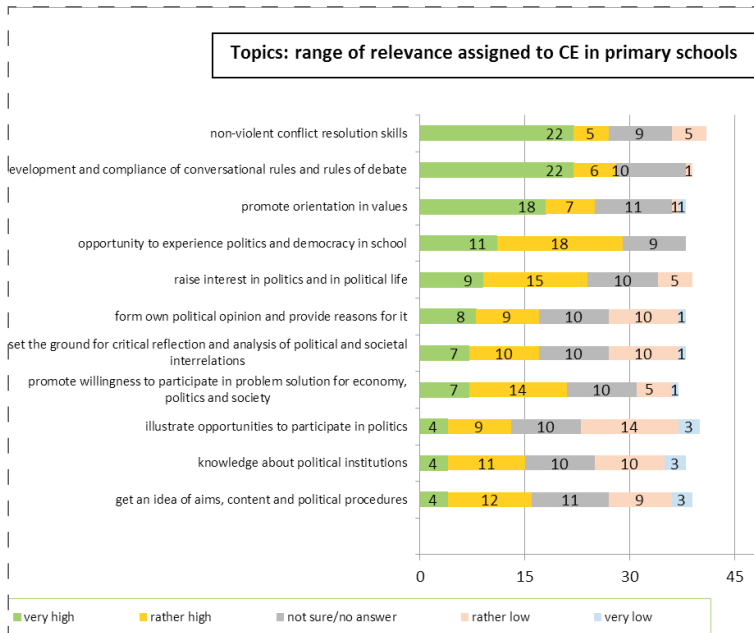


CE is not only affiliated with one specific subject (e.g. History/Social Studies and CE). Remarkably, teachers also integrate CE into subjects like Mathematics, Chemistry and Physics, which potentially allows conclusions regarding the importance of the crosscurricular integrated principle of CE in Austria.

2. Understanding of CE

2.1. Primary Schools: Topics of CE which are important for Primary Schools

Which significance do you assign to the promotion of the following aspects? (72)



Note: In the questionnaire teachers were asked to answer question 2.1. and 2.2. according to the school type they worked in. This accounts for the rates of non-answers in these sections.

Top 3 („very high” + “rather high”)

- opportunity to experience politics and democracy in school (29)
- development of and compliance with conversational rules and rules of debate (28)
- non-violent conflict resolution skills (27)

Category “Other” (8 entries)

- media consumption / dealing with media (including internet) / media education (3)
- gender-sensitive education / awareness for differences with regard to gender and opportunities for reflection and for change
- provide a safe space for articulation of opinions
- environmental protection
- separate subject CE in primary school
- to question norms and boundaries

Which are the 3 most important aspects in Primary School?

(note: apart from the categories stated in the table)

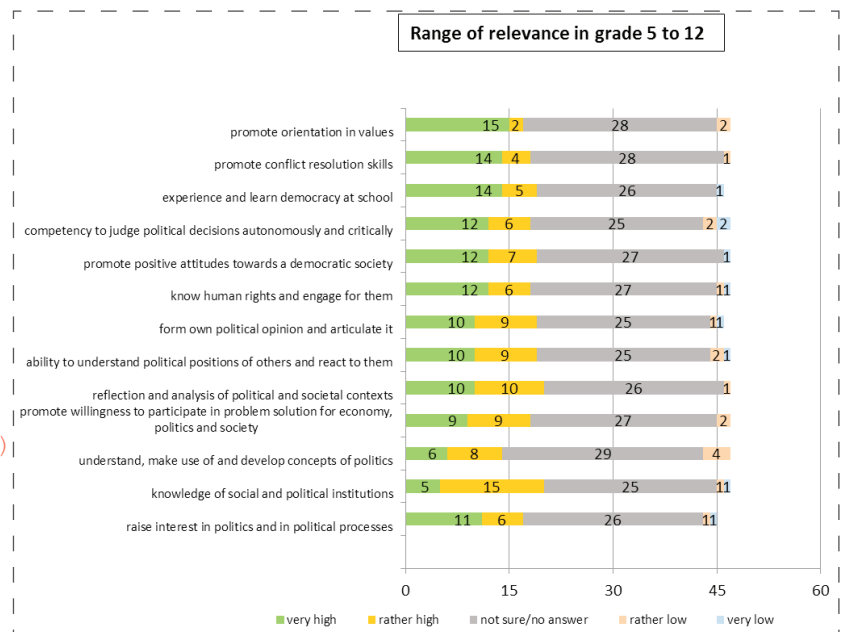
- value orientation in terms of self esteem and respect for others
- personality, school environment, private environment
- requirements for living together
- economic, political and societal correlations
- justify own political opinion
- participation (in economics, politics and society)
- ability for criticism
- to keep rules

Rules (of debate), conflict resolution and values are considered to be important by the respondents in primary education. Participation is also stressed to be important for younger students, especially on a small-scale level within school, rather than in “political institu-

tions” and “politics”. The development of a well-founded political opinion is not considered as a primal goal of CE in primary education, whereas the vast majority of the participants think that this competence should be promoted by CE in secondary education (see following table 2.2.).

2.2 Grade 5 to 12: Topics of CE which are relevant

Which significance do you assign to the promotion of the following aspects?



Note: In the questionnaire teachers were asked to answer question 2.1. and 2.2. according to the school type they worked in. This accounts for the rates of non-answers in these sections.

Top 3 (“very high” + “rather high”)

- reflection and analysis of political and societal contexts (20, ex aequo)
- knowledge of social and political institutions (20, ex aequo)

- experience and learn democracy at school (19, ex aequo)
- promote positive attitudes towards a democratic society (19, ex aequo)
- form own political opinion and articulate it (19, ex aequo)
- ability to understand political positions of others and react to it (19, ex aequo)

- promote conflict resolution skills (18, ex aequo)
- competency to judge political decisions autonomously and critically (18, ex aequo)
- know human rights and engage for them (18, ex aequo)
- promote willingness to participate in problem solution for economy, politics and society (18, ex aequo)

Category "Other" (7 entries)

- sensitivity for diversity
- media education
- collaboration of schools and non-formal institutions
- create spaces for encounters (contemporary witnesses)
- formulate own political positions and argue
- criticism of media
- dialogue with other cultures and religions

The table for Secondary School shows much less variation than the results for Primary School. Everything seems to be "equally important"; hardly any items were voted as "less" or "not important" for CE by the respondents, which means that a variety of requirements and responsibilities are assigned to CE in secondary education. The additional comments also show that media education is considered to be important in primary education as well as in secondary education by quite a few participants.

