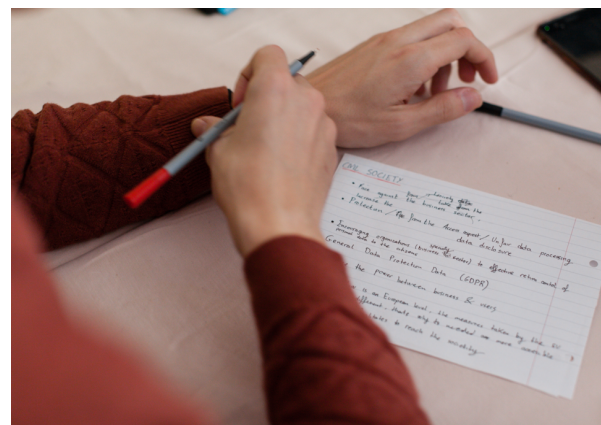# A Profile of Non-Formal Youth Civic Education in Germany

Inspiration for a Reimagined Civic Learning Infrastructure

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Contents

1.   Introduction

As the very fundamentals of democratic society are challenged in nations across the globe due to increasing political polarization, populism and mistrust of democratic institutions and the media, greater attention has turned to civic education as a tool for combatting these challenges. There is increasing agreement among academics, policy-makers, practitioners and the public that civic education must be prioritized. Contention arises, however, when it comes to vital follow-up questions like: what is the goal of civic education?; what methodologies are most effective?; who is responsible for its provision?; what legal and institutional conditions best support civics?; and what steps need to be taken to move the issue forward?

This discussion paper explores the German infrastructure for *außerschulische politische Jugendbildung* (non-formal youth civic education) as an alternative model that may serve as a source of inspiration in rethinking our ideas about civic education and the infrastructure needed to support it. Implications of this infrastructure are discussed, and I propose recommendations based on these findings – using the German case both as a positive example, and in some cases, as an example of what to avoid. I specifically look at *non-formal* youth civic education, because Germany exhibits strong legal, institutional, conceptual and funding

frameworks for its provision, considered part of youth work, and it is well worth exploring this unique model. Here, a note on terminology is useful.

> *"Education is what is left over when you have forgotten what you've learned."* – B.F. Skinner

Identifying an accurate translation for the field and practice of *außerschulische politische Jugendbildung* in English-language context is difficult due to language specificities as well as differing approaches to the work. As opposed to formal education, which takes place in schools and universities, and informal education, which constitutes unintentional learning, non-formal education consists of "institutionalized, intentional and planned" learning events and "mostly leads to qualifications that are not recognized as formal qualifications by the relevant national educational authorities, or to no qualifications at all[1] – learning for the sake of learning. A more extensive description of non-formal education follows in sections 2.3 and 3.3.

The German concept of *Bildung,* which does not have a suitable direct translation in English

that fully encapsulates its meaning, can be interpreted as an aim and process of non-formal education; In contrast to *Erziehung* and *Ausbildung* which insinuate specifically training and gaining of knowledge and skills, *Bildung* is an ongoing process of personal growth which encompasses knowledge, values and social responsibility. Likewise, the term used for the profession of a non-formal educator is *Bildner,* which translates directly as "creator", not a term used in English, but one that better captures the essence of this unique German vocabulary.

Although the German term, *politische Bildung*, translates directly to "political education", this carries certain negative connotations in some spaces, so a better translation is "civic education". Often perceived in the U.S. as a domain of formal education, *civic education* refers to "content (knowledge *about* political institutions, principles, and processes of governance), mastering specific democratic skills (e.g., public speaking, critical thinking, etc.), and the attaining of particular dispositions (e.g., social responsibility, tolerance, compassion, etc.)", whereas *civic engagement* emphasizes "learning through doing"[2] and is associated with working to make a difference in the civic life of one's community. Per Philanthropy for Civic Engagement's (PACE) Civic Learning Primer, *civic learning* more broadly describes "a range of educational experiences that prepare young people for informed and engaged participation in civic and the democratic process...through learning and practice"[3] to include non-formal and informal learning, but it connotes a greater passivity than what is described here. Some similarities can also be identified with the concept of *civic youth work,* which refers to its task as "the ongoing co-creation with young people of democratic living-citizen".[4] However, this term is not widely used in praxis, and the

concept developed by Roholt and Baizermann may refer too specifically to a certain model that does not fully reflect all that *außerschulische politische Jugendbildung* encompasses. As a result, in this paper, I use *non-formal youth civic education* as the translation for *außerschulische politische Jugendbildung,* as it describes a pedagogically intentional learning process aimed at fostering civic knowledge, skill and attitude development that takes place outside of formal education.

> *Nowhere else in Europe is there such a differentiated, diverse, legally secured and above all theoretically well-founded system of youth work as in Germany.*[5]

In addition to a literature review, the material presented here is based on 12 months of ethnographic research conducted between November 2019 and October 2020. Specifically, the material presented in this report is derived from semi-structured interviews with 15 non-formal civic educators and civic youth workers in Germany and four youth participants, and participant observation as a research fellow working with the Arbeitskreis deutscher Bildungsstätten (Association of German Educational Organizations [AdB]), a non-profit umbrella organization for over 100 non-formal civic education centers throughout the country. The limited number of interviews does not aim to be representative, but rather to provide a summary of common themes. Eight interviews were conducted in-person and eleven by video or voice call between January and September 2020. Eight women and eleven men were

interviewed, and the level of experience in the field ranged from under five years to more than thirty. Fourteen interviews were conducted fully in German, three fully in English and a mix of the two languages was used in two interviews. All quotes originally in German have been translated into English for the purpose of this paper.

Section 2 begins with an exploration of the German case, providing a detailed description of the legal, theoretical, institutional and funding frameworks for non-formal youth civic education. Section 3 is divided into eleven subsections that discuss the major themes that arose as infrastructural implications during the research process. Finally in section 4, I present recommendations for a reimagined civic learning infrastructure based on the German case that is intended specifically for a U.S.-American audience, but may also be of use for other democratic countries looking to explore a different model of civic education.

2. The German Case

2.1 Legal Framework

The right to civic youth education is legally codified under the federal government's social code (SGB VIII Kinder- und Jugendhilfegesetz [KJHG]), which came into force in January 1991.[6] Under Section § 11 Youth Work (*Jugendarbeit*), it states clearly that non-formal youth education with a focus on general, political, social, health, cultural, natural history and technical education is to be provided to young people until the age of 27-years-old, although it conditions that this can be extended as appropriate. Each federal state has an implementation act pertaining to the Child and Youth Services Act, and the federal system operates on the principle of subsidiarity, meaning a central authority performs only those tasks that cannot be executed by a person, group or organization at a more local level.

In December 2019, the Federal Ministry for Families, Seniors, Women and Youth (*Bundesministerium für Familien, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend* [BMFSFJ]) released an independent youth policy framework (ages 12-27) as a cross-departmental, future-oriented, and independent social policy based on the social relevance of childhood and youth, the resulting requirements, and the interests and ideas of children and young people.[7] Among the nine fields of action named in the policy

are participation, engagement and democracy, to fulfill the goal of fostering interest in politics and trust in democracy as well as the ability to be heard and involved. Kernels of civic education also bleed into the other goals, such as ones focused on fostering European citizenship and cohesion and acceptance of diversity.[8]

Laws regarding continuing education are also relevant. Although they are concentrated on adult education, they include anyone 16 years or older and are therefore also of interest for young people. Almost all federal states have laws regarding provision of adult/continuing education, and in 14 out of 16 German states, there are "education leave" laws (*Bildungsurlaubgesetze*) that afford five days of paid leave to employees for educational purposes.[9]

2.2 Institutional Framework

There are an impressive array of public bodies at the federal level that support civic education. For example, there are 10 federal ministries or authorities that regularly attend meetings of the Federal Committee for Civic Education (*Bundesausschuss für politische Bildung* [bap]). Formerly the Working Committee for Civic Education (AApB) until 2002, bap was developed as a cross-sector

committee to provide an arena for handling common concerns.

Perhaps the most obvious institution on the German scene is the Federal Agency for Civic Education (*Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung* [bpb]), which supports all interested citizens in navigating politics by promoting an understanding of political knowledge, strengthening democratic awareness and

throughout the country, of which there are 250 at present.[11] There are also state-level agencies for civic education (*Landeszentralen für politische Bildung*) that organize on the regional level in all 16 German states.

Professional associations and umbrella organizations, many of which are non-profit organizations that are financially supported by public funds, also play an important role and

Federal Bodies Supporting Civic Education
- Ministry of the Interior (BMI)
- Federal Agency for Civic Education (bpb)
- Ministry for Families, Seniors, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ)
- Federal Administrative Office (BVA)
- Ministry of Defense (BMVg)
- Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)
- Ministry for Economic Collaboration and Development (BMZ)
- Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF)
- Ministry for Labor and Social Affairs (BMAS)
- ENGAGEMENT GLOBAL gGmbH

fostering willingness to participate in political life.[10] The agency, which is housed under the Federal Ministry of the Interior and has physical seats in Bonn and Berlin with media centers providing materials for free or at low cost to the public, primarily serves as an information and resource center, providing materials in print and online and hosting events covering a wide range of political and societal topics and developing new methods for effective and widespread citizenship education. They also train and provide materials for journalists and civic education professionals – both teachers and non-formal educators – and are involved in the recognition process for civic education centers

take on a multilayered form. The previously mentioned, publicly-funded Federal Committee for Civic Education (*Bundesauschuss politische Bildung e.V.* [bap]) is a group of organizations working at the federal-level in civic youth and adult education.[12] The 25 member organizations come together with the goal of strengthening and representing the field in politics and society through exchange, common projects and events, lobbying and in producing a journal of civic education. GEMINI, the Joint Initiative of Youth Civic Education Actors in bap (*Gemeinsame Initiative der Träger Politischer Jugendbildung im bap*) is a sub-organizational body of seven member organizations focusing on youth education

specifically[13], representing in total around 1,750 institutions.[14] All of these seven and many of the other organizations represented in bap are umbrella organizations themselves, representing their own set of organizations in their respective arenas from all across the country. The Association of German Educational Organizations (*Arbeitskreis deutscher Bildungsstätten* [AdB]), for example, is a professional association of 105 (as of 2020) member organizations in the field of non-formal civic education.

The complexity inherent in such a structure reflects the diversity of actors involved in the field of civic education beyond schools. As *bap* states:

> civic education happens in youth clubs/associations and in non-formal education centers [*Bildungsstätten*], in unions and churches, in adult education centers [*Volkshochschulen*] and city initiatives, in political party and association committees, in foundations and businesses, in seminars and projects, often in connection with work-related continued education/training or interest groups and increasingly in cooperation with formal education".[15]

This diversity of actors ascribed responsibility for civic education reflects a pluralistic society and means that the public can engage in civic learning in many spaces and across many themes. Professional associations help to organize this diversity under a set of common goals and united theoretical and practical discussions and raise overall societal awareness about the importance and opportunity that the field as a whole provides. Communication across sectors is supported by structures like the Round Table (*Runder Tisch*), which gathers individual organizations to secure collaboration in the field through "structured dialogue".[16]

Germany's infrastructure is further supplemented by institutions acting on the European and international levels. The International Youth Service of the Federal Republic of Germany (*Fachstelle für Internationale Jugendarbeit der Bundesrepublik Deutschland e.V.* [IJAB]) is an association to support international youth work and international youth policy cooperation with the goal of "creating greater mutual understanding, offering international learning opportunities, enabling more participation, and combating xenophobia, racism and violence".[17] JUGEND für Europa, the German national agency for the EU programs (Erasmus+ Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps) is another important actor in international youth work. Given the implicit and explicit crossover between youth work and civic education, these institutions deserve mention for their contribution to the field.

Despite the fact that many of the professional associations receive public funding either in whole or in part, the authority and decision-making power is independent, allowing them to make their own decisions as to where to allocate funds, what work to focus on, etc. These institutions operate with an independent mandate as mediators between individual education organizations and federal public bodies, as a central authority for funds and a means of communication. The relationship can be interpreted as horizontal as opposed to vertical, where the state sees itself as a support structure rather than a directive force. This follows the principle of subsidiarity; action and decision-making should be left to lower levels (individual education institutions or associations) when goals can be better reached by them than by a further-removed

public body. Naturally, this requires a certain level of trust in these non-governmental partners on behalf of the state.

2.3 Theoretical Foundation

The Federal Child and Youth Plan (*Kinder- und Jugend Plan des Bundes* [KJP]) describes non-formal youth civic education as:

> Civic youth education imparts knowledge about the connections between politics and a variety of topics and offers and shows them the opportunities for involvement in socio-political processes. Its aim is to promote democratic awareness and political participation of young people and enable them to contribute to the further development of democratic culture.[18]

A definition from the Federal Agency for Civic Education adds to this definition that it offers "pedagogically intentional learning opportunities",[19] and a report from the Association of German Educational Organizations (AdB) further emphasizes "enabling participants to form judgments based on their own interests and experiences".[20] It is about making the connection for participants between the issues that are important to their lives and political life, rather than a narrower definition of civic education as dealing exclusively with explicitly political knowledge or themes.

