

T-KIT 7

European Citizenship in youth work



The training kits series

Youth Partnership

Partnership between the European Commission
and the Council of Europe in the field of youth



T-Kit 7

European Citizenship in youth work

Revised edition

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Welcome to the T-Kit series

Some of you may have wondered: what does T-Kit mean? We can offer at least two answers. The first is as simple as the full version in English: “training kit”. The second has more to do with the sound of “T-Kit”, the word that may easily recall “ticket”, one of the travel documents we usually need to go on a journey. For us, this T-Kit is a tool that each of us can use in our work.

More specifically, we would like to address youth workers and trainers, and offer them theoretical and practical tools to work with and use when training young people.

The T-Kit Series is the result of a collective effort involving people from different cultural, professional and organisational backgrounds. Youth trainers, youth leaders in NGOs and professional writers have worked together in order to create high-quality publications, that address the needs of the target group while recognising the diversity of approaches across Europe to each subject.

The T-Kits are a product of the partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth.

To find out more, visit the website:
pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership

Contents

PREFACE	5
A word about language	6
1. INTRODUCTION	7
Approach	7
Structure and contents	7
2. ABOUT CITIZENSHIP	9
An ongoing quest	9
Current forms	10
3. A SOCIAL PRACTICE	13
The political, social, cultural and economic dimensions	14
The senses of belonging: a personal approach	15
A dynamic, complex and integral concept	15
4. YOUTH WORK AND EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP	19
Young people's learning	20
5. BUILDING EUROPE TOGETHER	23
Concept and practice mutually feed each other	24
Beyond stereotypical representations	24
Voluntarily chosen status that becomes a social role	25
Human rights as the basis of European Citizenship	25
Citizen–citizen relations and civil society	26
Shared criteria of identity	26
Sense of belonging	27
Europe as collective memories – or ongoing construction	27
Europe as a mental territory	28
Culture as plastic, political, contingent	28
Present and future-oriented	28
Construct, deconstruct, reconstruct	29
6. OPEN QUESTIONS FROM YOUTH WORK PRACTICE	31
Informal learning of citizenship	31
The role of the community	32
Multiple identities	32
National heritage and Europe	33
Europe and the rest of the world	33
The role of faiths and religions	34
7. EDUCATION FOR CITIZENSHIP	35
Communitarian or civic republican understandings of education for citizenship	35
Individualist understandings of education for citizenship	35
Educational activities for European Citizenship	37
Starters	38
Exploring participants' views	45
Going deeper...	53

8. OTHER EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES ON EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP THEMES	67
A tale of two cities	67
A mosque in Sleepyville	67
Can I come in?	68
Dreams	68
Euro-rail "à la carte"	69
Force the circle	69
How can we respect and live together with minorities?	69
Let every voice be heard	70
Limit 20	70
Making links	71
On the ladder	71
Tales of the world	72
To vote, or not to vote?	72
Trade union meeting	72
9. CITIZENSHIP IN EUROPE: ELEMENTS FOR A HISTORY	75
Citizenship in the ancient world	75
The Middle Ages	75
The European Enlightenment	76
The liberal understanding of citizenship	76
Revolutions	77
The nation state	77
Human rights are older than you might think...	78
Women	78
Citizenship in Europe since 1945	78
10. CALL TO ACTION AND REACTION	83
11. RELEVANT INSTITUTIONAL WORK ON CITIZENSHIP	85
Council of Europe	85
European Union	86
EU–Council of Europe youth partnership	86
12. BIBLIOGRAPHY	87

LIST OF FIGURES

1. The citizen–community dynamic	9
2. A conceptual framework of citizenship	13
3. Senses of belonging	15
4. Multiple senses of belonging	15
5. Developing wider senses of belonging	15
6. Aims for youth work and European Citizenship	20
7. Themes	21
8. Skills and values	21

Preface

Welcome to this revised edition of the T-Kit on European Citizenship in youth work!

This T-Kit was devised in order to find ways to stimulate young people to engage more in society (thus exploring citizenship) and to support them as they develop their sense of belonging to the wider community, Europe, and as they become concerned about, and committed to, its values, its present and its future.