"disagree")

- curriculum leaves no time for CE (11, ex aequo) (note: at the same time 12 respondents stated that they would "rather disagree" or "disagree")
- CE could be used to promote political parties (11, ex aequo) (note: at the same time 13 respondents stated that they would "rather disagree" or "disagree")

Category "Other" (7 entries)

- It is important to enhance the education of teachers (4)
- *Each kind of acting is political!*
- *Political parties have no business at all in education.*
- Teachers have no interest to do in-service training in their free time.

Which are the 3 most important obstacles for CE in Primary School?

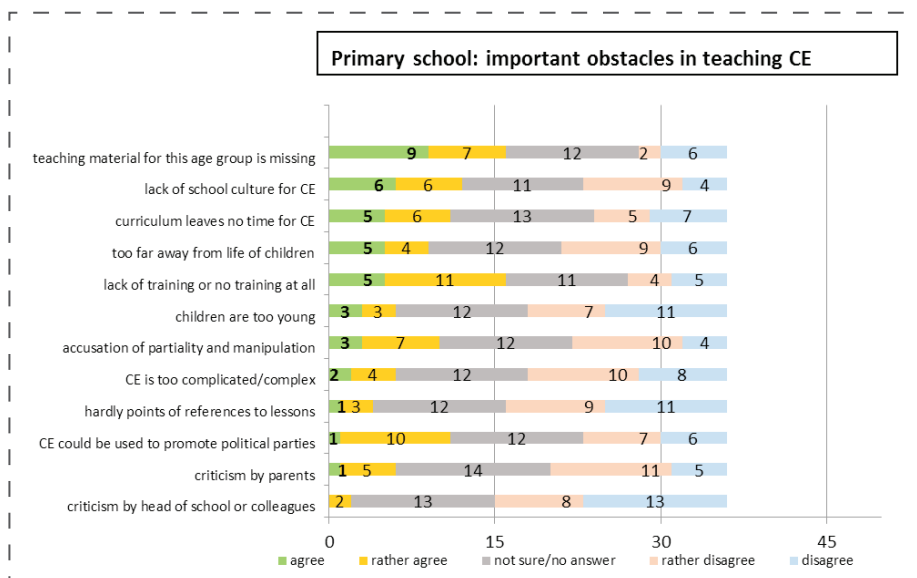
(note: apart from the categories stated in the table)

- lack of interest (note: of students)
- general lack of interest / relevance among colleagues with regard to CE
- CE is perceived as too complex and this leads to keeping people stupid
- methodical deficits in dealing with complex structures
- overload of curricula
- manipulation of political convictions
- lack of in-service training
- lack of willingness of teachers in teaching CE

Lack of training and lack of material seem to be important obstacles for primary education teachers when integrating CE into their practice. About twice as much of the participants stated that these aspects hamper their teaching. Overall, the respondents don't think that CE is too "complicated/complex" or "far away" for younger students. Also the fear of criticism by parents, colleagues and heads of school doesn't seem to be distinctive.

3. Most important obstacles in teaching CE

3.1. Most important obstacles in primary school

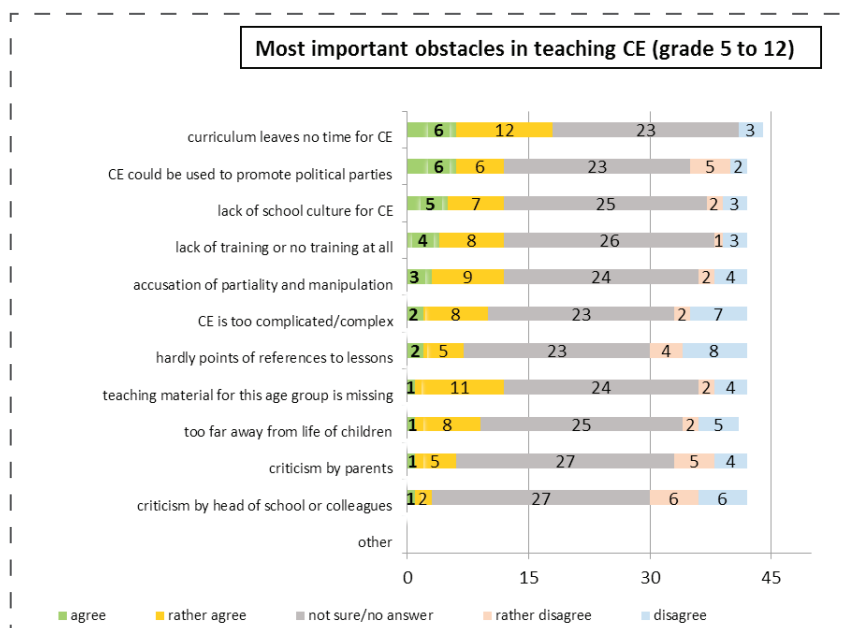


Note: In the questionnaire teachers were asked to answer question 3.1. and 3.2. according to the school type they worked in. This accounts for the rates of non-answers in these sections.

Top 3 ("agree" + "rather agree")

- teaching material for this age group is missing (16, ex aequo)
- lack of training or no training at all (16, ex aequo)
- lack of school culture for CE (12) (note: at the same time 13 respondents stated that they would "rather disagree" or

3.2 Most important obstacles in schools grade 5 to 12



Note: In the questionnaire teachers were asked to answer question 3.1. and 3.2. according to the school type they worked in. This accounts for the rates of non-answers in these sections.