Although topics covered in non-formal civic education offerings are vast, to include human rights, historical-political education, diversity and inclusion, solidarity, global citizenship, interreligious dialogue, discrimination, a variety of forms of community engagement, etc., civic education's overarching goal is

communicating civic knowledge, developing civic skills and fostering civic attitudes.

In addition to clear definitions as to what non-formal civic education is and aims to do, the field is also grounded on a clear theoretical basis: the Beutelsbach Consensus (*Beutelsbacher Konsens*). During the 1970s in particular, civic education experts and practitioners debated the essential questions of what civic education aims to do and under what conditions it should be designed. Conflict between the left, which viewed civic education as an educational instrument for democratization of society, and the conservative wing, which viewed it more as a protection of the constitutional political order and social market economy, came to a head at a meeting in the Schwabian town of Beutelsbach in 1976.[21] The outcome of the summit provided clarity around these essential questions by clarifying a minimum standard of civic education and laying out three essential principles:

1. *Prohibition against overwhelming/indoctrinating the student/participant.* It is not permissible to catch students off-guard, by whatever means for the sake of imparting desirable opinions, thereby hindering them from "forming an independent judgment". This is the difference between political education and indoctrination. Indoctrination is incompatible with the role of a teacher in a democratic society and the generally accepted objective of making students capable of independent responsibility and maturity.
2. *Matters which are controversial in scholarship and political affairs should be presented as controversial in the classroom.* This point is closely tied to

the first, because if different perspectives are left out of sight, varying options suppressed and alternatives undiscussed, the path to indoctrination is clear.

3. *Students should be in a position to analyze a political situation and their own personal interests as well as to seek ways to have an effect on given political realities in view of these interests*. This objective requires acquisition of operational skills, which follow logically from the first two principles.[22]

Although the Beutelsbach Consensus has not eliminated the debate on the role and scope of civic education, it did set out rules to help quell the controversy around a neutral, state and democracy-supporting civic education and a supposedly indoctrinating one.[23] Their continued relevance is clear in speaking with those active in the field today; interview participants often and repeatedly referred to the Beutelsbach Consensus in regard to a variety of themes that arose. The Frankfurt Declaration of 2015 extended these original principles to make clear the position of a critical-emancipatory civic education. It was drafted by 19 academic experts and practitioners and has received 170 signatories.

1. Crisis: a civic education that focuses on the democratization of societal relations deals with the radical changes and multiple crises of our time.
2. Controversy: civic education in a democracy should reveal conflicts and dissent, and fight for alternatives.
3. Criticism of power: autonomous thinking and action are limited by dependencies and structural social inequalities. These relations of power and domination should be detected and analyzed.

4. Reflexivity: civic education is itself part of the political. Learning relations are not free from power structures, political education reveals this.
5. Empowerment: civic education provides an empowering learning environment within which experiences of power and powerlessness are scrutinized and challenged.
6. Changes: civic education creates opportunities to change society, both individually and collectively.[24]

In the last two decades, focus has turned to competence-orientation. At the beginning of the 2000s, a "PISA-shock" – concern over German students' performance on international standardized tests – prompted formal education in particular to focus on learning goals and outcomes in a variety of subject areas. Thus, competence-orientation came into focus. Rather than concrete goals, such as the learning outcomes of a particular activity, competence-orientation prioritizes the mediation of knowledge and fundamental ability to deal with long-term needs of the learner[25]. The main focus of such competence models has been formal education, but models also exist for non-formal civic education. Those that endorse them see them as a way of improving quality, tracking impact, and/or providing a basis for evaluating and certifying programs and institutions[26]. Moreover, they may actually aid communication in cross-sector partnerships, for example between schools and non-formal education providers. Although partners are unlikely to use the same approaches, established competences provide a sort of common language. They provide a way of more easily understanding theory and using it in everyday work.

Despite these perceived advantages, a shift toward competence-orientation in non-formal

civic education is also criticized for its association with school-based education and because it ostensibly undermines the core nature of non-formal education as inexactly measurable, participant-oriented and diversely conducted.[27] Practical issues such as a lack of dedicated time on behalf of non-formal educators to reflect on competence-orientation is also a barrier. An awareness of the value of using competence models may be abetted by increased availability of professional trainings on the subject.

2.4 Funding Framework

Germany has a strong tradition of public funding for civic education. The funding structure couples long-term, institutional investments and project-based funding from across sectors: both public (EU, federal and state) and private foundations. Without producing a comprehensive overview of all funding opportunities, this section will highlight several important funding mechanisms.
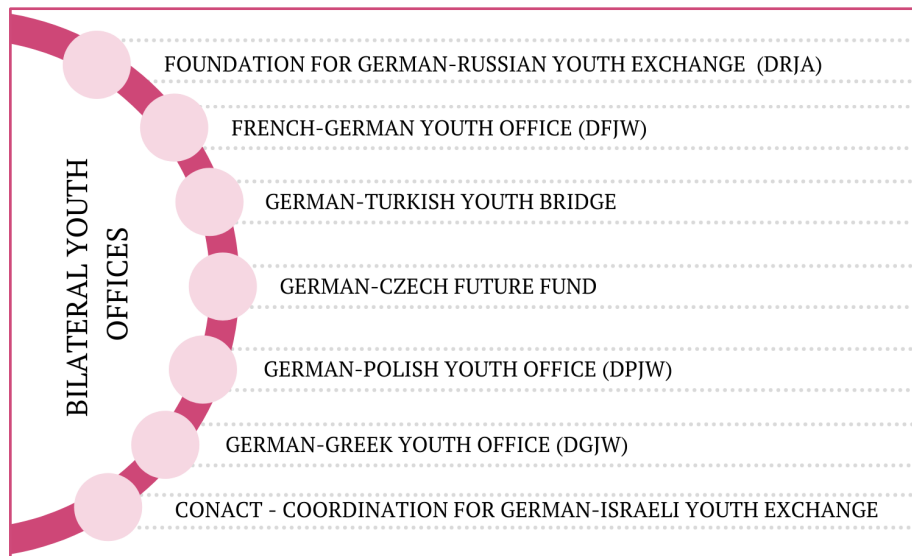
The Ministry for Families, Seniors, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) coordinates the Federal Child and Youth Plan (KJP), which was introduced in 1950 as the central funding instrument for child and youth welfare at the federal level according to the aforementioned SGB VIII.[28] Among its tasks, it supports non-formal child and youth education to include civic youth education. It clearly lays out its commitment to infrastructural investments by providing long-term funding to certain associations and professional organizations to support professional and theoretical advancements in the field; develop professional standards and country-wide communication and cooperation structures; and represent the professional practice at the federal level. In addition to

these longer term investments, the Ministry (and others) provide competitive grant funding which seeks to support professional associations, education-oriented initiatives and institutions, academies and education centers in tackling specific topics and developing innovative methods for civic education.[29]

BMFSFJ also operates the Live Democracy! (*Demokratie Leben!)* program, which promotes democracy and diversity through projects related to civic education, media competence and civic engagement. In 2019, this program had a €115 million budget. The program is constructed as competitive project grants to support the development and testing of new methods and ideas, networking and transfer of information. During the 2020-2024 funding period, the focus will be on promoting democracy and diversity and preventing extremism.[30]

The federal states and municipalities are also important funding partners. Each has state-specific laws and guidelines and its respective agency or ministry that handles youth affairs outside of formal education.[31] A fundraising database from the Ministry for Economy and Energy (BMWi) makes it easier to search for specific grant opportunities fitting for civic education projects at the state, federal and EU levels.[32]

Funding at the European level through programs like Erasmus+ Youth in Action are another important resource for organizations working in the international civic education realm, as are publicly and privately supported bilateral cooperations.

BILATERAL YOUTH OFFICES

- FOUNDATION FOR GERMAN-RUSSIAN YOUTH EXCHANGE (DRJA)
- FRENCH-GERMAN YOUTH OFFICE (DFJW)
- GERMAN-TURKISH YOUTH BRIDGE
- GERMAN-CZECH FUTURE FUND
- GERMAN-POLISH YOUTH OFFICE (DPJW)
- GERMAN-GREEK YOUTH OFFICE (DGJW)
- CONACT - COORDINATION FOR GERMAN-ISRAELI YOUTH EXCHANGE

These bilateral institutions, funded jointly by the governments of the two respective countries, present a unique structure that serve as a focused coordination body for youth initiatives (school and non-school) and specialist training between Germany and the respective countries.

Although a comprehensive overview of all funding opportunities is beyond the scope of this paper, it is important to note: 1) the sheer availability of resources, both public and private, and 2) the mixture of infrastructural as well as project-based funding. Of course, although infrastructural funding is available for certain institutions, like many professional associations and umbrella organizations, the individual organizations direct-service organizations rely to a large extent on short-term project funding, both public and private.

3. Infrastructural Implications

3.1 Recognition of the Value of Civic Education

A value for civic education depends on strong legal, theoretical, institutional and funding infrastructures. Compared to other countries, the infrastructure for civic education in Germany, particularly non-formal civic education, is well-developed. With a variety of institutions focusing on civic education and many funding sources - both public and private – it is obvious that civic education is of particular value.

Commonalities can be identified between the structures for youth work that existed during the Weimar Republic (1918-1933) and even the Wilhelmine Period (1890-1918)[33], but a common narrative is that, historically, the valuation for comprehensive democratic education as a societal good stems largely from the reeducation politics of allied troops (primarily U.S.-Americans) in the post-World War II period in West Germany, which spanned school, youth work, and youth and adult non-formal education.[34] Practically, this effort to orient and socialize Germans to democracy was carried out through the creation of pluralistic and independent organizations such as youth groups, labor unions, education institutions and other associations to allow for the self-organized application of democratic principles. Additionally, specific educational programming was developed to foster democratic skill-

building and to embed democratic values.[35] The modern infrastructure is largely a relic of this post-war period, although the original laws and institutions date back to the Weimar Republic.[36] Direct legacies of these efforts still exist today, such as the education center, Wannsee Forum (originally "Camp of Wannsee" grounded in 1947 by the Americans), the International Forum Burg Liebenzell, and the Bavarian Youth Council (*Bayerischer Jugendring*), a coordinating body of district youth associations grounded in 1947.[37]

Evidence of a continued political and societal value for civic education was echoed by interview participants:

> *It is still remarkable that this field has such a strength, if you look at the number of houses, the number of clubs, the number of actors who do it, it is quite impressive.* (International civic youth worker)

Some interview subjects recognized the value while also indicating a need for increasing investments in order to reach more people, and many pointed out concerns with the way funding is set up (for example, the balance of short-term, project-based vs. long-term funding). However, from a comparative perspective with other countries in the EU and worldwide, it became clear that Germany invests more in these structures, as many

interview participants attested based on their work with international partner organizations:

In comparison to other countries, we have good structures. We have a funding landscape that is there, that you may sometimes have to look for a bit, and of course applications are sometimes rejected, but I always say that if you have a good idea, you always get the funding....It's a big advantage....I have Hungarian colleagues who can't implement activities because there is no more funding, because the government has abolished all funding possibilities. Then you can no longer work. That is a huge advantage. (Non-formal educator, state political party foundation)

While youth work and education for democratic citizenship is supported in various EU-level documents and funding structures, the presence of national-level institutions and bodies to support the work in many EU member states is limited. Certainly, the Erasmus+ program has been vital in enabling project-based work on education for democratic citizenship and human rights education in European countries, although the infrastructural dimension is not the main aim of the funding program. Still, as one participant noted, it can be difficult to find compatible partner organizations in other countries due to limited structures and institutions working in civic education:

In international comparison, this is also what is always reflected by the other partners in developing an international youth encounter with a political theme. It isn't so often. They often wrap it up in cultural education and social education. But to do something so clearly cultural-

political is rare. It doesn't happen. (Non-formal civic educator)

The relative strength of organizational structures and availability of funding is a historical legacy, but it is also viewed as a salve for current societal threats. In particular in recent years, calls from politicians for expanded civic education as a tool for promoting tolerance of diversity, anti-extremism and respect for democracy have gathered steam. In response to a racially-motivated February 2020 shooting in Hanau that left nine people with migration backgrounds dead and a shooting at a 2019 synagogue in Halle that killed two, politicians have called on increased investments in civic education to combat racism and anti-Semitism and support tolerance of diversity. Similar demands came in response to the integration of one million new refugees in 2015 and to rising popularity of right-wing extremist and populist ideas. Clearly, politicians see civic education as essential and are willing to back up that assertion financially.