The concept of European Citizenship is deeply connected with the ideals of democracy, participation and human rights in Europe and beyond. On the one hand, many young people express those ideals in multiple ways, as active citizens, outside and inside the formal democratic structures. On the other hand, it is still a challenge to stimulate many young people to engage more in society and feel concerned by wider European or global processes.

Some questions remain open. At what level should young people engage in society? What impact can local youth organisations have, when faced with massive European or even global issues? As we become more aware of global societal processes, we are challenged to make sense of them at the local level. European Citizenship is also concerned with this link between local realities and wider international and European processes.

Europe can provide a bridge here. As nation states start to be perceived as being less influential and less relevant in our globalised lives, Europe can provide a transnational space for communication and action in solidarity with the rest of the world. Young people know there is a bigger world out there than their local communities, and Europe can provide opportunities for exploring, learning and engaging. The wider European space can offer a forum for exchanging solutions and also for creating solutions together. This is the sense, the idea and the potential of European Citizenship.

This revised T-Kit was created at a particular time for Europe, and for the world. The 2008 financial crisis with its multiple facets (financial, economic, social, political and of the construction of Europe), affecting the daily life of people all around Europe, has hit young people acutely. Many signs point to deep questioning of European unity. In these times of urgencies and emergencies, to engage in wide reflection on European Citizenship could be considered misleading. What should all this be about? Can we still speak about a sense of European Citizenship while in some countries discourses for national sovereignty and against Europe are becoming more and more common? What is the role of young people, and what role can youth work play as a space for exploring global realities and for engaging young people in these matters?

On the other hand, more than ever before, there is a certain consensus (among countries, communities, social actors, institutions, organisations and citizens) on the need to articulate co-ordinated responses to this “crisis” at European level and to uphold together the values and missions of human rights, democracy and peace.

Times of transformation like these always bring both opportunities and threats. We certainly see the threat of disillusionment and frustration with politics, the threat of unco-ordinated or purely finance-oriented policies, the threat of populism, of renewed nationalism, and the threat of a selfish Europe in a globalised world. Together with that, we are experiencing the opportunity and the need to deepen democracy, so that national and European institutions become more relevant to the interests and concerns of citizens. We see the emergence of new mechanisms of participation and the possibility for civil society actors and emerging

citizens' initiatives to shape politics and longer-term orientations in how societies decide to respond to challenges. Many projects and initiatives reveal the opportunity to strengthen human rights approaches to societal development – including social rights – not as a luxury for good times but as a shared social, legal and ethical compass necessary for living together in equality and dignity.

Another issue which guided our reflections on the T-Kit was the dimension of diversity. Diversity in Europe is more than a social characteristic. Diversity is at the heart of Europe. In times of crisis, apart from being a value, diversity is an opportunity. We have the opportunity to employ diversity for finding adequate solutions – instead of simplistic and excluding answers – to the challenges of a complex and interconnected world. Becoming a space for discussing diversity with young people and building their competences to live together in multicultural societies can also be a task for youth work; and intercultural competences are certainly some of the most important ones when acting in the spirit of European Citizenship.

Finally, this T-Kit was inspired also by a more historical drive to the European project. Within living memory, neighbours all across Europe have been enemies at war, with young Europeans called upon to kill other young Europeans. In more recent history, we have seen similar tales of sorrow and destruction unfolding in the south-east of our continent. Developing European Citizenship is also about consolidating the achievements of European integration, overcoming current challenges and investing in the future.

The partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission in the field of youth has had European Citizenship as one of its priorities. It launched the first T-Kit on European Citizenship entitled “Under Construction” back in 2003, and organised three series of training courses for youth trainers, youth workers and educators, held a research seminar and developed other related publications. Those were followed by courses in the frame of the Youth in Action programme of the European Commission and by many activities organised by youth NGOs and other civil society organisations. As realities in Europe developed, a need to revise the T-Kit emerged, both to bring the concept of European Citizenship closer to the spaces that youth work offers for young people to learn to be part of society, and to update the T-Kit with relevant information and know-how for youth workers and educators.

The ideal of European Citizenship is obviously still under construction and many questions are yet to be answered. What meaning does this European community have for young people? Do they even perceive Europe as a community to which they belong? Why do so few young people vote in European elections? Is there a future for Europe? If the answer is “yes”, then today's young people are going to be the ones to shape it. Europe should be the forum where those questions are discussed and where shared values can be acted upon, within Europe and with regard to those outside – wherever we choose to see the boundaries of “outside”.

