



Betzavta International - Learning the language of democracy

SUMMARY

One of the ongoing challenges and important tasks for a democracy is to develop a democratic culture among its citizens. Democratic *institutions* certainly form an important base but without the development of corresponding attitudes among the people, they are running the risk to remain an empty shelf.

A limited understanding of democracy is also affecting the approaches of democracy education, which often put an overemphasis on cognitive learning aspects, e.g. an understanding the procedural aspects of its institutions. Another challenge in this educational field is the limitation to an abstract discussion about the (dis-)advantages of different forms of democracy without making young people aware of their own attitudes and possible consequences for their own life and their immediate surroundings.

Based on the shortcomings of traditional models of civic education the Betzavta approach was developed in Israel already in the 1980s and became later broadly adapted in the formal and non-formal sector in Germany. It promotes participation through a hands-on, experiential learning process during which participants are getting the chance to get into deep reflections on their own explicit and implicit attitudes towards democracy. Through an extensive work with dilemma based situations participants also have the chance to become increasingly aware of possible discrepancies between their self image and actions in concrete situations.

Although Betzavta is gaining increasing international popularity due to its ability to connect with a wide range of important contemporary youth work topics (e.g. democratic decision making, conflict resolution, multiculturalism), international training offers in the field are still very rare. It was also deliberately chosen to implement the project in cooperation with EECA partner region + Russia as in most of the countries of the partner region a lack of democracy education practices can be clearly seen. A comparatively weakness of a civil society based on democratic values unfortunately still forms a characteristic of the post-soviet states and the capacity building of actors in the field with an innovative method will help to strengthen the existing initiatives in this area.

COORDINATING ORGANISATION

MELJEM
E D U C A T I O N

Mellem Education (Denmark)

PROJECT DETAILS

Dates	9 - 16th December 2015
Place	Aghveran, Armenia
Type	Training course
Working language	English

OPEN CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

OBJECTIVES

- To provide youth workers and youth leaders from program and EECA partner countries with the chance to deeply reflect on their attitudes towards democracy through an experiential learning setting
- To raise the competences of participants to make use of new methods/tools in their work and to improve their democratic skills and sensitivity of young people
- To form a network of likeminded organisations, which are interested in the further cooperation and exchange on innovative forms of democracy and civic education

APPLICATION

Please fill in the following online application form until **5th November**:
<http://tinyurl.com/nng67p5>

COSTS

Accommodation and board will be fully covered. Travel costs can be reimbursed up to the following amounts:

Spain, UK, Russia	530 €
Denmark, Germany	360 €
Ukraine, Belarus	275 €
Georgia	180 €

PARTICIPANTS PROFILE

- Youth workers and youth leaders interested in exploring an innovative and experience based way of democracy education
- Having the possibility to make use of their newly gained skills in their work with young people afterwards
- Interested in setting up cooperation with similar organizations from other European countries
- Being able to communicate fluently in English

CONTACT PERSONS

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