Of course, the fact that civic education has come to be seen increasingly as a solution for societal challenges like polarization, right-wing extremism, racism, religious extremism, etc. has had both positive and negative consequences. Some interviewees noted a growth in attention towards the field in recent years, alongside a shift in focus and changing approaches:

It is very much in the process of being built. Especially in the last few years, I would say it is growing very strongly....If you look at the budget and the number of positions in civic education, you can see that it is growing everywhere. In recent years, the demands on civic education have also changed somewhat....in the

past, the main task of civic education was to get people back to the ballot box. And today, as voter turnout is rising again? Our main task is to get people talking to each other. And that's why there are completely different formats now than there were ten years ago. A great deal is now already communication and media education topics. (Civic education agency staff)

Certainly, an increase in funding directed toward civic education has helped actors in the field innovate and provide more programming, but a commonly repeated frustration among practitioners is that civic education is viewed as a "firefighting" function. As more politicians call on civic educators to respond to pressing societal concerns, it puts pressure on the field to focus on whatever "hot topic" is in play at the time, requiring a shift in expertise, methodologies and target groups. Instead of politicians turning toward civic education to fix immediate or short-term problems, a hope was apparent for longer term investments that would allow practitioners to make more decisions on how best to direct efforts and thematic focus based on needs of the local community rather than being guided by a nationally politically salient focus.

In recent years, civic education has become faster and faster, always quickly saying, "We need political education". But we have the problem that then mostly projects come along that are limited time, that specify a topic. An example is, after we had the attack, the Islamist attack, on the square at the Christmas market in Berlin a few years ago. After that, of course, many, many projects were set up against extremism prevention, Islamism prevention and then suddenly a lot of money was spent on projects in this area.

But we actually need more infrastructure funding to be able to react to such social phenomena. Instead, we get more and more projects, then do the theme and a year later a new theme again. And that tears our landscape apart. This also overtaxes our specialists, because they have to keep coming up with new topics, but under rather poor conditions, mostly temporary and without security. And it would actually demand other conditions, so that political education can also react well to these social crises (Civic education specialist, confessional educational organization)

Politicians and funders are not the only actors to turn to civic education. One interviewee reflected on his role in working as a civic educator with a worker's union, which generally take on a substantial role in training and continuing education in Germany. He noted that the program was developed in response to requests from trade unions looking for educational concepts that would help integrate diverse young professionals into work environments, namely after the influx of refugees from Syria in 2014. Conflicts arising among employees as a result of these changes posed problems for companies, and civic education was identified as an opportunity to facilitate more positive coexistence. As a result, a program, supported by public funding, was developed to offer workshops to adult professionals on the topic of refugees and integration, with the aim of countering populist and xenophobic narratives. This example demonstrates how a variety of sectors view civic education as an important responsibility and also a useful tool in meeting respective goals.

Certainly, political demand for civic education as experienced in recent years has had

negative consequences for practitioners in the field in terms of a need to react quickly to changing thematic focus points, time-limited project funding, and increased oversight and expectation of a quick-fix to societal problems. However, existing structures, particularly in comparison to other countries, do support the field in the long-term and have laid the ground for a well-established field of practitioners and myriad opportunities for funding and support. On the whole, these investments and the recognition across a variety of sectors of the importance of civic education is evidence of a particular regard for its societal value.

3.2 Broad Definition of Civic Education

An understanding of the conception of civic education promoted in national policies is important; extant research demonstrates its role in influencing and establishing parameters within which the educational approach takes shape[38]. The variety of English-language terminology related to the teaching of civics reflects various intents. The term "civic education" is often associated with civic knowledge specifically. Cogan & Morris contrast this with "citizenship education" which they describe as associated more with attempts to promote education *through* (via participation) and *for* (via active engagement) civic education.[39] "Education for Democratic Citizenship" is defined by the Council of Europe as

> education, training, dissemination, information, practices and activities which aim, by equipping learners with knowledge, skills and understanding and molding their attitudes and behavior, 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.[40]

In German, this breadth of definitions is encompassed, more or less, by one term, *politische Bildung*, signifying a broad interpretation of aims, themes to cover, methods, ideas of where it takes place and by whom, etc. This flexibility also much to do with the relative importance of non-formal education, which is less defined by curricula and therefore more flexible in terms of thematic focus and methodology (explored further in section 3.3). Certainly, sub-fields are specified which require specialist knowledge (e.g., education for sustainable development, media education, human rights education, democracy education, social entrepreneurship education) but it is generally accepted that these fall under the broader umbrella ,or are closely related, to *politische Bildung*.

Specifically, non-formal civic education is about making the connection for participants between the issues that are important to their own lives and the political world, rather than a narrower definition of civic education as dealing with abstract political knowledge. It is more than knowing the inner workings of government or preparing young people to become voters. It also seeks to build citizens who can think critically, participate in democratic processes, communicate with people who have different perspectives – people who uphold values of tolerance, human rights, solidarity and social responsibility. As a result, the themes covered in non-formal civic education offerings are wide-ranging. These may include: digitalization, human rights, right-wing extremism, participation, sustainable

education and development, European integration, diversity, gender equality, globalization, municipal/regional/national politics, intercultural themes, foreign/security policy, etc.[41]

A heavy focus on political-historical education around primarily the Holocaust and National Socialism, but also the history of the former DDR, is worth highlighting. The Federal Agency for Civic Education's mission statement states that the German state has a special obligation to promote a political consciousness based on democracy, tolerance, and pluralism due to its history of National Socialist dictatorship and the East German communist past.[42] A reckoning with a complex history is a key feature of civic education as a result, with a visceral understanding that democracy and human rights cannot be taken for granted. A strong culture of remembrance (*Erinnerungskultur*) is evident in Germany's approach to civics education with political-historical education a central theme.

Although the thematic focus is broad, non-formal civic education also relies extensively on the *method* of learning as a means of developing civic skills and attitudes, through democratically-inclined and participant-driven pedagogy (Democratic pedagogy/education). Creating more democratic school cultures in formal education is recommended and an important means of improving young people's ability to practice democracy in everyday settings, but non-formal education, by virtue of its intrinsic characteristics, is a natural fit for such experiential learning.

This broader conception of civic education recognizes the extensive impact it intends to have on participants, to include skill and attitude development. In approaching civic learning across a variety of thematic focus

points outside of our traditional perceptions of the "political", the participant is engaged in material that links directly to their lived experience. The non-formal education methodology seeks also to engage participants in the practice of democratic behavior in the learning process, with less focus on gaining competencies through an ascribed curriculum and a greater flexibility about where civic education can take place.

3.3 Importance of Non-formal Education

Certainly schools play an important role in civic education in Germany through stand-alone courses like politics and social studies or integrated in other course subjects (dependent on state curriculum guidelines), but there is also a heavy focus on non-formal education (*außerschulische Bildung*), which is defined as a program of personal and social education planned outside the formal curriculum that serves to improve certain skills and competencies.[43] It differentiates itself from informal education, which refers to learning acquired through everyday experiences such as family, media, work, play, friends, etc., and formal education, which refers to education that takes place in institutions like schools and universities where one receives a certificate or degree in exchange for completing certain requirements.[44] Non-formal education has the following seven characteristics:

1. Voluntary, holistic and process-oriented
2. Accessible for everyone (ideally)
3. Organized process with educational goals
4. Participative and learner-centered
5. Based on experience and action and the needs of the learners

6. Provides life skills and prepares learners for their role as active citizens
7. Includes both individual learning and learning in groups.[45]

Framework for Action for Education 2030 in working towards Sustainable Development Goal 4.7.[46]

FORMAL EDUCATION	NON-FORMAL EDUCATION	INFORMAL
SCHOOL, UNIVERSITY, VOCATIONAL	NON-SCHOOL INSTITUTIONS	EVERYWHERE
INTENTIONAL PROCESS WITH EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES BASED ON CURRICULA & STANDARDS	INTENTIONAL PROCESS WITH EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES	SPONTANEOUS
STRUCTURED (E.G., LESSON PLANS)	STRUCTURED (LEARNER-CENTERED)	NOT STRUCTURED
TEACHER-LED	FACILITATOR-LED	LEARNER-LED
LEADS TO FORMAL RECOGNITION OR CERTIFICATION	NO FORMALLY RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATION	NO CERTIFICATION
LEARNING EXTERNALLY EVALUATED (TESTS, GRADES, ETC.)	LEARNING IS NOT EXTERNALLY EVALUATED; FOCUS ON SELF/GROUP REFLECTION	LEARNING IS NOT EVALUATED

Non-formal education has been a recognized feature of the German educational landscape since the period after WWII when non-formal education centers such as *Bildungsstätten* were established as part of the democratic re-education effort in West Germany, but it has also become increasingly recognized at the EU level. The Council of Europe's Conference of Ministers included non-formal education as a key contribution in its Agenda 2020, and the Council of Europe's Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education states the importance of non-formal learning specifically for democracy and human rights education. Non-formal learning was also included in the Incheon Declaration and

Efforts to set quality standards have evolved alongside this increased recognition, although there is debate over whether increased standardization actually changes the core characteristics of this type of learning, which prizes a learner-responsive approach.[47]
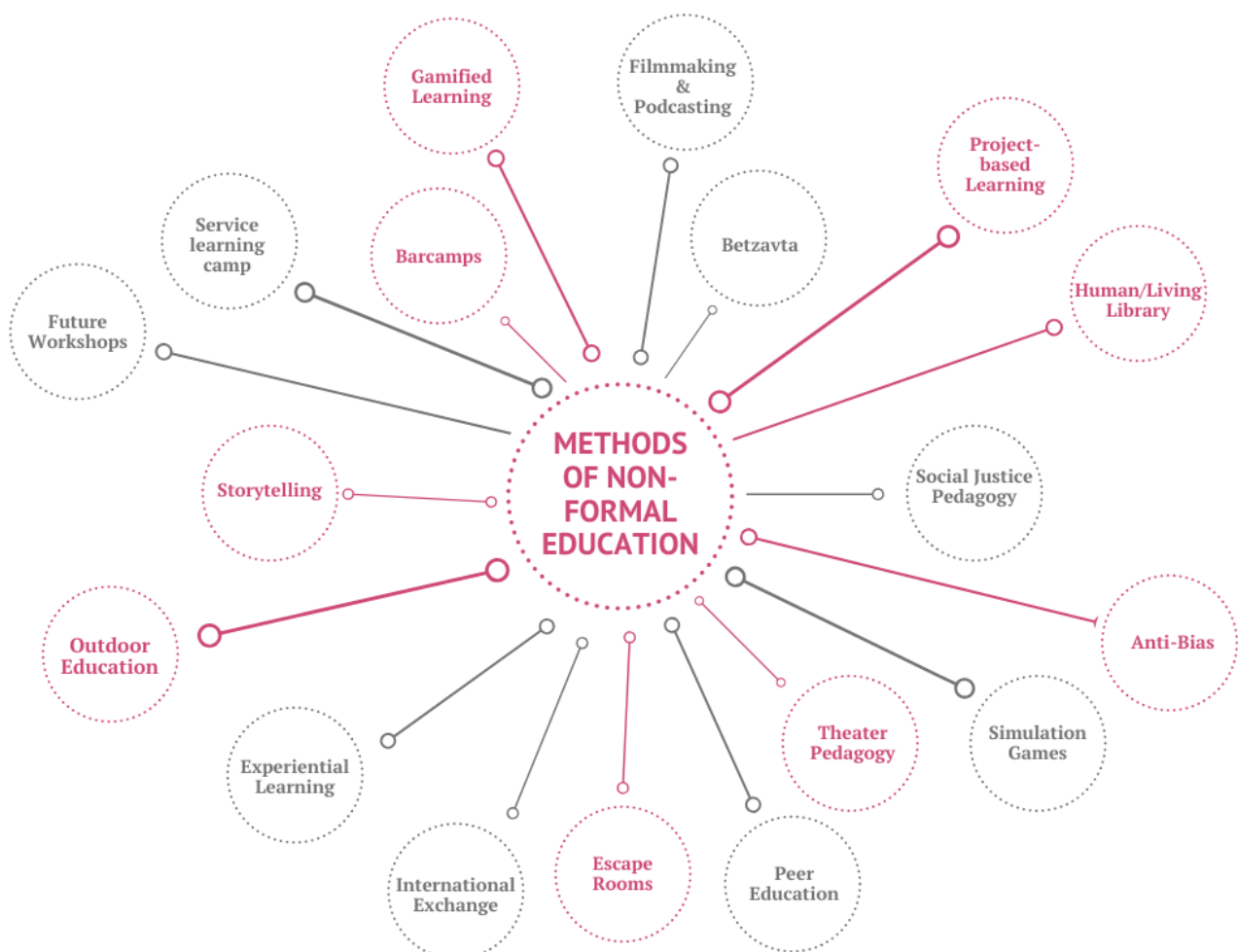
The original aim of youth work was tied to democracy building and civic education, although it has become less explicitly tied to these aims over time, becoming increasingly focused on leisure time opportunities as well as other aspects of non-formal education and work-oriented skill-building. Although non-formal education is considered to be part of the field of youth work, it is a more specific

and intentional educational opportunity. It can certainly take place in classic youth work spaces such as youth clubs but, in Germany, there are additional institutions which focus more exclusively on non-formal education, where programming is pedagogically planned but does not offer a certificate or degree.

Two particularly unique institutions in Germany's institutional framework are non-formal residential education centers (*Bildungsstätten*) and adult education centers (*Volkshochschulen*). These exist in the space between formal institutions like schools, universities and vocational education, and home and work life.