Top 3 (“agree” + “rather agree”)

- curriculum leaves no time for CE (18)
- CE could be used to promote political parties (12, ex aequo)
- lack of school culture for CE (12, ex aequo)
- lack of training or no training at all (12, ex aequo)
- accusations of partiality and manipulation (12, ex aequo)
- teaching material for this age group is missing (12, ex aequo)
- CE is too complicated/complex (10) (note: at the same time 9 respondents stated that they would “rather disagree” or “disagree”)

Category “Other”

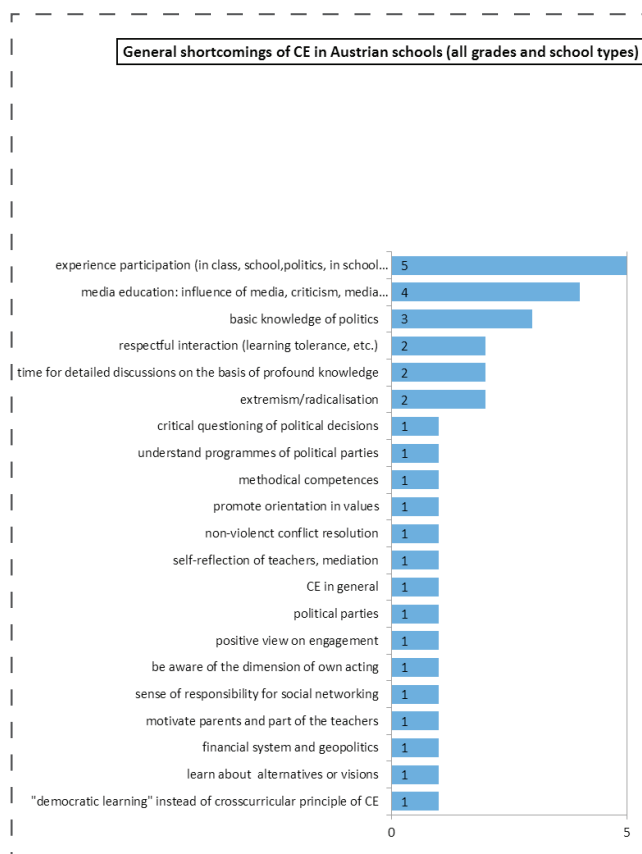
- lack of interest of students (2x)
- lack of funds for education
- CE is no separate subject, cross-curricular principle plays an insufficient role
- there is also a lack of time for media education

Not enough time for integrating topics related to CE into their lessons is considered an important obstacle by the respondents of Secondary School. Twice as much of the participants stated that there is a lack of teaching material with regard to CE and three times as many teachers stated that there is a lack of training concerning CE. Regarding the question if CE is “too complicated/complex” for students or “too far away”, teachers of Secondary School answered quite evenly, much in contrary to their colleagues in primary education.

4. General shortcomings of CE in Austrian schools (all school types and grades)

4.1. What are general shortcomings in CE?

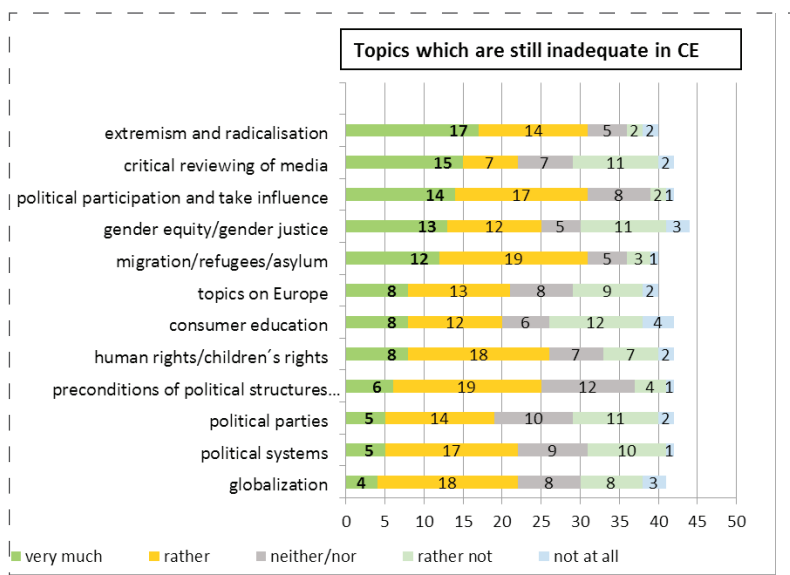
(note: open question, maximum of 3 nominations)



Again, media education is considered to be a topic that is neglected in current CE by quite a few of the participants and is stressed as an important competence throughout the whole questionnaire. Basic knowledge of politics, political parties etc. is also mentioned to be a field in which CE could be improved. The importance of school for being an intermediary by promoting various forms of participation, engagement and actions could be further enhanced, as stated by several of the respondents.

4.2. Need in CE to catch up with relevant topics

The following topics are still inadequate in CE ...



Top 3 ("very much" + "rather")

- opportunities of political participation and taking influence (31, ex aequo)
- migration/refugees/asylum (31, ex aequo)
- extremism and radicalization (31, ex aequo)
- human rights/children's rights (26)

Category "Other":

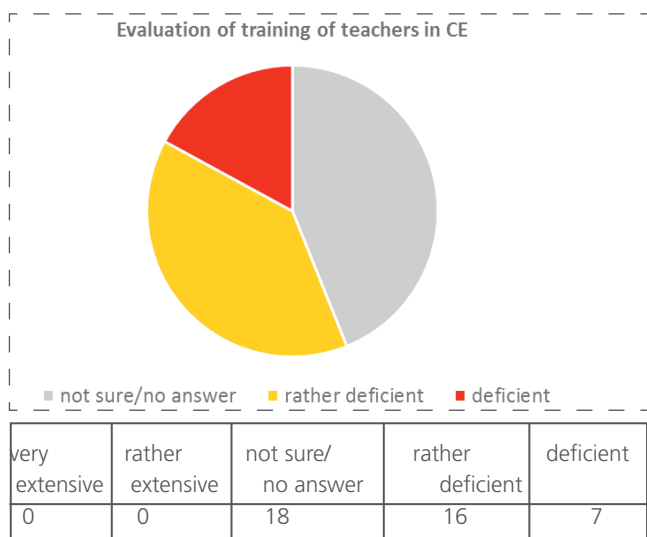
- remove coca cola machines of schools (they represent influence of economics)!
- dismantling democracy (including Troika, power of internationally working weaponry groups, rating agencies, entities like GS etc.)

Nearly all of the respondents agree that the topics "political participation", "migration/refugees/asylum" as well as "extremism/radicalization" need to be enhanced with regard to CE. Concerning most of the other topics (such as "gender equity/gender justice", "media education", "Europe", "consumer education" or "political parties") there is much more dividedness in the participants answers.

