

BEYOND CITIZENSHIP LESSONS: INQUIRIES IN FORMAL, NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL SETTINGS

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Panel abstract

It might be a 'global' interest to express 'citizenship education' and to define formal ways of teaching citizenship at school. These formal ways introduce concise pedagogical means and strategies promoted by state, policy and economy. However, citizenship education is much more than formal instruction. It includes a variety of occasions to learn from. Young people become involved into a plethora of social and political situations – it's crucial to their coming of age as fellow citizens of a political community, circle or unit. Learning encompasses a map of structures and practices to learn about.

Therefore, this panel focuses on 'citizenship education' in a distinctive way: it considers the relations among places or sites of learning, which clearly promote matters of citizenship and social justice. All papers seek to challenge classic understandings of 'citizenship education' which mainly concentrate on institutional arrangements. Those classic foci sometimes restrict the researchers' point of view to traditional sectors of formality, non-formality, or informality. However, learning about and through citizenship should always include plural settings. Young people can participate in different local units. They might hold varying belongings or they might be part of different communities. Settings of formal education – like schools or public agendas – could be connected to or interrelated with others sites.

The panel reports on different case studies from Europe and Asia. Each empirical study emphasizes specific learning sites that are to a greater or lesser extend connected to 'formal citizenship education'. Why do informal sites like corridors, cafeterias or niches at school matter for citizenship learning? In which way do trips and activities that take place outside school provide different understandings of political participation? Or, in which way do young people's political activities in youth organizations bring up alternatives to conventional citizenship instruction? The papers in this panel investigate these distinctive understandings of citizenship education and discuss the connections among varying settings and sites.

In detail, the papers will address the following (general) questions: What counts as citizenship learning? How might the interrelations between different sites of citizenship learning be defined? How do sites of citizenship learning promote political action and social justice? Concerning formal curricula, what do we learn from research that focuses on places situated close to school or other formal agendas? All papers illustrate findings from qualitative empirical (and comparative) research.