Bildungsstätten are a unique type of residential learning center for non-formal civic education that often feature facilities for overnight stays – alongside seminar rooms you will find individual and shared bedrooms, dining services, and lounge and recreation areas. These sites offer the opportunity to "live and learn under one roof".[48] These learning escapes focus primarily on non-formal political and civic education, although cultural education, work-related and social education are also featured. In keeping with the philosophy of non-formal education, there are no grades, no mandatory attendance, and no defined curricula. Instead, opportunities emphasize participation and self-guided learning – practicing exactly the skills they intend to foster. Typically, offerings are one-off events of one or more days or a short series in the form of seminars, trainings, workshops or travel.[49] Bildungsstätten are often supported by municipal, regional or federal funding, but the financial model also relies on income from overnight stays. Staff include pedagogical as well as cooking, cleaning, public affairs and

METHODS OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Gamified Learning · Filmmaking & Podcasting · Project-based Learning · Service learning camp · Barcamps · Betzavta · Human/Living Library · Future Workshops · Storytelling · Social Justice Pedagogy · Outdoor Education · Anti-Bias · Experiential Learning · Theater Pedagogy · Simulation Games · International Exchange · Escape Rooms · Peer Education

administrative employees. Often freelancers assist as trainers, speakers and specialists.

Volkshochschulen are independently run, but publicly funded centers where people of all ages can attend courses covering a wide variety of subjects at a low cost, affordable for all but those in the lowest economic tier. In addition to music, art, language and technology courses, Volkshochschulen also offer courses exploring political and societal topics. The German Adult Education Center Association (*Deutscher Volkshochschul-verband, e.V.),* which represents 905 educational centers throughout Germany, is involved in a variety of special projects to support youth civic education.[50] Volkshochschulen also host integration courses – courses required for migrants to Germany that cover the basics of the German political and legal system as well as German language.

Non-formal learning opportunities are not limited to these specific learning sites, however. Other learning spaces, such as soccer stadiums (e.g., Lernort Stadion, e.V.) and sites of historical remembrance such as former concentration camps are other examples of learning spaces used to approach civic learning in novel ways – taking the participant out of the traditional education environment. In addition to pedagogy guided by the aforementioned principles of non-formal education, all of these spaces also offer a physical escape from everyday life; not an attempt to sever the everyday experiences of participants from civic education, but rather to open up new horizons of experience and seek to integrate them with participants' realities.[51] Ingo Juchler points out the deepened content knowledge, authenticity of the learning experience, multi-perspectivity and learning autonomy as additional beneficial characteristics.[52]

Several important benefits of a strong non-formal education system became apparent in interviews conducted with civic education professionals. For one, the lack of curriculum standards led to a sense of freedom for the educator to be able to shape learning offers to the needs of the target group. Similarly, a lack of grades and pressure to perform leads to an environment that fosters greater freedom to "argue and speak and express thoughts". Participation in the learning process is another key feature. One interviewee described this as:

> *What we do is oriented towards the interests of young people and not towards educational plans or curriculum or things like that. The young people themselves can change what happens to the educational process. Change of topic…change of methods…can have a say in the break times.* (Civic education specialist, confessional educational organization)

These features that set the non-formal learning experience apart make it clear for participants that it differs from a formal learning experience. In ideal cases, non-formal education occurs in a location that is physically removed from school, work and home life, like the previously mentioned non-formal education centers. This allows participants to escape normal life for deeper reflection on the topic at hand. This "third space" does not have to adhere to a formal institution as many interviewees attested.

> *It is very often about a third place…a place that is not school and that is not family.…This can be the educational institution, but of course it can also be a completely different place. We sometimes do it at the campsite, in the city, on the beach or something. There is this moment*

to create in another place and also to create an [experience of] living together for a time. That's why we also do a lot of formats that are several days long, in order to enable an intensive learning process and living together for a while. (Civic education specialist)

As noted here, the aspect of time is an important component. Many interviewees talked about the importance of having more time, often multi-day, weekly or at least one-full day together with participants to more fully explore the topic at hand.

[…] the non-formal places of learning simply offer a much larger space for reflection, self-reflection…these are just topics that otherwise in school you can't, yeah, in a block of one and a half hours, you can't cover certain topics. You sort of rush from history to chemistry, to biology, and at a non-formal place of learning, you spend maybe seven, maybe ten days. You just deal with that subject over the longer term. I think also the long term learning effects are maybe different than in school because of course you get factual knowledge, but [in non-formal education] you are perhaps taught more values, content, attitudes and I believe this is simply part of an overall educational setting. School can't do that in the form and intensity that non-formal educators can. (Historical-political educator/international youth work)

One young international participant compared his experience at a youth exchange hosted at a residential learning center in Germany to that in his home country, saying:

The exchange in [home country], we were staying at a hotel and there were no other guests….There weren't so many common spaces to share, to socialize and what not. And it was a hotel. So you just kind of had this feeling of being on holiday. Whereas [in Germany], it's a house. And when we went there, it was a real concentration on making a community event, which is what they do for every exchange. And because of that, you really feel like you feel so much more at home and you start to feel really comfortable in your surroundings and more comfortable you feel, the more you're able to express yourself. (Former international youth exchange and international long-term volunteer)

Using sites of particular relevance for civic education, such as concentration camp memorials or war graves, was noted as important also for the authenticity of the learning experience and more intimate reflection. In speaking about one particular historical site related to WWII, a respondent said: "It is so tangible, comprehensible …. I can touch it. I can feel it".

You are there and you create the history. I find that a very strong and emotional experience. It's the same when you take [a look at] memorials. That is something that is really a very, very deep, emotional experience. (Historical-political educator/international youth work)

Non-formal education often works in partnership with schools to provide their programs and to work on democratic school development and student and youth governance. This enables non-formal education to reach more young people, although it is still highly dependent on formal educators, administrators and students knowing that such opportunities exist. The challenges and opportunities presented in

partnerships between schools and non-formal education are explored further in section 3.7.

A desire to make offerings appealing to young people so that they engage voluntarily relies also on the simple idea that offerings are fun. Gamification of the learning process has been a growing focus, both in digital and offline spaces. In reflecting on the barriers that keep young people from participating politically, one interviewee who was active as a long-term international volunteer at a non-formal education center commented:

> I would say breaking down this prejudice of engagement, political engagement, as boring. That's...that would be the main barrier [to political participation]. And I really do think that the non-formal education method is a really great way to do it, because they tend to be a lot of fun. (Former international youth exchange and international long-term volunteer)

The ability to convene diverse groups of people who may otherwise not engage with one another is also cited as an important value of non-formal civic education spaces. As one interview subject explained, the German school system tends to bring more homogenous groups of students together due to a system that separates students early in the school system into various educational tracks.

> This is especially true for something like inter-religious formats or formats where, for example, young people from different groups of students come together, school systems come together or different ages come together. This is, of course, something that is easier to achieve in non-formal education than in school,

> where the sorting is very homogeneous. (Civic education specialist, confessional educational organization)

The recognition of the value of non-formal methods and non-school institutions for civic development is clear. The ability to confront civics without the temporal, place-based and methodological boundaries that school settings may present is viewed as a clear advantage for learners in addition to civic education that happens in schools. This has important implications for the type of programs available, pedagogical approaches used, program reach and overall conception of how civic education can and should be supported.

3.4 Lifelong Learning Approach

Extant literature points to the effectiveness of lifelong civic learning. For example, the "lifelong learning model" posited by Mishler and Rose suggests that attitudes and beliefs shaped early in life are subject to continuous change as a result of subsequent experiences which challenge or reinforce them .[53] There has been increased scientific focus on adult civic education recently, with qualitative and quantitative evidence of a positive association between non-formal adult learning and certain factors of civic participation.[54] Particularly in the face of a rapidly evolving political, social and information environment, it is critical that we continue to practice civic skills and learn over the course of our lives. The infrastructure for civic education in Germany reflects that aim in its extended definition of "youth", investments in adult education and a focus on non-school spaces of learning. According to Germany's independent youth policy (*Eigenständige Jugendpolitik*), the definition of

"youth" in Germany is anyone between 12 and 27-years-old, whereas in the U.S., it is defined as a more limited 16 to 24, per the Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs (IWGYP). The EU's definition per the EU Youth Strategy, Erasmus + Youth in Action Programs, Eurostat reports and Eurobarometer surveys use 13 to 29-years-old as a definition. This wider definition of youth, going beyond secondary and even tertiary education levels, indicates a focus on civic education that exceeds the formal school system, accompanying young people as they rise into adulthood. Programs designed to foster civic education are available for young people well into their 20s and available for those who may no longer attend school or university.

"Youth" is defined as...

12 to 27
in
Germany

13 to 29
for
EU programs

16 to 24
in
the U.S.
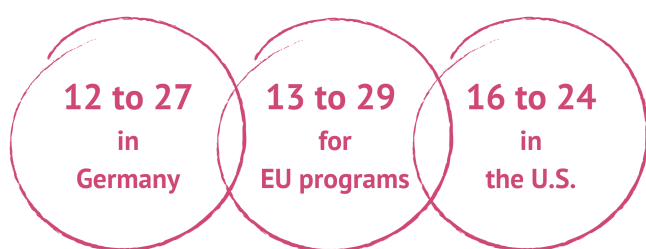
Although a thorough description of adult civic education is beyond the scope of this paper, it is important to understand how it differs from non-formal *youth* civic education. The funding and institutional infrastructure demands a clear separation, even when it is perhaps unclear from a practical or methodological perspective how they differ.[55] The literature makes clear that *adult learning* includes learning activities that occur after completion of initial, continuous, full-time education and after first entry into the labor market.[56] *Non-formal adult learning* takes the form of general

or vocational courses in organized settings, and *adult education* takes place in leisure time and indicates learning opportunities that deal with the learner's interests, encompassing spiritual, artistic, political and/or cultural education.[57] Youth and adult non-formal civic education share many similarities in that they occur outside of formal education and adhere to the same guiding principles, so aside from a legally defined age demarcation, it can be difficult to differentiate where one leaves off and another begins aside from the idea that youth education reflects the particular phase of life of young people.[58]

Whether adult or youth, the non-formal nature extends opportunities to access civic education in life domains outside of the classroom, be they in community organizations, the military, or through labor unions at work. "Educational leave" (*Bildungsurlaub*) is permitted in all but two of the 16 German federal states. These laws permit up to five days (varies by state) of paid educational leave to certain employees for the purpose of attending registered educational opportunities, ranging from mental and physical health and wellbeing to language training and technical skills and, of course, civic education. The choice of seminar is left to the employee and does not need to be connected to one's job. Still, few take advantage of this opportunity.[59] Correspondingly, a policy paper released in 2018 by the Association of German Educational Organizations (AdB) endorsed a campaign to raise awareness of the right to educational leave; coordinate the recognition process for continuing education providers so that country-wide programs may be offered; and to strengthen incentives for using the offer for civic education, among others.[60]

A strong culture of lifelong learning encourages people to continue to engage and

learn across their lifespans and in different spheres of life. Germany's investment in institutional and funding infrastructures reflect this commitment. Although more could be done, efforts have been made to reduce barriers to participation in continued education activities to make it easier for people of all social, economic and educational strata to participate.

3.5 Diversity and Design of Funding Instruments

Extensive public funding reflects a political and social value for civic education, and the availability of funding for a wide variety of organizations in Germany is evident (details regarding specific funding infrastructure in section 2.4). Particularly those interview participants with experience living and working in other countries recognized the benefits that such a strong funding infrastructure brings. One interviewee remarked that from a comparative perspective (having worked elsewhere in Europe), it is a "great opportunity" and "allows a lot of actors". Another, originally from Italy, noted that Germany "was kind of a paradise" upon beginning work there:

> *Money was coming from different institutions, also for international work….and it's good because it gives a lot of possibilities of course – of developing new ideas, of not turning to be project factories, but putting some more effort in the content, so the organization is not worried only to proceed financially to sustain the organization itself but there is also the chance to have some time to develop new ideas, new projects, new*

> *directions for the organization itself.* (International youth worker)

According to one interviewee working in international youth work at a German non-formal education center:

> *The funding landscape is super diverse and super broad. Starting with the KJP [Federal Child and Youth Plan] to the European possibilities, but then also foundations and private industry. And charity.* (International civic youth worker)

This diversity of funding instruments, from the local to the national level, is unique. In many other European countries, organizations rely almost, if not entirely, on European Union funding through programs like Erasmus+ which fund international youth exchange, youth worker training, capacity and partnership building and policy development.