1. Education/ in-service training

5.1 Education

a) How do you evaluate training of teachers in CE in Austria?



b) In case you evaluated the education of teachers in CE to be currently rather deficient or deficient: what are the 3 most important steps towards improvement? (note: open question)

teacher education in CE:

- compulsory modules for CE in education (2)
- enhance integration of CE in curriculum of teacher education (2)
- teacher education in CE (2)
- enhance offer of master programmes in University Colleges of Teacher Education
- education for CE already during university studies
- improve quality of teacher education
- professionally competent personnel in teacher education

in-service training in CE for teachers:

- create incentive systems of in-service training – seminars, workshops etc. (4)
- compulsory module for CE in in-service training (2)
- no joint seminars for primary school teachers, lower secondary and higher secondary school teachers
- hands-on approach in in-service training
- competency-orientation and method-orientation in training and in-service training

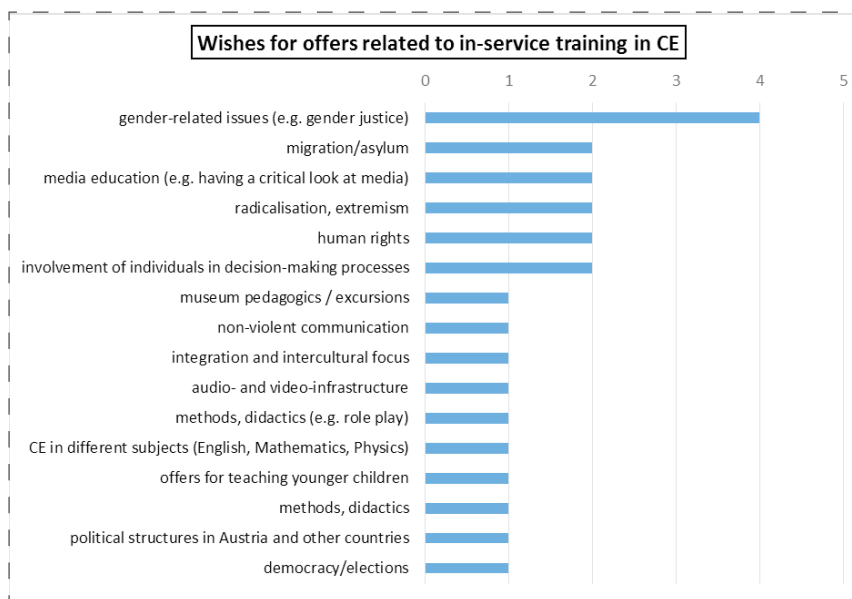
Other suggestions:

- material (well-prepared material/suitable and comprehensive hands-on material) (3)
- separate subject for CE (3)
- excursions to organisations and associations which are politically active, learn about diverse structures
- reform of University Colleges of Teacher Education (should become institutes which promote critical thinking instead of just reproducing things)
- in-depth information about countries of origin of our students with migrant background, about political structures
- ethics and value orientation
- cross-cutting issues
- comprehensive media education
- to recognize own points of view and differentiate them from facts
- cross-curricular principle of CE should be extended for interdisciplinary collaboration
- reform of subject „History“

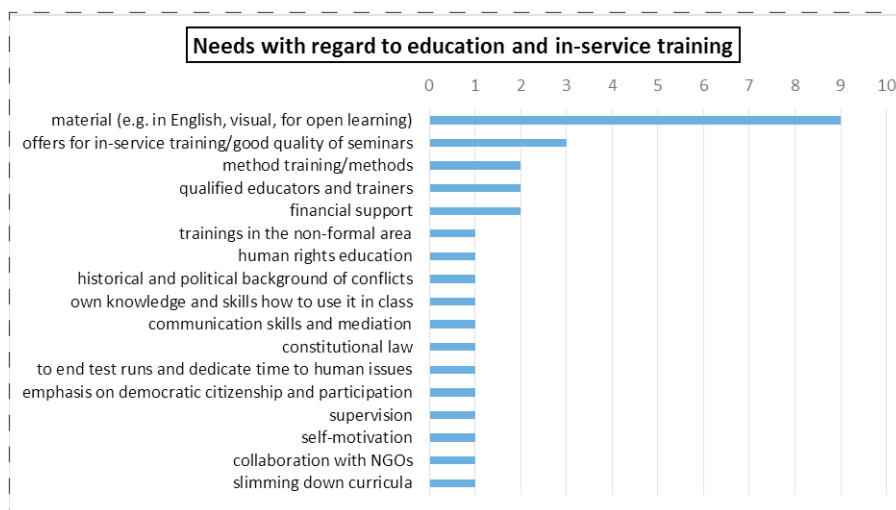
(cease chronological memorizing, instead establish culture of critical debates)

- to learn about non-violent communication
- to avoid personal rejection of dissidents
- to integrate graduates from political sciences and related studies (with supplementary pedagogic/didactical training) in school life as full members of the teacher staff
- flat hierarchies in school system, social sensitiveness

What are your wishes for offers (e.g. thematic focus) related to in-service training in CE?



c) Foremost, what would you need with regard to education and in-service training in CE to foster competencies of students? (note: open question)



Other remarks:

- there are sufficient offerings for for primary school
- there is an incredible amount of material (polis)

5.2. In-service training/advanced trainings

Which are motivating factors that inspire you to attend an advanced training? (note: open question)



Participants offer a very distinctive opinion that teacher training in CE should be improved. More than half of the respondents stated that training of teachers in CE in Austria was seen as "rather deficient" or "deficient". None of the participants stated that teacher-training regarding CE was regarded as "extensive" or "rather extensive". However, nearly half of the respondents did not respond to the evaluation of the training situation of teachers in Austria at all.

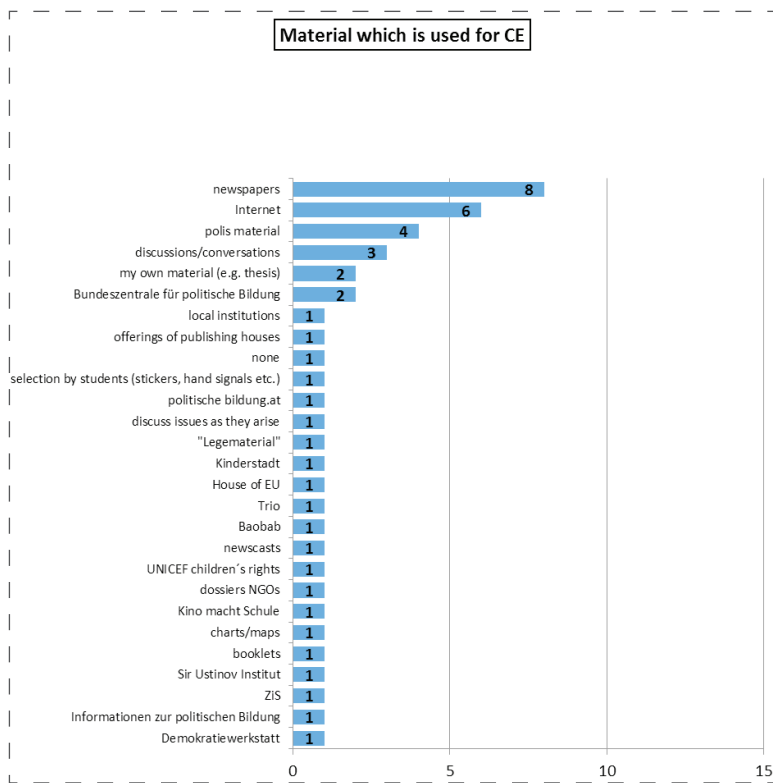
Respondents state that there is a need for compulsory modules on CE in education as well as in in-service training. They also stress the importance of qualified trainers as well as adequate material for different purposes (e.g. for different subjects, visual material etc.). Regarding motivating factors to attend an in-service training, current and interesting topics make the top of the list. When asked about topics they would wish to focus on in in-service training, several teachers name gender-related issues, followed by topics such as migration/asylum, media education, radicalisation/extremism, human rights and participation. Respondents state that there is also a need for training regarding topics such as "diversity" and inter-/transcultural understanding.