This T-Kit on European Citizenship in youth work does not come to life until you make it happen. As the team writing this publication, we have a number of expectations. We hope that you find the T-Kit open and provocative. It includes some necessary conceptual references and it aims to be practice-oriented but not a recipe book. We hope that it will be useful in helping to bring European Citizenship closer to young people's experience and understanding, but also close to their hearts.

Enjoy the exploration. Whether you choose to take the map with you, or leave it behind to have a look at later – bon voyage!

Paola Bortini, Gülesin Nemutlu, Miguel Ángel García López, Gerard Tosserams,
Zara Lavchyan, Ruxandra Pandea, Mara Georgescu, Marta Medlinska

A WORD ABOUT LANGUAGE

For this T-Kit, the editorial team made a few linguistic choices.

Firstly, the team decided to use capital letters for “European Citizenship”, in order to distinguish it from a legal understanding of the status of citizens of any of the EU member states. As presented in the T-Kit, European Citizenship is something more than this and something different.

Secondly, the team decided to use the terms “education for citizenship” and “education for European Citizenship”, to underline the link between educational processes and their outcomes in practice. Currently, several other terms are in use. For example, the European Commission uses the term “citizenship education”, while the Council of Europe uses the term “education for democratic citizenship and human rights education”. The North-South Centre promotes “global education”, as the global dimension of education for citizenship.

Chapter 1

Introduction

The title of this revised T-Kit, *European Citizenship in youth work*, indicates that there is hope and the experience needed to bring European Citizenship close to the spaces that youth work creates for young people.

The T-Kit aims, first and foremost, to support those who work with young people in Europe to develop activities on the theme of European Citizenship – using European Citizenship as an approach and framework in youth work, and carrying out activities for European Citizenship or taking action in society to uphold its values, such as democracy and human rights.

APPROACH

European Citizenship is a dynamic and complex idea, and education for European Citizenship presents a number of challenges. Without ignoring the diversity of views and developments in these areas – controversies included – the approach of this T-Kit is practice-oriented.

This means that, in answer to the question “What is European Citizenship?”, this T-Kit offers some information and also proposals for developing a thorough understanding. It invites readers, at the same time, to see themselves as *the citizens* and to develop their own understanding of what European Citizenship can become in their own context, within the value framework on which modern Europe was created.

This T-Kit offers educational guidelines and activities developed in an international context, with reflections on using and adapting them to other contexts. In order to be meaningful, education for European Citizenship needs to make connections with the daily lives of young people, with the places where they live and with their aspirations and possibilities.

The T-Kit makes use of the existing approaches of education for democratic citizenship, understood as practices that aim, by equipping learners with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviour, to empower them to exercise and defend their democratic rights and responsibilities in society, to value diversity and to play an active part in democratic life, with a view to the promotion and protection of democracy and the rule of law. (Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, 2010)

The revised edition is adaptable to a local youth work context as well as to international youth initiatives. The activities have been prepared for a non-formal education context, but can be adapted to other environments.

The revised edition kept most of the contents of the first edition on concepts of citizenship. The history of citizenship was updated.

STRUCTURE AND CONTENTS

Chapter 2 “About citizenship” and Chapter 3 “A social practice” explore the main concepts used in this T-Kit and the tensions related to them. Chapter 4 “Youth work and European Citizenship” and Chapter 5 “Building Europe together” describe the key concepts and educational orientations of the T-Kit with the support of concrete examples showing how to approach this theme in youth work. Chapter 6 “Open questions from youth work practice” introduces some issues and controversies related to European Citizenship, among them informal learning, multiple identities, Europe and the rest of the world, national heritage, religion and the relation to power.

Chapter 7 is a short explanation of the main approaches used in education for citizenship. Chapter 8 “Other educational activities on European Citizenship themes” contains material ready to be used and adapted in youth work activities, including some from other educational resources that could be equally useful. Chapters 1 to 8 are complemented by Chapter 9, a historical overview of the development of citizenship, and completed by the call to action in Chapter 10.

Finally, Chapter 11 “Relevant institutional work on citizenship” summarises the work of the Council of Europe and the European Union in this field, and the activities of their youth partnership on the topic.