Funding pots like the Federal Child and Youth Plan (*Kinder- und Jugendplan des Bundes* [KJP]) provide funding to support institutions like professional associations and more reliable project funding that gives the funded organizations the freedom to propose project themes and methods that are relevant for them. On the other hand, there are increasingly specialized programs that provide competitive grant-based funding that may ask applicants to focus on a specific topic or target group, such as the €115.5 million Live Democracy! (*Demokratie Leben!)* program. This trend towards ministry-backed programs that "set up activities and abruptly cut them off, whatever their dynamics and results might have been" is commonly referred to as "projectitis", an allusion to the negative, infection-like consequences associated.[61] Evers describes this "policies by programs" approach as potentially

clientelist in that organizations reliant on funds for their initiatives may be confined instead "to those immediate tasks the authorities think are helpful and appropriate".[62]

Although organizations interviewed reported a diversity of funding structures, it is clear that project-based, short-term funding poses a challenge. Experts report "increasing economic pressure" and "the increasingly business management perspective" as driving a preoccupation with applying for project funds.[63]

Project-based funding may successfully incentivize innovation which is vital, but it also tends to ignore tried and true ideas. As one interviewee put it: "It must always somehow be innovative, or something new". This may prevent a "scaling-up" of proven methodologies or approaches due to a lack of funding . The issue of instability for organizations was also noted.

> *A lot is based on project [funding], which brings a certain insecurity and also discontinuity....from my perspective, especially in youth work, it simply has to be planned for the long term....The fluctuation is relatively high, the workload is high. I can imagine that it or I don't remember the nineties, but I think that it was a little more set in the past than it is today. (Historical-political educator/international youth work)*

This relative instability leads organizations to ostensibly become project factories, always seeking the next source of funding in order to stay in "business". One new-to-the-field civic educator said:

> *My salary and colleagues' [salaries] are paid through the projects we develop.*

> *Every time [we apply for a grant], we charge also for our work and that's how we finance our organization, and that's why it's important to have as many projects as possible. (Non-formal youth civic educator)*

Temporary work contracts are not abnormal in Germany, in many fields of work. In 2019, one in 14 Germans over the age of 25 (which tend to have an even higher share of limited contracts) had a time-limited work contract.[64] This can, however, lead to high turnover and the feeling of worker instability. Many professionals working in the field are also contracted as freelancers due to the funding available, which has its own drawbacks, namely lack of benefits and stability:

> *There are a lot of freelance trainers and it's good, but at the same time the problem is you don't have access to some stable things .... for me it's ok because I don't have kids or responsibilities, but I don't see myself working as freelance for more than 5 years. I know a lot of people like that, because there are just very few positions where they can be hired. At [the] end of [the] day, they might earn a little bit more as a freelance trainer, but in terms of insurance and retirement it's not that good. (Non-formal civic educator)*

The amount of time spent on administrative features related to funding - from applying for to reconciling projects - is also a concern. Increasing economic pressure and decline of long-term public funding has led to an increase in the need to search elsewhere for funds, resulting in a greater amount of time spent on grant writing, accounting, reporting and evaluation.[65] One respondent estimated 1/3 of her time went to fundraising and that her salary was relatively low in comparison to

the work load required. In a 2012 non-representative survey of 164 non-formal education institutions, only 18% had dedicated fundraising staff, meaning that in the majority, this work is being delegated to other staff.[66] This over-bureaucratization and organizational demand has made administrative functions increasingly dominant in relation to pedagogical duties, and makes it much more difficult for young people to organize projects themselves.

One mechanism to ease some of the burdens imposed by the predominance of project-based funding is being implemented in the EU's Erasmus+ funding program which funds European non-formal, youth, and adult education projects. Starting in 2021, organizations will be able to apply for Erasmus+ accreditation to guarantee they meet Erasmus quality standards, entitling them to apply for longer term, more stable funding and greater freedom in goal setting, enabling them to innovate more freely and focus on long-term goals.[67]

Clearly, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, concerns about the reliability of funding for civic initiatives is apparent. Actors have been unable to pursue standard operations during the lockdown and some were only able to resume a limited amount of work as restrictions eased over summer 2020, due to participant limitations, hygiene restrictions, limits on school excursions, etc. Some organizations have filed for bankruptcy as a result. In August 2020, a special program for child and youth education and child and youth work (*Sonderprogramm Kinder- und Jugendbildung, Kinder- und Jugendarbeit*) made €100 million in non-repayable funds available for non-profit institutions existentially threatened by the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically those with overnight facilities and

international exchanges.[68] Other federal interim aid and loans were made available prior, and further assistance programs were erected in the federal states. Nevertheless, concerns about the long-term stability of future funding are apparent, well-summarized by one interview subject in particular:

> *There is a relatively large amount of money in the system, I think, but that will change. There was rarely so much money, and I'm referring now to until the beginning of this year, because it's changing again now. But I think that the tendency will be that it doesn't exist in this way after Corona and the whole crisis. It will probably change. But the situation at the moment is that there are relatively many and good funding programs.* (Non-formal civic educator)

As a result, one respondent emphasized that structures should also be made resilient to the influences of politics, noting the importance of solidifying independent funding and, thereby, the independence of institutions so that the entire structure can exist and grow without relying completely on state funding.

In summary, there is a general recognition that the civic education field is relatively well-funded, with a large portion of funding coming directly from the state. The availability of these funds help to democratize the civic education space, by giving funding access to a diversity of players. The design of both long-term, infrastructural investments in professional associations and permanent institutions and competitive project-based grants seek to balance stability and innovation. In practice, however, as civic education has become more politically important in recent years, a focus on special funding programs like Live Democracy! (*Demokratie Leben!*) have taken autonomy away

from implementing organizations, which have to adapt programming quickly based on rapidly evolving topics of focus and time-limited project grant periods. There was consensus among interviewees that a recalibration of available funding in the direction of institutional support and away from project funding is necessary, in order to support higher quality outcomes and a more resilient civic education field.

3.6 A Cross-cutting Ecosystem of Civic Learning

Figure 1 in the Appendix shows a topography of civic education in Germany from Transfer für Bildung e.V.. It makes clear the cross-cutting nature of civic education across a variety of professional fields and sectors. Non-formal civic youth education, as previously described, falls under child and youth welfare, more specifically, child and youth work. However, civic education also plays a role in myriad other programs, such as youth social work, the youth penal system and the separate but linked field of national public service programs. All of these areas, despite perhaps not focusing exclusively on civics education as the primary goal, recognize the important role of civic learning as an input and output of the work.

The youth public service programs are a good example of this. Although they do not fall under a narrow definition of youth civic education, national and international public service programs are recognized as an important source of civic learning. There are multiple programs that offer the opportunity for young people to volunteer as public servants under the umbrella term "Youth Voluntary Service" (*Jugendfreiwilligendienst*),

varying in length from 6 to 18 months in most cases. The European Solidarity Corps at the EU level, offers a similar experience for young Europeans to "build a more inclusive society, supporting vulnerable people and respond to societal challenges".[69] Prior to 2011, it was required that young Germans serve one year in the military or as a social volunteer, laying the groundwork for today's extensive structure. In 2019, around 86,000 young people participated through the FSJ or BFD programs.[70]

> *"Civic education in Germany – a colorful, vibrant and challenging landscape"*[71]

Several of these public service programs are funded by the federal government under the Youth Voluntary Service Law (JFDG), which also includes a requirement of pedagogically-designed educational components consisting of 25 seminar days per 12 months of service. For the *Bundesfreiwilligendienst (*Federal Youth Voluntary Service*)*, another national public service initiative also operated by the Federal Office for Family and Civil Society Tasks (*Bundesamt für Familie und Zivilgesellschaftliche Aufgaben*), civic education is a required part of the service year, offered by 17 recognized education centers throughout the country. The combination of practical civic engagement and volunteering experience with pedagogically designed educational offerings provides a unique opportunity for civic learning. These requirements not only ensure a strong educational experience for participants, but also help to support the public and nonprofit organizations offering such opportunities.

While non-formal civic youth education in Germany is a specific field with its own actors

and professional standards, it is clear that there are numerous initiatives and informally organized groups conducting work that certainly contribute to civic learning that are not recognized within the more narrowly defined field of non-formal youth civic education. This may inadvertently exclude other actors doing civic learning work from penetrating certain circles and gaining access to funding, professional development and lobbying representation. Despite varying approaches, an awareness of all actors involved – from youth social work to national public service programs, media education to anti-extremism work, post-migrant and refugee integration organizations and citizen participation initiatives – is important for a better understanding of what the complete civic learning ecosystem entails.

This raises the question of whether these clear distinctions in the field between sectors are relevant and necessary? The clear separation of working fields between non-formal and formal civic education as well as adult versus youth civic education is largely a result of administrative and legal division – dependent on which associations, ministries or funding sources are responsible for which sectors.[72] As a result, the branches have developed their own working associations, professional standards, approaches, funding structures, and goals. Even within the field of non-formal youth education, the various disciplinary boundaries separate media education, cultural education, education for sustainable development, etc. It begs the question of how necessary these separate worlds are. Are the distinctions between them artificially constructed based on bureaucracy? Would a more cohesive and coordinated approach produce more innovative approaches and effective results?

3.7 Confronting Challenges of Reach in Partnership with Schools

The question of how to develop exciting offers that participants want to attend is at the heart of the matter for non-formal civic education.[73] Due to the voluntary nature of non-formal civic education activities, reaching target groups was often reported as a challenge. One interview participant noted:

> *The fundamental problem of all educational contexts is, of course, how do you reach those who you assume are in particular need of it. Unfortunately the phenomenon is that often people with an affinity for education take advantage of offers. How do you reach those who don't have an affinity to education, who first have to be motivated to engage in it? (Civic education agency staff)*

Despite a clear interest of young people in political topics, based on recent studies, the challenge of finding the time in young people's busy lives is pronounced.[74] A shift in recent years to all-day schooling (*Ganztagsschule*) has limited the time available for extracurricular activities. 69% of students in primary and secondary schooling attended an all-day school in 2017/2018 compared to just 16.3% fifteen years prior in 2002/2003.[75] A youth work and non-formal youth education structure built around extra time available to students has thus had to accommodate this development, a "power balance" between school and non-school activities.

As a result, partnerships with schools have become used increasingly as a way to reach young people who otherwise would not access

their programs. In fact, well over half of participants in non-formal education activities are students.[76] Such partnerships were described often as field trips outside of the classroom to the non-formal partners' education center or other learning space, but also cases where non-formal educators came into the school to conduct programs in the classroom. It is generally emphasized that school cannot "do" youth work, as conversely youth work cannot "do" school.[77] This loosening of boundaries between formal and non-formal education has benefits in terms of reaching more young people reliably and offering more multi-faceted civic education opportunities to young people, but it is not without challenges.

One interviewee remarked particularly on the challenge of inconsistency of opportunities, or a "luck of the draw" in access to civic education opportunities beyond the classroom depending on which school or teacher a student has.

> *We have the problem that schools do not automatically think about non-formal education, but we are very dependent on committed teachers and on committed school management. And where cooperation works, it is because people work well....I personally didn't notice any of this at my school. There's still a lot of that in Germany. You are lucky if you realize that there is such a thing [non-formal education]. Or because one of the teachers, is particularly committed and says, "here there is something for you". If you don't have these teachers, then you don't get anything out of it.* (Civic education specialist, confessional educational organization)

This same interlocutor also emphasized the important "triangle" of "schools, non-formal

actors, and municipalities" in creating well-rounded opportunities for young people by learning from one another and working more closely together. This collaboration relies on engaged and active partners, and cooperation across sectors is not a given. Unequal valuation of school and non-school partners has become particularly clear due to COVID-19-related measures, in which school closures and use of digital tools has largely led schools to cancel non-formal offerings completely, at a time when this support is more necessitated than ever.[78]

Commonly reported were fundamental issues in pedagogical understanding between formal and non-formal educators and the sacrifice of certain key principles of non-formal learning when engaging in school partnerships. The principle of voluntary participation, for example, that clearly distinguishes non-formal education from school is sacrificed in a shift to increasing school-based partnerships. In interviews, non-formal educators reported a notable impact of teacher hierarchy and the looming threat of grades when working with students as part of a school program.

> *School is not a democratic system. The school as an institution contradicts what we want to actually teach young people. Teachers or people who work in the school system look at us and this is only a projection, but only as those who play games with young people and do lots of colorful, great things. They do not see the added value for competence development or the biographical development of young people in the way we see them.* (International civic youth worker)

Differences in the defining characteristics of these two educational landscapes demand partnerships based on mutual understanding

and respect, which can only grow from structural partnerships and more accessible arenas for cross-sector communication – not in order to "soften" respective strengths and principles, but to build comprehensive spaces for civic learning that benefit young people through a rich array of offerings.

Aside from partnering with schools, educators mentioned a need to develop new approaches to better engage young people in today's world. Staying relevant to the needs and interests of young people by understanding what themes are important, what media they consume, where they spend their time, and developing methodologies based on this knowledge is critical. The director of the Federal Agency for Civic Education noted the importance of "outreach civic education" saying the answer isn't simply "more civic education", but rather it's about *other* civic education that is closer to the lived realities of participants, in a language that is comprehensible, that is experience-based and activating.[79]

Evolving interests, habits and demands on young people's time have put pressure on non-formal education institutions to come up with new ways of reaching participants – a notable challenge for practitioners in the field. As the field looks to partnerships with schools as a potential solution, other challenges related to the essence of non-formal education emerge, posing an ongoing challenge. One opportunity for a bridge may be mutually constructed competence frameworks, such as the Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC), to be used as a tool for dialogue and cooperation between various sectors. This would account for variance in respective strengths, values and methodologies while

maintaining a common thread to enable discourse.