6. Material and methods

6.1. Material

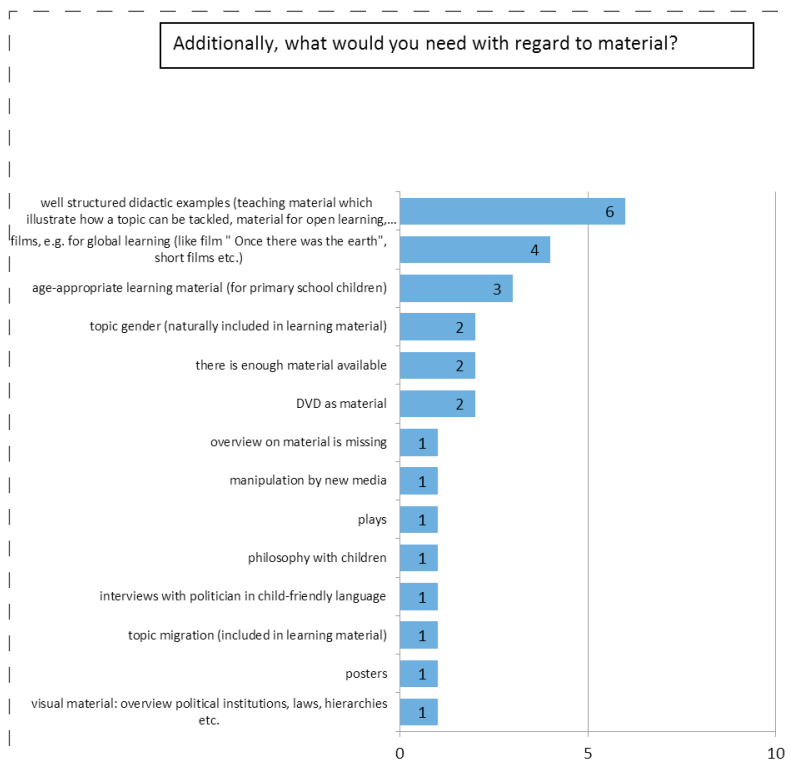
a) Which material do you or your colleagues use for CE?

(note: open question)



A lot of teachers compile/gather the material they use for teaching CE themselves (e.g. newspapers, newscast, internet research). Apart from material by Zentrum polis – which is mentioned by several teachers – there doesn't seem to be a preference for one specific institution/provider of material. Teachers draw on a variety of sources and providers.

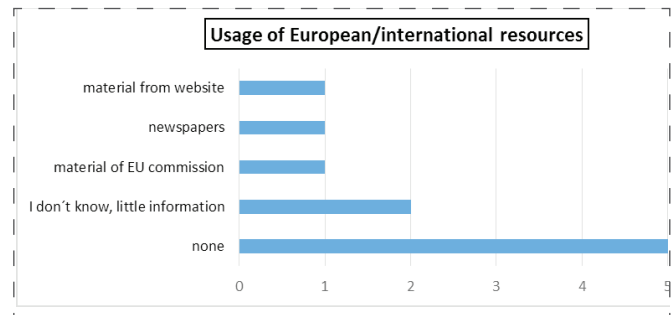
b) What would you additionally need with regard to materials (topics, media etc.)? (note: open question)



Regarding the question, which additional material in CE they would need, the respondents state a need for well-structured didactic examples as well as age-appropriate learning material. Again, a lot of teachers ask for media-based material as well as material that encourages students to critically reflect on media and media reporting. Some respondents also articulate the view that there is already enough material available with regard to CE.

c) Which European/international resources do you or your colleagues use (e.g. Council of Europe, EU etc.)?

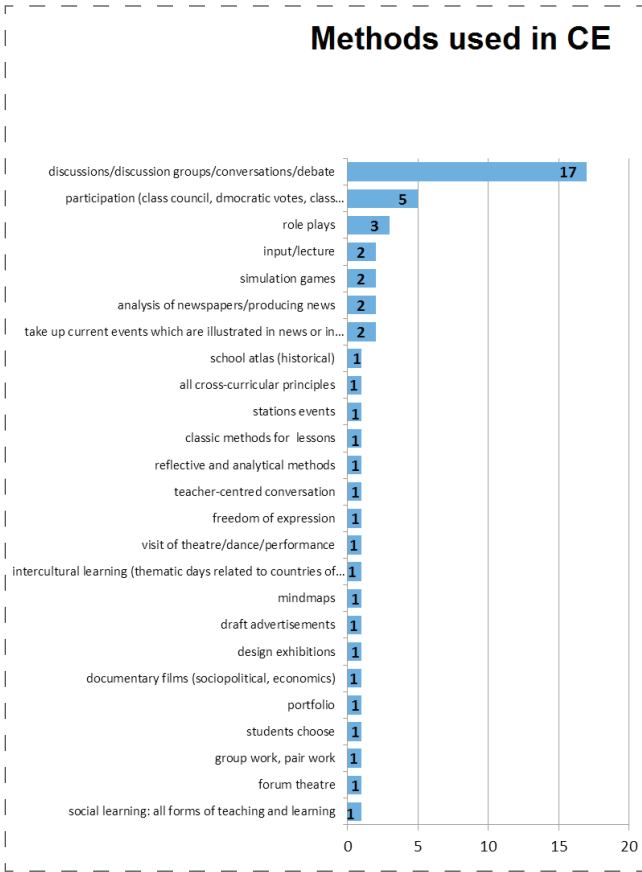
(note: open question)



When asked, if they used material by European or international institutions and providers, only about one quarter of all participants answered this specific question. And the majority of these respondents stated that they didn't use European or international resources at all, respectively that they didn't know much about these resources.