Chapter 2

About citizenship

This chapter offers a summary of the different approaches to citizenship.

In the section “An ongoing quest”, An ongoing quest, we look at quotations from various philosophers, politicians and social scientists talking about citizenship. They provide an insight into the evolution of ideas about citizenship in the last 50 years.

Citizenship is traditionally defined as the relationship between the state and the individual. Yet, by now we know that, because of the changing needs of people and their circumstances, their relationship with the state is affected by an ever-expanding list of other aspects, one of which is the relationship between the individual and society. In the section “Current forms”, we look at the four common constructs of citizenship which define the relationship between the state and the individual. In Chapter 3, “A social practice”, we explore the four dimensions of the relationship between the individual and society, and the meanings of people’s sense of belonging.

Citizenship is a contested notion (i.e. there are many different understandings) because traditions and approaches to citizenship vary across history and across Europe, according to different countries’ histories, societies, cultures and ideologies. All these different ideas about citizenship live together in a fruitful – but also troublesome – tension that has economic, social and political implications.

Within any of these different understandings, from the perspective of the individual, citizenship is an intrinsically contested notion because it implies a permanent interaction and negotiation between the personal needs, interests, values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours of each citizen and the communities in which they live and participate.

Figure 1: The citizen–community dynamic



AN ONGOING QUEST

By the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, the straightforward understanding of citizenship as a status given by the state to the individual started to be questioned.

Citizenship is the practice of a moral code – a code that has concern for the interest of others – grounded in personal self-development and voluntary co-operation rather than the repressive compulsive power of state intervention. (Hayek, 1967: 79)

Definitions of citizenship started to point to the free will of the individual and the question of belonging to a community.

Citizenship is a status bestowed on all those who are full members of a community. All who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed. There are not universal principles that determine what those rights and duties shall be, but societies in which citizenship is a developing institution create an image of ideal citizenship. (Marshall, 1973)

The rights which come with citizenship status, as well as the responsive duties, start to be named in the 1970s, which initiated an ongoing process of claim and provision by both the state and the citizens.

Citizenship is the peaceful struggle through a public sphere which is dialogical. (Habermas, 1994)

During the 1990s, concepts of citizenship were once more questioned, following an increase in migration and various needs becoming apparent in society. The introduction of multidimensional citizenship created links between citizenship, identity and diversity.

The world order changed with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the USSR, which also meant for the ex-Soviet states a need for reconsideration of many notions, particularly of citizenship, participation, democracy and freedom. This was for a generation a time of crisis of identity, and for younger generations it was a time of searching for their identity in complete reconsideration of social and democratic values.

Citizenship is not just a certain status, defined by a set of rights and responsibilities. It is also an identity, an expression of one's membership in a political community. (Kymlicka and Norman, 1995)

Citizenship is a complex and multidimensional concept. It consists of legal, cultural, social and political elements and provides citizens with defined rights and obligations, a sense of identity, and social bonds. (Ichilov, 1998)

The diverse everyday practices of individuals were once left to the private spaces of people in the name of ensuring equality in status. Today, the challenge is to redefine citizenship in such a way that these differences can also be practised in public spaces, as the mood of the times is asking for.

CURRENT FORMS

In literature and in practice, we see that the notion of citizenship is generally defined and practised in four different forms, each with a different basis:

- ▶ citizenship based on national identity;
- ▶ citizenship based on papers;
- ▶ citizenship based on duties and responsibilities; and
- ▶ citizenship based on rights.

Knowledge of these different forms can be helpful in understanding each other when debating citizenship. The parties of the debate may not be referring to the same practice even though they are using the same "C word".

Citizenship based on national identity

The roots of citizenship based on national identity date back to the French Revolution. The foundation of the state sovereignty was named as "the nation". By this time, the word "nation" referred to the people living within the geographical borders of the state.

In time, together with the increasing power associated with the state, the importance associated with the people of the state, called "the nation", started to increase as well. Historically, the rise of people's sovereignty and the rise of nationalism overlapped. Derek Heater (1990) refers to this as a "historical accident".

Simultaneously the term *citoyen* ("citizen") started to be used for people who had a raised consciousness of the nation and its related responsibilities, whereas "the people" referred to the masses. In time, the words "nation" and "people" started to be used interchangeably and the term "national sovereignty" became the centre of power.