3.8 Non-formal Youth Civic Education as a Profession

The list of occupations provided by the German federal work agency (*Agentur für Arbeit*) includes "educational instructors" (approximately meaning *Bildungsreferent*in*) and "pedagogue" (*Pädagoge*in*), who often work in adult education institutions, youth centers, education centers of political parties and other organizations, among others. It does not include specifically *civic* educators.[80] It is common, however, for people working in the non-formal civic education field to self-designate as such.[81] Given the diversity of the field in terms of work conditions (project-based vs. long-term, volunteer vs. professional, public vs. private, adult vs. youth), what exactly does this title mean? Despite the variety inherent in the profession, the field is organized around its own professional understandings, a semi-recognized career field and cooperation infrastructures.

There is no specific degree or training required to work in the field, and thus, professional backgrounds are diverse. This is particularly noteworthy in a country known for standardized qualification requirements for a variety of occupations. Non-formal civic educators, contrarily, have a high degree of "lateral entrants" (*Quereinsteiger*in*). The majority have an academic background and university degree, often in political science, sociology, psychology, education, humanities or history.[82] At present, there are only a few degree programs in adult education/political education pedagogy available, with some including non-formal youth or civic education

as a sub-focus. For example, the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt offers a postgraduate course in civic education and the University of Duisburg-Essen offers a civic education module in its Adult Education/European Adult Education Master's program.[83]

The heterogeneity of professional and academic backgrounds was reinforced in conversations with interview participants, who have experience in therapy, social work and formal education, to name a few. Some had become involved through their own activism as young people or through "train the trainers" programs. It is not uncommon to find someone working in the field with a PhD nor recent graduates of Bachelor's programs. The multitude of heterogeneous fields of practice, institutions, forms of work, and target groups often leads to organization- or institution-specific characteristics.[84] While this interdisciplinary nature and lack of set qualification standards for such a diverse field has its benefits - namely a variety of thematic focuses and opportunities for innovative ways of thinking - there are also challenges, as one interviewee remarked: "The disadvantage is that you naturally have completely different starting conditions... With every new employee, you have to start from the beginning."

I don't think there is a profession of a non-formal educator here either. I personally did not come directly to it, and I think my colleagues did not come directly to it. Nobody has studied anything, social work or anything like that and said "I really want [to work in] non-formal education". Some do, but only a few. Most of them studied something else. Maybe they studied pedagogy and then somehow got into this non-formal education because they got to know it,

then started in some educational institution and said "hey that's totally cool, it's fun" or got involved in some kind of association and then stayed with it. That is perhaps the clearest most direct way where they had been engaged as youth and went to a youth exchange or something and said "hey cool, I want to do this later, lead encounters" or something like that. That is perhaps a direct way. (Non-formal educator, state political party foundation)

A 2004 study derived something similar, namely that many professionals come to the field by virtue of having been a participant in a non-formal education offering and moving on to conduct an internship or on-the-job training.[85] The field is also characterized by a high degree of part-time, volunteer and freelance employees, with many full-time positions increasingly being cut.[86]

Although the field may not be as recognized or regulated as formal education, there are clear opportunities to enter the field and many trainings and opportunities for collaboration and exchange. Much of the public funding at the German and EU levels is available for implementing professional trainings, so many individual institutions also specialize in professional peer training programs. The professional associations (such as GEMINI and bap) set informal standards and professional understandings through provision of training, lobbying efforts, and raised awareness of the field. The 16. Child and Youth Report (*Kinder- und Jugendbericht*) released in 2020 proposed increased training opportunities organized through a cross-field databank as well as opportunities for professional self-reflection.

A nascent attempt to diversify the field is focusing on encouraging more ethnic, racial

and religious diversity amongst institutions active in the field itself as well as individual professionals.[87] Providing long-term funding and intensified involvement in specialist discourse for organizations of young people with migration background and people of color has been endorsed.[88]

Despite the disparateness of actors, experts in praxis and theory coalesce around a set of generally required skills:

- Specialist knowledge of politics, economy, history as well as pedagogy and didactics;
- Methodological expertise that takes into consideration the theme, location, and target group and keeps participants engaged and active;
- Social competencies such as sensitivity, communication skills, empathy and conflict resolution in order to recognize and respond to the interests of participants and adapt as needed.[89]

In contrast to formal (civic) educators, they may be understood better as "learning helpers" providing the opportunity and arrangement for learning, or facilitators offering guidance and support in contrast to a pedagogy better described with words such as "teaching, informing, advising, arranging and animating".[90]

A discussion in the field over whether clearer professional standards and qualifications would be beneficial is ongoing. Some suspect that such attempts at standardization would harmfully deter the diversely devised career field, while others view it as a way to better assure quality of services and increased recognition for the work.[91] This apprehension toward standardization has been voiced strongly, starting in the 1960s. Between 1966 and 1975, the German Education Council

(Deutsche Bildungsrat) recommended that continuing education be adopted as a fourth pillar of the German education system, which would have required a standardization of curricula and didactic approaches.[92] This was strongly rejected by non-formal entities, who subsequently sharpened their own stance towards participant-oriented approaches as a key professional understanding.

Nevertheless, attempts to address the required competences of non-formal educators have gained steam, increasingly at the European Union-level with focus on "quality standards, validation and strategies for recognition".[93] The European Training Strategy's Competence Model for Trainers is one such mechanism which defines criteria and indicators split into seven competence areas:

- Understanding and facilitating individual and group learning processes
- Learning to learn
- Designing educational programs
- Cooperating successfully in teams
- Communicating meaningfully with others
- Intercultural competence
- Being civically engaged.[94]

A better integration of praxis and academia is often touted as a means to higher-quality provision and increased recognition of the benefits of non-formal civic education. In comparison to formal civic education pedagogy, the non-formal sphere is under-researched.[95] Moreover, the discourse and common understandings between theory and praxis are starkly segmented.[96] Steps to bridge this divide have intensified in recent years, such as via the *Fachstelle für politische Bildung* (Specialist Unit for Civic Education), launched in 2017, which aims to 1) provide an overview of actors and practice areas in civic education;

2) provoke exchange within and between research and praxis; and 3) support cross-division collaboration and new solutions.[97]

3.9 A Non-neutral and Controversial Civic Education

Although always a subject among civic circles, the rise in popularity and electoral success of Germany's right-wing, populist party, Alternative for Germany (*Alternative für Deutschland [AfD])* has raised the question of neutrality in civic education to the fore. As part of a so-called *Lehrerpranger,* (literally translated as "pillory of teachers") in some states, the AfD has set up a portal where students and parents can report educators when they ostensibly break the neutrality requirement. In a similar vein, the party, through federal and state functions, has increased pressures on school and non-school actors who address topics of racism and right-wing extremism as part of educational programming.[98]

In the 16th Child and Youth Report, the independent expert commission commissioned by the federal government specifically intones the need for politicians to support civic educators in defense of these attacks, which seek to delegitimize and defund.[99] General consensus in the field upholds the commitment to the non-negotiable principles of the Basic Law (German Constitution) in which human dignity and legal equality of all people is upheld, even when it stands in opposition to the specific stance of a political party. The 2020 report emphasized democracy education as its focus, with specific emphasis that although civic education should be

ideologically and party independent, it is *not neutral.* Rather it intentionally upholds democratic and human rights principles and strengthens young people's resilience toward anti-democratic and misanthropic tendencies.[100]

During interviews with practitioners, it was clear that recognizing civic education at its core as inherently non-neutral is important for boundary setting. This relates to the aforementioned human rights perspective but also the fact that civic education exists to intentionally preserve a democratic system of government.

> *I don't think that civic education can be neutral because what does neutral mean? It's a bit questionable, and that you also open boundaries, for example especially in Germany there is anti-Semitism sensitization, projects against anti-Semitism, memorials, etc. And they have this concept of open and closed spaces. And when does a room [topic] close and what statements are okay? I think these boundaries must be created.* (Youth civic education facilitator)

This use of boundaries was oft repeated, both as a tool for preventing hate speech and pushing learners beyond traditional planes of thought. Therefore the role of the civic educator becomes opening learners up to all viewpoints of a topic within certain boundaries.

> *We always have to push ourselves to the limits. There are certain guidelines, and we must always adhere to democracy and at least human rights. And if people are devalued and endangered, then it will not be allowed. We must also limit that... We as civic education have to convey even the*

underrepresented positions. That is, if we assume that there is a problem in society for certain minorities, refugees or LGBT, that there is a problem for a socially weak person, for people who live in poverty, then we have to name this position and say "that is a problem, and we have to be active here". But we don't have to address xenophobic positions or positions that contradict human rights. And it is quite possible, it is precisely pedagogically sensible and possible for example, to discuss the party program of the AfD at school and to say, where for example the party program contradicts human rights. It says that certain groups should be devalued and treated unfavorably. Political education does not then have to be neutral, but can take a stand. (Non-formal youth civic educator)

Debates around neutrality and indoctrination in civic education are not new. Controversy in the 1970s between those on the left who thought civic education should lay the ground for changing society and those on the right advocating for an orientation toward the existing political order led to a hallmark moment, the Beutelsbach Consensus.[101] The guiding principles resulting from the convening have prevailed until today: 1) Prohibition on indoctrination; 2) Necessity of discussing controversial issues; and 3) Positioning of the learner to analyze political situations and the relation to one's own interests and to influence politics for one's benefit. These helped to quell some of the dissent by providing "ground rules".

The second principle demands that "matters which are controversial in scholarship and political affairs should also be presented as controversial in the classroom".[102] This requires the time and space (more than can be managed in an average classroom lesson) to fully examine issues, bringing in all perspectives to include non-mainstream, niche ideas.[103] Widmaier asserts in an interview with the Federal Agency for Civic Education on controversy in civic education that non-formal education is therefore better suited than schools to take on this challenge as a result of the temporal opportunities for intensified collaboration and reflection.[104] Also, the role of the educator permits a less hierarchical relationship with the participant. In non-formal education, it is acceptable, even desired, that participants get to know the opinion of the educator.[105] Even for teachers in formal education, some believe neutrality is not required in every situation as it does not necessarily lead to indoctrination (which depends on other factors).[106]

This links to the first principle, prohibition against indoctrinating the student. Aside from a constant self-evaluation and reflection, the shear infrastructure of civic education in Germany – the diversity of actors in particular – was seen as a protection against indoctrination, even when certain institutions, such as party foundations or confessional/religious groups obviously come from a specific perspective, acceptable from the perspective of Siegrid Schiele, original convener of the Beutelsbach Consensus, so long as "openness and transparency" are guaranteed.[107] One interview respondent commented:

What you need of course is diversity. Otherwise you have a very one-sided offer. And that is why the diversity of our democracy is a prerequisite, that the [civic education] actors remain diverse and actually become more diverse, so that you can really always have an offer from all possible social groups and not that a

certain group remains underrepresented. (Civic education specialist, confessional educational organization)

Political action itself is a far more controversial subject: firstly, because whether political action is a goal of civic education depends on one's democratic theory and conceptions of the "good citizen". More controversially is the question of whether political action should take place in the context of the educational offering itself. For example, whether or not a petition-writing campaign should be part of a non-formal education program. According to Widmaier, the main purpose of civic education is to enable people to participate politically, and that there is no confirmation that using action as a methodological approach in civic education is indoctrinative in and of itself, particularly when accompanied with appropriate pre-and post-preparation, analysis and reflection.[108] He notes the importance of experiential learning in training skills necessary for participation and in accessing experiences of self-efficacy which may encourage participation outside of the learning environment.[109] In practice, this implies that attending a protest would be an acceptable method, so long as participants had the opportunity to discuss the experience, reflecting on any emotional and content-related questions raised. Others, however, see this approach as a direct confrontation to the principles laid out in the Beutelsbach Consensus.

3.10 Evaluating Impact

Empirical evidence of the impact of civic education efforts, and a quantitative description of the field is sparse, in terms of the contribution from academia but also evaluation in praxis, although calls for greater

attention to research have increased in recent years.[110] From a field-wide perspective, there is a clear benefit to more research (field-building, lobbying, recognition, etc.), but an increased focus on evaluation in praxis poses challenges for practitioners and demands additional resources.