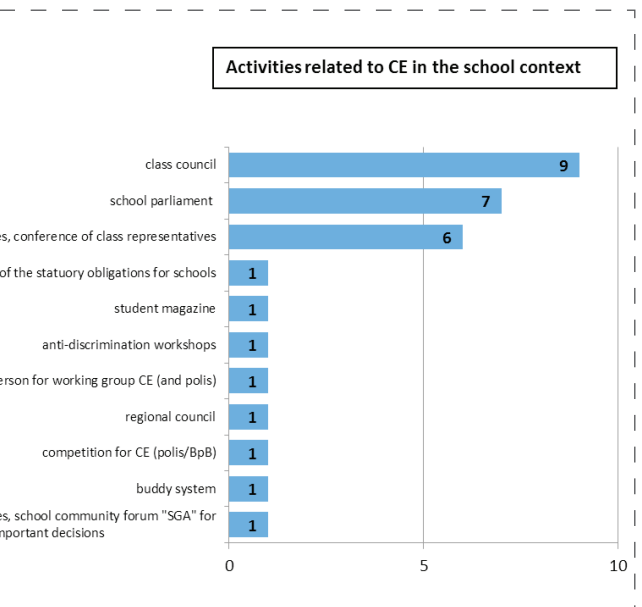
6.2. Methods/actions (open questions)

a) Which methods do you use in CE? (note: open question)



Again, this question shows a very distinct result: The vast majority of educators uses discussions/debates as the main method when teaching CE. School participation as well as role plays and simulations are other popular methods in CE. It is also remarkable that teachers use a broad range of methods with regard to CE, including artistic approaches such as dance/performance, design exhibitions, forum theatre etc.

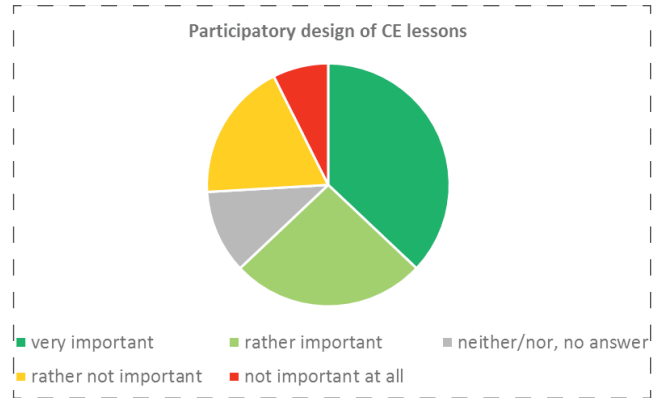
b) Which activities related to CE take place at your school? (note: open question)



(Formal) school participation is by far the most important means of activities with regard to CE in school. Several teachers also name specific projects such as anti-discrimination workshops, competitions or buddy-systems they carried out.

c) Which relevance do you assign to a participatory design of lessons of CE (e.g. students-centred teaching and learning environments, students having a say in the choice of methods)?

very important	10
rather important	7
neither/nor, no answer	3
rather not important	5
not important at all	2



Reasons to integrate a participatory design/approach in CE lessons: (note: open question)

- learning democracy and politics by living/doing it (6)
- raises interest/motivation of students (5)
- students should learn to think for themselves, articulate their thoughts and stand up for it (3)
- lessons at eye level, respect towards adolescents and their ideas (3)
- promotes social competences and cohesion in class by tackling specific subjects (2)
- it is a matter of political thinking and acting, non-violent communication, rules of democracy
- nothing good happens unless you do it
- lifelong learning demands personal skills to approach content
- children have to find socially acceptable pathways to reach their goals
- promotion of creativity

Reasons not to integrate a participatory design/approach in CE lessons: (note: open question)

- problem of space and time
- class sizes are too big
- CE is only tackled when thematically adequate

Teachers that design their lessons in a participatory way state that learning democracy is supported the most by students "experiencing/doing" democracy themselves. Another reason for the respondents to approach CE in a participatory manner is that they state it raises the students overall interest and motivation.

7. Positive examples of practice

Which example (examples) for positive experiences in your own teaching practice of CE do you remember? What has worked out well in the past/proves to be successful in present? (note: open question)

Positive experiences in general

- lessons on specific topics that went well (e.g. political system of GB, children's rights, human rights, multi-ethnic societies)
- participation of students in decisions (e.g. on the annual plan,

on the seating arrangements, on lesson contents/topics)

- improvement of social cohesion and mutual acceptance within a class (e.g. "intercultural" or "interreligious" learning, mutual understanding)
- (reflexive) discussions/debates about current issues and topics (e.g. education policy, preservation of peace, extremism)
- implementation of class or school councils or election of student's representatives
- being able to solve a problem or conflict within class/school in a participatory process (e.g. through dialogue, discussion, mediation)
- successful implementation of team-work (e.g. older students together with younger students, projects across classes, feedback by classmates)
- museum work and remembrance work (e.g. visit of the Jewish Museum)
- being able to strengthen both girls and boys in the class without perpetuating gender clichés

Positive experiences: material

- documentary films and socio-political films (e.g. BAOBAB, normale.at)
- "children's rights suitcase" (collection of pictures, worksheets and a teachers manual on children's rights)
- "Roots & Shoots" by Jane Goodall (environmental and humanitarian youth project)

Positive experiences: projects

- excursions to and workshops within political institutions (e.g. "Democracy Factory" by the Austrian Parliament, visit of town hall)
- cross-curricular project-weeks
- "protective coat project" with Ceija Stojka (workshop on Roma in Austria)
- filmfestival normale.at (socio-political films)
- project "See and remember – Present meets past" (Comenius remembrance project)

Positive experiences: methods

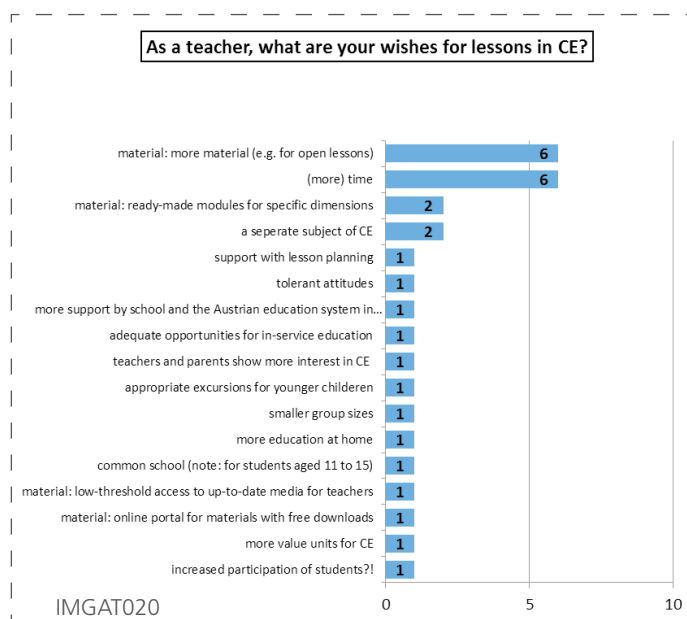
- mediaanalysis and newspaper analysis (e.g. Zeitung in der Schule)
- citizenship education via theater plays, dance or films (e.g. Filmfestival normale.at)
- roleplay (e.g. on media education, "playing" a local council meeting)
- group work / buddy-system
- philosophical debates that support critical thinking

When asked about positive examples regarding their CE practice, teachers highlight specific lessons or thematic focuses that went well within their classes. Several teachers also mention the involvement and participation of students into decisions as positive experiences with regard to CE. Quite a few respondents state that finding a mutual solution for problems and disputes or the improvement of social cohesion and acceptance within class were positive outcomes of their engagement/commitment in CE.

8. Wishes / needs

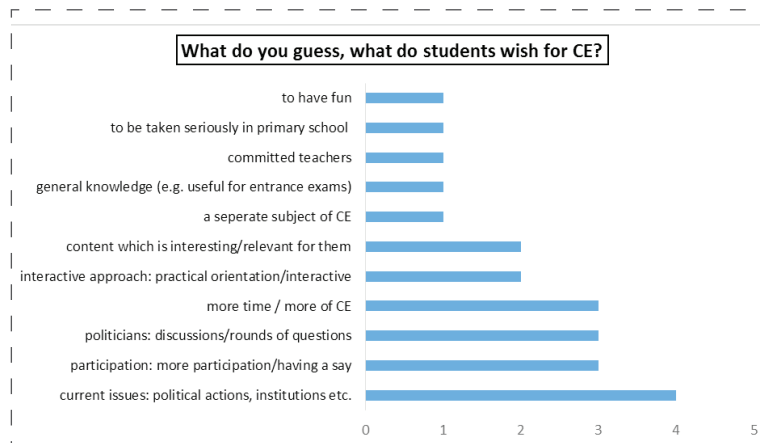
a) As a teacher, what are your wishes for CE?

(note: open question)



When asked for their wishes with regard to CE, (more) material and additional time for CE make the top of the list of the teachers. Other wishes revolve around the general "importance" of CE, e.g. implementing CE as a separate subject, better support of CE by teachers, parents, school or the educational system.

b) What do you guess, what are wishes of students for CE?



When teachers were asked about the potential wishes of their students with regard to CE, several stress the importance of including current topics with relevance to the students' lives into lessons of CE. Again, quite a few mention that also students would appreciate additional time or units for CE. Allowing for (more) participation as well as possibilities to get in touch with politicians are seen as other important wishes of students with regard to CE.

GENERAL REMARKS ON RESPONDENTS AND SCHOOL TYPES

More than 55% of the respondents (25 from the total number of 45 participants) are teachers of Primary Schools. This suggests a relatively uneven distribution between educators teaching in primary education and teachers of secondary education.

Primary School system in Austria takes only 4 years and it differs in manifold ways from subsequent years (in terms of curricula, organisation of lessons, subjects etc.). Hence, approaches to citizenship education and its practice in daily school life vary between the different school levels.

A further distinctive feature of the survey: The female/male ratio of 38/7 of the respondents reflects the significant gender gap within the Austrian school system. Data reveal that more than 90% of educators in Austrian Primary Schools are women and there is an overall rate of approx. 70% of female educators in the general school system (data for 2014, source: Statistiken im Bereich Schule und Erwachsenenbildung in Österreich: Zahlenspiegel 2014, Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs).

UNDERSTANDING OF CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION (CE)

Primary School: The majority of Primary School teachers relates „Citizenship Education“ primarily to the aims of developing social skills of children (e.g. non-violent conflict resolution skills, conversational rule and rules of debate) and, secondly, to student's opportunities to experience democracy and politics in the school environment. Critical reflection and articulation of one's own political opinion is only rated in the second place. This seems to be an analogy with statements of the expert focus group interview (national consortium of ENGAGE in Austria, January 2015)⁷³ which mentioned the tendency in primary education to equate CE with social learning. Furthermore, media education/media literacy is considered essential in primary as well as in secondary education by quite a few participants.

Grade 5 to 12: With regard to teachers of grade 5 to 12, responses are more evenly distributed and the spectrum of understanding CE is very broad. It encompasses the knowledge of social and political institutions, the reflection of political and societal contexts, but also the articulation of one's own opinion and the development of positive attitudes towards a democratic society. Value orientation and conflict resolution skills are considered important as well.

As mentioned above, the relevance of media education is highlighted for both school levels.

OBSTACLES AND SHORTCOMINGS

Primary school: Teaching material which is missing, as well as deficits in formation and in-service training facilities (e.g. methodical skills to deal with complex structures), are crucial factors. Besides, a lack of interest of students and teachers in CE is mentioned in the additional comments. One part of teachers perceives a lack of school culture for CE, whereas other respondents are confident in the latter. On the whole, it can be concluded that Primary School teachers do not perceive themselves as being very well equipped for CE.

Grade 5 to 12: With regard to grade 5 to 12, time constraints due to a dense curriculum appear as topic number 1, followed by the factors, which are already mentioned above for Primary School teachers (lack of material, education/training, school culture), followed by potential accusations of partiality.

CONCLUSION: WHAT ARE NEEDS OF TEACHERS WITH REGARD TO CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION?

The small sample allows some cautious estimates on needs and perceptions of teachers in Austria with regard to CE (although they may differ in manifold ways, among others with view to primary and secondary school level). On the whole, teachers estimate that CE should provide (more) opportunities for students to experience participation and democracy, but also to critically deal with media (including the use of media) and to enhance young people's basic knowledge of political institutions.