The German Youth Institute (Deutsches Jugendinstitut [DJI]) and German Institute for Adult Education (Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung [DIE]) are two publicly-funded but independent research institutes, with departments dedicated to civic education research. Other interesting initiatives, led by universities and other institutions, such as Transfer für Bildung e.V., an organization seeking to build recognition of civic and cultural non-formal education through scientific research.[111] and i-EVAL, a data platform and evaluation tool for evaluating international youth exchanges, have made important contributions, but overall it is a weak mooring in research.[112] Per Becker, who provides a summary of the state of research in non-formal civic education, the academic research that does exist is divided across disciplines (political science, educational science, political didactics, psychology, history, philosophy, etc.) and therefore difficult to compare and relate to one another.[113] Most recently, the commission for the 16th Child and Youth Report included a recommendation that in order to better identify and develop non-formal youth civic education, greater investment in empirical and practice-oriented research should be a focus.[114]

Standards for evaluation have been slow to develop, and have primarily dragged behind the discussion in the U.S.[115] This may have to do with the relatively easily available public funding that has traditionally been independent of demonstrated empirical

impact. Moves toward a better statistical documentation of the field and impact evaluation have increased with pressure, namely from funding arms. Frameworks and quality standards at the European and national levels require demonstration of efficacy for policy makers and the public.[116]

The amount of bureaucracy is somehow growing more and more. When I now think about how the accounts looked 20 or 30 years ago and how they look now - what demands, what quality requirements are made. As I said before, the financial framework is setting the stage, which sometimes makes it very difficult to meet these quality demands. I think evaluation has always been important in a certain sense. The question is only I think it is becoming increasingly impact-oriented, so to speak. The measurement of impact is becoming increasingly clear in youth projects. (Historical-political educator/international youth work)

Funding is increasingly dependent on displaying results, provoking resistance from practitioners who question the feasibility of measurement from a theoretical and practical standpoint.[117] This hesitation was already apparent in a 1985 project report on the long-term effects of non-formal youth civic education, in which the author referenced the agreement that the Federal Agency for Civic Education (project funder) regarded the evaluation of learning success as a tool for the organizer and not as a means of controlling the organizers.[118] Still, evaluation is often interpreted as a "judge".[119]

Interview participants cited both conceptual and practical roadblocks. In regard to the former, participants felt that an empirically-oriented approach was incompatible with the goals and methods of non-formal youth civic education, which is defined by participant-driven learning.

Youth education has a self-image that young people themselves define what they need. And that is something we can hardly say...what the content is. Because in the end, we cannot say beforehand what will result in the end because the young people have to bring what they want with them. (Civic education specialist, confessional educational organization)

A freedom from evaluation was seen by many as positive for the pedagogical approach as it frees the educator and participants from a goal-oriented learning path, allowing more flexibility in program design and direction. One interviewee remarked:

If that [program evaluation/reporting] were to increase? Then I would say we're going in the wrong direction, one that I don't find good. Because then we are thinking "every input has to have its output, but really the defined output". And then we are no longer in this free, in this open discourse that can and should take place in the "safe space" of the seminar. (Non-formal youth civic educator)

Participants also referenced the essential difficulty in attributing hard indicators to attitudes, feelings, behaviors and values – the metrics by which we might evaluate non-formal civic education impact. The question of how to measure the essence of what non-formal civic education seeks to do – motivate people to responsibility, autonomy, and maturity.[120]

A lack of time and resources to properly evaluate programs was also apparent. This

relates to the increasing focus that civic educators have on the bureaucratic and administrative functions of their job which take away time from program innovation and implementation.

> *We say often among colleagues that we should think more strongly about for example, sending questions to participants six weeks after a seminar. I don't do it regularly, but I intend to always. It always slips away because I have the next seminar or something else around the corner to prepare for.* (Non-formal youth civic educator)

The primary method used, a post-event survey of participants, cannot capture the full impact, but anything more would require additional qualified staff, appropriate partnerships in academia and financial support. A closer connection between academia and praxis would help produce more empirically sound evidence and take some burden off of praxis.

Despite these challenges, practitioners in the field may also gain from improved evaluation. Three functions of evaluation have been identified that are particularly relevant for education: recognition, legitimation, and optimization.[121] Accordingly, evaluation makes it possible for practitioners to focus on improving quality of offerings.[122] This is evident in the many programs and institutions that use various evaluation instruments to understand the participants' learning experience.[123] Furthermore, an ability to demonstrate the efficacy is valuable for increasing recognition and respect for the field as a whole, as it may provide evidence to counter attacks against its effectiveness and relevance.

Given the still underdeveloped nature of impact evaluation, a culture of "error tolerance" is needed, as practitioners experiment with new ways to assess impact in ways that preserve the essence of non-formal education.[124] This requires an investment in expanding academic research in the field and a closer collaboration between science and praxis. Identifying uniquely compatible evaluation and research methodologies specific to non-formal education would increase recognition and help all actors – education providers, funders and policy-makers - assess quality without the worry that such efforts would harm the activity itself. Increased training on how to better conduct internal evaluation and communicate results would give practitioners control over the evaluation process, thereby diminishing the image of evaluation as a threat rather than an opportunity.

Of course, as we've seen with the COVID-19 pandemic, a better statistical description of the field (number of employees, number of participants served, number of events, type of services, topics covered, etc.) and empirical research on the effects of civic education could be an asset for the field in lobbying efforts. As previously described, the "firefighting" function of civic education (covered in section 3.1) means that it is prioritized politically and financially in certain moments more than others. It is worth considering that being able to better demonstrate evidence as to the value of civic programs would provide evidence in times of budget constraints and/or ideological political attacks, as well as offering an empirically sound basis for improving quality.

3.11 International Education as an Approach to Civics

In many cases, civic education is viewed as a way of educating on national political systems and advancing national values, even fostering national patriotism. This creates difficulties for international standardization, such as can be seen, e.g., in the debates about the content of curricula in education for democratic citizenship in the frame of the Council of Europe member states. Perhaps due to Germany's history of National Socialism and the Holocaust, this more nation-centric narrative is less emphasized, although there are also debates between a rather conservative/traditionalist view and a progressive view about the content of civics. Of course, understanding national political systems, current events and dynamics is an integral piece, but the importance of global and European citizenship education also plays a role. In Germany, this is carried out to a large extent in the independent field of international youth work (*internationale Jugendarbeit*).

A greater global awareness and international competence is particularly valuable in light of increasing globalization and migration, enabling young people to understand and take responsibility for the impact of individual decisions on the world at large. Encountering a different perspective helps young people challenge their own understandings of history, society, culture, and politics. As with broader youth work and non-formal education, international youth work can include a wide range of topics, formats and methods depending on the needs and interests of the learners, and clearly contributes to the political/civic socialization of young people,

although a retreating focus on the political aspect has been identified.

Similarly to civic education, international youth work is legally grounded in the federal government's social code (SGB VIII Kinder- und Jugendhilfegesetz [KJHG]). Following the basic principles of youth work, it supports identity development, participation in society and civic engagement through pedagogically-guided arrangements. Long-term funding for international youth work comes primarily from the Federal Child and Youth Plan (KJP) and the EU program, Erasmus+ Youth in Action. It is also supported by other public funding from the municipal to supranational levels, private foundations, as well as individual participation fees (although in most cases, programs are offered at low cost or for free for participants). Special bilateral international institutions (see graphic in section 2.4) focus specifically on exchange with countries with a history of war or violence.

The field also has extensive institutional backing with its own department in the Federal Ministry for Families, Seniors, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ), an independent but publicly funded association, IJAB, the International Youth Service of the Federal Republic of Germany and the German national partner agency for the EU's Erasmus+ Youth in Action program, JUGEND für Europa. International youth work has a variety of formats both short and long-term: group and individual exchange programs, bi- and multilateral encounters, international workcamps, voluntary/public service programs in foreign countries, au-pair experiences and international youth initiatives.[125] Projects are also often provided for youth work professionals in the form of, for example, professional training and partnership building.

Today's model for international youth work originated in the post-World War II period as a means of promoting international understanding and respect for other cultures, providing insights into different ways of life, and atonement and reparation with people in countries that suffered hardship caused by the Germans during World War II.[126] In the immediate aftermath of the war as part of the "reeducation" campaign, cultural and educational exchange was initiated through new institutions, like America Houses (*Amerika Häuser*), and in the form of exchange trips for young people, scientists, and multipliers to the U.S. to learn about U.S.-American democracy first-hand.[127] Of course, these exchanges were a rather one-sided approach in which German visitors were expected to learn from the U.S.' model of democracy and not fully reflective of today's concept of mutual exchange.

The introduction of the EU program, Youth for Europe, in the early 1990s introduced an ongoing element of European influence on international youth work in Germany. At the supranational level, youth exchange was viewed as an important civil society instrument for European communication and the development of European solidarity. This has presented opportunities but also risks since the development of European education politics and its interference in national level systems for civic education and international youth work may result in a loss of quality[128] and/or altered priorities. For example, a focus on the economic goals of the EU has led to a greater emphasis on employability in international youth exchange programs, as opposed to civic or political dimensions.[129] At the same time, the EU's Erasmus+ Youth in Action program, one of the largest funders of international youth work, has made active citizenship and youth participation a focal point of the work, which clearly has a civic/political element.

A 2020 study[130] on the impact of the EU program Youth in Action found remarkable impacts on participants:

88% improved their ability to achieve something in the interests of the community or society.

62% indicated they agree that through their participation they improved their ability to discuss political topics seriously.

More than **50%** of participants reported increases in importance for values of human rights, non-violence, individual freedom, peace, self-fulfillment, equality, solidarity with people facing difficulties and tolerance.

41% report increases for keeping oneself informed on current European affairs; 41% and engaging in voluntary activities; 36% for engaging in civil society.

Despite a well-funded and established system, studies have revealed issues of access. A 2013 study on the long-term effects of international youth exchanges recommended that in addition to (academic-path) high school and university students, students from other types of school, trainees and young professionals must be more closely involved in international youth encounters in order to make this form of intercultural learning possible for a wider range of social classes.[131] A later study, that focused on identifying access points and barriers, found that financing structures have much to do with this.[132] For example, there is insufficient investment at the local level and too much bureaucracy in application processes.

This creates a higher hurdle for organizing such activities, particularly for young people themselves, in comparison to other offerings of youth work. Also, there are differences in the priorities of different countries for youth exchanges; while in Germany and the EU, reaching young people with fewer opportunities to access international experiences is prioritized, in other countries, international exchange is a means to support elites.

A lack of awareness of opportunities was also identified as a critical barrier.[133] In the study, young people who had already participated in international exchanges reported a variety of different routes to getting there, but the most common was through engagement in other youth work activities/structures. However, those that had not yet participated couldn't imagine where they might hear about such offerings outside of a school setting, indicating a need for youth work to better publicize (or initiate to begin with) international opportunities to a broader public.[134]

This was echoed in conversations with former international youth work participants:

> Before, I had never heard of it [Erasmus+ exchange projects]. Generally in Germany I know hardly anyone who knows about it. My friends were all totally enthusiastic but they didn't know about it...that there's this possibility that you can continue your education for a week or two weeks or ten days with people of the same age and whether you've studied or not, and yes, exactly....I had the feeling that you only hear about it when you are really involved with it [already]. (Former international youth exchange and international long-term volunteer)

In the specific case of the Erasmus+ programs, it seems as though an Erasmus "bubble" exists, in which those that have taken part in one activity are likely to participate multiple times, while many young Europeans are unaware that such opportunities exist at all. This became personally apparent in my participant observation in four Erasmus+ exchanges for youth workers. In one exchange in particular, one fellow participant from Turkey told me she had already participated in 13 other such exchanges. Interest in participating in such opportunities is high,[135] so a broader awareness of such opportunities would likely help expand this reach.

As previously mentioned, an increasing focus on a de-politicization of international youth work has received increased attention. From the beginning, international youth work had a clear political component as a function of foreign policy.[136] Moreover, the focus on country partnerships with former victims of World War II indicates a clear historical-political component.[137] A practical connection between civic education and international youth work is evident in the many civic education institutions that also work, in part, with international youth work and also the widely accepted function of international exchange as an approach in which learning and practice of political/civic skill-building, knowledge, attitude and behavior come into play.

> My first project was something called "EU Between Challenges and Benefits". That was a topic I was not at all familiar with. I was not politically active or anything like that. And I meanwhile am. It really opened my eyes because I thought it was so great that everyone, no matter who was taking part in the project – that means we had people who knew about politics

*professionally or were already involved and we had people like me who had nothing to do with politics, and I really liked the way everyone was approached and how everyone was brought along. And that also influenced my complete career. I only had a short time to go abroad after that and I wanted to do something that involved many cultures and, in the best case, get politically involved. And before these projects, I would never have dared to talk about politics. (*Former international youth exchange and international long-term volunteer)

Notably, the reflection above is from a youth exchange with an *intentionally* political theme. In another interview, a current European Solidarity Corps long-term volunteer doing his international experience in Germany talked about his more localized experience, painting the picture of a perhaps less political, but still impactful, role that international experience has to play in developing attitudes such as efficacy and self-confidence as well as building skills of communication and teamwork.