The main areas for improvement identified by the respondents are **material, education and in-service training** and, furthermore, **structural preconditions for CE** (e.g. having more time available for CE, smaller class sizes, a common school for students aged 11 to 15, better support of CE by teachers, parents, school or the educational system). With regard to the latter, the implementation of CE as a separate subject (note: which means that CE is not combined with other subjects like History and Social Studies or Geography etc.) is suggested several times.

CE should increasingly address current and interesting topics which are in the focus of media coverage. Extremism and radicalization, migration and refugees or human rights/children's rights is mentioned in this regard, but also options for political participation and taking influence.

Needs/suggestions related to material

Teachers mention (among others) well-structured didactic examples, ready-made modules for specific dimensions, low-threshold access to up-to-date media, an online portal for material with free downloads, adequate material for different purposes (e.g. for different subjects), visual material and age-appropriate learning material (for Primary School children). A lot of teachers appreciate media-based material and material that encourages a critical reflection of media and media reporting.

Needs/suggestions related to education and in-service training

Respondents clearly state that education and in-service training in CE should be improved – in terms of its extension and profundity, but also with regard to qualified educators. The need for increasing the institutionalisation of CE in education and training is obvious. Suggestions are, for example, to integrate CE into the curriculum for teacher education (compulsory modules in education and in-service training) and to generally improve the quality of teacher education.

When asked about topics for in-service training they would like to address, several teachers mention gender-related issues, followed by topics such as migration/asylum, media education, radicalisation/extremism, human rights and participation or topics related to diversity and intercultural/transcultural learning.

What teachers guess that students primarily would wish for regarding CE, are interesting and current content as well as participatory and interactive approaches, e.g. inviting politicians for discussions. Wishes of teachers and assumed wishes of students most notably coincide in two points: to have more time available for CE and to deal with current and interesting topics.

PART II: **National expert focus group on Citizenship Education (CE) in Austria**

Venue: January 26, 2015 (office of polis – Centre for Citizenship Education in Schools), Helfferstorfer Straße 5, 1010 Vienna

Interviewers: Maria Haupt, Elisabeth Turek (polis – Centre for Citizenship Education in Schools)

Participants: 5 members of the national consortium for the project „ENGAGE – Building together European learning material on EDC“. Mr. Mittnik could not attend the meeting due to other commitments. He was interviewed on January 14, 2015. His responses are integrated in the main findings of the focus group.

Thomas Hellmuth (Ass. Prof. University of Salzburg, didactics of History and Citizenship Education)

Gabriele Lener (Head of a primary school in Vienna)

Elisabeth Schaffelhofer García Marquez (Managing director of the National Coalition for Children’s Rights in Austria, Workshop trainer for EDC/HRE)

Sigrid Steininger (Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and Women’s Affairs/Department Citizenship Education, Austrian coordinator for the Council of Europe’s “Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights” programme)

Erika Tiefenbacher (Head of a secondary school in Vienna)

Absent (excused):

Philipp Mittnik (Zentrum für Politische Bildung/Center for Citizenship Education at the University College of Teacher Education, Vienna)

Topics of the focus group:

- general shortcomings and challenges in CE
- positive developments in the field of CE and examples of good/best practice
- comparison: CE in Austria and other countries
- content of CE: what is still missing related to topics, material?

Main findings of the expert focus group interview on citizenship education (CE) in Austria

The summary reflects a snapshot of different views and statements of the participants.

Topics related to Primary Schools

- Some participants of the national consortium stress the shortfall of CE in Austrian Primary Schools and point out that CE, for the most part, is regarded as insignificant for children aged 6 to 10.
Generally, children of this age are not considered mature enough to deal with historical and political issues. Adults worry about discussing issues with children which go beyond „being nice and tolerant to each other“, but instead encourage them to take a stand on an issue and to argue.
- There is a lack of child-friendly edited and didactically well prepared learning and teaching material as well as a lack of topics which address consumership, tolerance/respect, religion, asylum/ migration etc. There is a need of more „provocative“ topics/material which encourage younger children to articulate themselves.
- Topics of CE should be related to the daily life of children (e.g. different dimensions of playgrounds; school regulation

and how it is put into practice etc.)

- Social learning is often equated with CE (yet, as some participants point out, interpersonal conflicts are different from political conflicts).
- Teachers of Primary Schools already put into practice a lot of activities which are related to CE (like school parliaments, class council etc.), even though in their mind those efforts are not considered to be part of CE. Compared to social learning, CE suffers from rather negative perceptions of teachers in Primary Schools.

Shortcomings in teacher education/training and lack of clear structure of CE

- Systematization and a clear structure in teacher education/training of CE are stated by some participants as benchmarks for substantial changes in CE. Currently, a clearly defined concept and framework of CE is missing (e.g. with regard to didactics and content). Training for CE lags behind requirements, which has an obvious impact on schools. A further aspect is seen in gaining sufficient funds for education/training in CE.
- The curriculum of the subject „History, Social Studies and Citizenship Education“ for prospective teachers (in Secondary Academic Schools) focuses on teaching content of History, whereas CE remains a peripheral matter. Teacher students neither gain real insight into the framework of CE, nor into the range of topics, which they are supposed to address at school. The time frame, which should be dedicated to History on the one hand and to CE on the other hand, is not clearly defined in the course of the study. As of next school year, compulsory modules in CE from grade 6 on are likely to bring about improvements and prospective teachers will have to deal with concrete content of CE.
- Regarding in-service training for teachers some participants mention that more funds are needed. A second aspect is the poor frequency of trainings by teachers, although there is a wide choice of offerings at pedagogical colleges and educational institutions. One participant comments that in-service teacher training should be mandatory.

Methods, learning process and organisation of CE

- CE should be organised in a manner which makes it possible to reach the diversity of students. It is important to sustainably anchor methods and topics of CE within the school context. Opportunities to do so are (among others) project learning or interdisciplinary teacher teams.
- Some examples of good practice for CE given by the national consortium: exemplary learning, conceptual learning and pedagogical concepts of global learning (e.g. Global Cube).
- CE should promote student’s understanding of the tasks and the impact of representative democracy. The core elements of democracy (e.g. plurality within a state) are mentioned to be fundamental in this regard.
- Acquiring knowledge and acquiring competences should go hand in hand and be enhanced simultaneously (not in the sequence of „first address knowledge, afterwards competences“).

General suggestions for development of material

- A central website, which is structured and sorted according to curricula
- Recommended and hands-on material (easily accessible without extensive searching of teachers)