We had our first activity two weeks ago, where we cleaned the local park and it was a super simple activity....but it was really nice and there were a few people in the park who were really congratulating us for this and really happy that we were doing this activity....and this is when I really realized it doesn't matter how much effort goes into the activity or action or how big it is. But, you know, every action can have a lot of value. And so it's always worth doing anything you can do to help the community in any way. And other than this...you really get the opportunity to speak your mind....They really value brainstorming and putting forward an

idea. This really helped me kind of have confidence in my ideas and believe in myself and have confidence to speak up and say what I'm thinking. (Long-term international volunteer in Germany)

However, a trend of de-politicization of international youth work has taken hold in recent decades. In the mid-1970s the concept of intercultural learning established itself as a new paradigm.[138] Critique has been levied that this focus has reduced the civic/political elements of international exchange in favor of career preparedness in a more globalized world and a greater focus on personal development, employability and optimized life path is highlighted over political/civic impact.[139]. Of course, intercultural learning also has political elements, in its contribution to international solidarity, justice and global understanding.[140] But there are limits to the spillover effect theory, which suggests every international exchange acts as an active contribution to democracy-building without intentional effort on behalf of the group leader to establish pedagogical links between social and political learning fields and learning processes.[141] Ballhausen compares this to the false expectation that a touristic visit would automatically instill positive attitudes toward the host country.[142] As with the research on service learning, reflection on the experience and consciously tying experiences to social, political and democratic realms is a critical piece of using international exchange to foster civic competences. Yael Ohana reflects further on the specific challenges for the absence of "the political" in European youth work in the report, "What's politics got to do with it? European youth work programmes and the development of critical youth citizenship".

Certainly, as a result of the COVID-19 crisis, international youth work has been hit hard

with the majority of physical exchange activities having been cancelled due to travel restrictions and public health concerns. Some efforts have been made to substitute with other methods (predominantly online), but problems with partner reliability, a reduction in working hours, and insufficiently developed or tested methods have been major barriers. As in other education-related circles, concerns about equal access, data privacy, and the unknown impacts of virtual methods, not to mention the misguided expectation by many that offline formats can simply be transferred to the virtual world as the alternative. Ongoing work in the field seeks to identify appropriate methodologies that can be implemented without physical exchange, although early conversations have focused heavily on tools and converting offline activities to online, rather than developing new pedagogical approaches which better harness the opportunities that the virtual environment provides.

4.   Recommendations

It is clear that effective and equitable civic education relies on a strong infrastructure for civic learning. The structures for non-formal youth civic education in Germany, with firm legal, institutional, theoretical and funding frameworks, provides a source of inspiration. In learning from Germany's unique example, we have the opportunity to transfer certain ideas for how to strengthen our own civic learning infrastructures as well as to avoid elements that have potentially harmful, unintended implications.

Increased attention from policy-makers, funders and everyday citizens towards civic learning in the U.S. provides a special opportunity. A 2019 project that mapped the U.S. civic education landscape identified broadly the need for increased funding of the civic learning space and intensified collaboration in the field ("From Civic Education to a Civic Learning Ecosystem, 2019). Similarly, a March 2020 report from the National Commission for Military, National, and Public Service proposed increasing federal government funding to support civic education and service learning efforts. More than 80 pieces of civics-related legislation were introduced at the state level in 2018-19 (Sawchuk, 2020) and the Education for Democracy Act was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives late in 2020 that would afford $1 billion for civic and history education in the form of grants to states, non-profits, institutions of higher education and civic education researchers.

These proposals come at a time when measures of civic knowledge and attitudes toward government, and even democracy as a system of governance itself, are concerningly low. The current infrastructure for civic learning in the U.S. needs reconsideration., and while there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach, looking to other models can help. Based on the profile and implications presented in this report, I make the following recommendations and propose related questions to invite forward-looking consideration:

1. Increase public funding that promotes both innovation and stability

Sufficient financial resources can help grow an ecosystem of organizations and providers, increase recognition, prompt innovation, improve quality and promote research and evaluation. The U.S. federal government spends about $5 million on civic education at present. Spending was cut in 2011 from an allocation of less than $70 million in the early 2000s, the majority split between two programs: the Center for Civic Education for teacher training and textbooks and Learn & Serve America for service learning.[143] The design of the funding system is also

consequential. As we see in the case of Germany, even a field with relatively high investments at all levels is not immune to undesirable effects related to an off-kilter distribution of project-based and long-term funding. Funding investments should seek to support organizational stability with competitive project-based grants. Funds should be accessible to a full spectrum of actors, including schools, higher education, community organizations, researchers, etc. Lastly, civic education practitioners must be involved in conception of funding programs to help set priorities and make sure goals and processes are practically applicable and achievable.

- How can funding be made easily accessible to a variety of sectors and a variety of organizations within those sectors?
- What funding structures can help ensure stability and foster innovation simultaneously?

2. Create a public body to coordinate a cross-governmental, cross-sectoral approach to civic learning

A federal-level coordinating body would be useful for engaging the various governmental agencies with ties to civic learning for a more cohesive approach. Housed outside of the Department of Education, such an entity would also facilitate a cross-sectoral approach to learning, serving as a resource for local government, non-formal education, formal education, etc. As a starting point, this entity might: manage funding programs, invest in capacity-building, facilitate exchange and support research. The Committee on Science,

Technology, Engineering, and Math Education (CoSTEM) established in 2011 may serve as a structural example for a starting point. Such bodies at the state level may also make sense, however, realizing this nationwide would be logistically and politically daunting.

- What does the field need in terms of a coordination/support structure, and who is best suited for that role?
- How might it be ensured that civil society actors retain a role in the construction and carry-through of this kind of a public body?

3. Invest in non-formal civic learning

Formal education plays an important role in civic education as the institution most likely to reach all young people, although it is clear it does not reach all people equitably. This does not mean, however, they are the only sources of civic learning, nor that formal education can single-handedly take on the civics crisis. Investing in new institutions to provide civic learning opportunities could be one option, but we should also recognize already existing organizations. Greater investments to promote civic learning in, for example, community organizations, youth work and afterschool program providers, museums, libraries, and historical sites is needed. In fact, a recent white paper from Generation Citizen and iCivics reported the "energy and enthusiasm for civics coming from places that were not previously considered", noting in particular community-based organizations. Although in many cases, these institutions already provide civic programming, they deserve increased funding and institutionalized support to make it a priority. Moreover, they should be included as stakeholders in all conversations related to

civic learning from the local to the national level.

The goal of creating more democratic school infrastructures and training teachers to provide effective civic instruction (discussion of controversial issues, experiential learning, etc.) is key, but it is important to also recognize that the structure of schools does not easily lend itself to these aims for which external institutions may be more suitable. Particularly in regard to equity, research has found that minorities are less likely to experience school climate as positively as white and Asian peers.[144] This is not to say attempts to rectify this shouldn't be undertaken, just that non-school entities may help to provide another outlet/opportunity for this type of learning.

Exciting initiatives like citizens academies at the municipal level and education policies that are beginning to include a focus on experiential civics education in partnership with community-based organizations signal initial movement in this direction, but it will take greater representation of these actors in the conversation to truly engage non-school actors in the work moving forward. Moreover, it is worth investing in structures that support an independent professional discourse for non-formal civic education in order to develop its own criteria for standards and quality.

- What non-school actors are already supporting civic learning, and what can be done to recognize and further these initiatives?
- What unique role do non-formal education organizations have to play and what do they contribute to the field that schools and universities cannot?
- How can non-school actors be better integrated into conversations on civic learning developments?

4. Expand interpretation of youth and invest in lifelong learning

A rapidly evolving political, social and information environment demands investment in civic learning across our lives. This commitment to continued education begins with young adults who have exited the formal education system. Research in the U.S. has shown that in contrast to adolescents (under 18 years old), young adults have scarce access to civic opportunities, especially publicly funded ones[145] despite it being a critical time for civic development. This life stage is "characterized by tolerance and is a time to explore political ideas and alternative points of view, and to wrangle with others in the solution of political issues".[146] While young adults who attend universities have continued access to civic opportunities, those who do not must take it upon themselves to identify these opportunities.[147] This barrier combined with the tendency for non-college youth to face "lower job prospects, less financial security and thus reduced opportunities for home ownership, weaker civic infrastructures in their neighborhoods, and fewer available programs that facilitate involvement in civic life" exacerbates inequity in civic participation.[148]

Opportunities should target non-university adults well into their 20s, as they negotiate this early phase of adulthood, which has broad implications for future civic engagement. Of course, these opportunities should not end with young adulthood. An investment in continued education infrastructures for civic learning in the U.S. is desperately needed. In addition to the sheer existence of educational offerings, a commitment to identifying barriers to participation (time constraints, financial resources, conflicting responsibilities, i.e. child/elder care, etc.) and designing opportunities/promoting policies that reduce

those barriers should be a top priority. Lifelong learning should be a core principle of cross-sector education policy.

- What are the specific civic learning needs/interests of young adults (18-29)?
- What barriers exist for post-adolescent youth (and older adults) to engaging in civic learning opportunities? How can these barriers be reduced?

5. Strengthen collaboration in the field

There are a significant number of actors in the U.S. civic learning space, but coordination is limited. Competition over limited resources hinders progress, and promising structures for fostering collaboration (such as umbrella organizations) are just beginning to emerge. Investing further in these organizational institutions would contribute to enhanced advocacy and lobbying, exchange of ideas, professional development, and recognition. Care should be taken to also engage cross-sectorally, including current actors like community colleges and universities, community organizations and youth organizing, public service programs and even relevant private initiatives. Future efforts should be made to engage further sectors, like social work, juvenile justice, international exchange, and even arts and sports organizations which may include civics as a peripheral, if not central, aspect of their work. A common understanding of requisite civic competences may aid cross-sector communication when approaches, terminology, values and overarching goals may differ.

- What investments are needed to strengthen already-existing

collaborative networks? Would establishing new ones be useful?
- What sectors currently have the potential to play a role in civic learning, and how can they be brought in to the conversation?

6. Invest in professionalization

A unique skill set is required for professionals engaged in non-formal youth civic education, and an investment in professionalizing this field would lend greater credibility to the work, set a certain level of quality standards, and offer opportunities for enhanced professional specialization, networking and information exchange. In practice, this would likely require leadership of a civics umbrella organization and focused funding to identify a common understanding of what it means to be a non-formal civic educator and developing professional competency frameworks. Provision of professional development opportunities would promote quality and growth. A commitment to increasing diversity in staffing should be a priority.

- What unique competencies are required of non-formal civic educators?
- What kind of professional networks/development would be most useful to people working in the field?
- How can we ensure greater diversity in the field?

7. Agree to universal civic learning principles that allow for multiple approaches while maintaining a commitment to promoting human rights and democratic values

An ideological divide in the U.S.' civic education field is unlikely to be reconciled fully due to harshly polarized views on what civic learning should aim to do and what methods should be used. However, establishing a common set of guiding principles, as Germany did with the Beutelsbach Consensus in the 1970s, may help ease tensions by establishing a basis of mutual understanding. Particular tensions regarding action-based vs. knowledge-focused civic education and social justice-oriented vs. patriotism-prioritizing citizenship models are likely to go unresolved in today's political climate. However, a common commitment to the role of civic learning in promoting human rights and democratic values should be of chief importance. These principles should also be used as boundaries, particularly in regard to approaching controversial discussions. Extant research indicates the value of discussing controversial issues for civic learning. Often however, navigating these discussions can be daunting and boundaries unclear. A rejection of topics that violate human rights norms and democracy seems a reasonable limit. A commitment to training and supporting educators to pursue deliberation and discussion of controversial current events should be prioritized, *especially* in a hyper-polarized political environment.

- What common definitional understandings and grounding

principles may those from both sides of the ideological spectrum commit to?
- What do educators (non-formal and formal) need to feel more capable of handling controversial discussions?
- What boundaries should civic educators place on the discussion of controversial themes and fringe perspectives?

8. Invest in research and evaluation

As in Germany, research into civic education in the U.S. is cross-disciplinary, comprising political science (primarily), psychology, economics and sociology.[149] It is also in short supply in comparison to other political science topics.[150] Campbell provides a useful overview of extant research, points to "a (perceived) lack of impact" and "lack of data" as reasons for a relative deficit in the literature, and notes the urgency of further research[151]. Communication between academia and praxis, like the work done by the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) is worth highlighting.

In comparison to Germany, the pressure to demonstrate efficacy of programs for funders and policy is greater, although additional investments to conduct this work is limited. Funders must make funding available for increased evaluation and research. An integrated effort on behalf of science and praxis should investigate the best ways to test causality and evaluate the full effect of civic programs (long-term studies, examining indicators aside from traditional measures of civic outcomes like voting, etc.).

- What is needed to strengthen the academia-praxis pipeline to ensure that research has access to research

opportunities and practitioners can use research outcomes to shape programming?

- How can practitioners help tell the full story about the impact of their work?

9. Tie civic education to international experience

International experience offers myriad opportunities for the informal acquisition of civic skills, but there is also the opportunity to use international exchange as a more intentional civic *education* offering – in terms of thematic content, but also in terms of format and methods. International experiences certainly can contribute to a more multi-layered understanding of citizenship, with our roles, rights, responsibilities, identities, values and understandings as global citizens additionally engaged.

Certainly, there are international exchange opportunities available for U.S.-American youth, but the majority are individual exchange programs, with a young person who goes to study, intern or volunteer abroad or organized as a group trip through school (typically high school or university). These opportunities typically come at a cost and are, thus, often exclusive experiences for those who can afford it. To prepare young people for global citizenship, we should invest in opportunities for international civic experiences in different formats and in other sectors (such as youth work, youth organizing, etc.) and open up access through increased funding opportunities. There is a specific lack of availability for post-secondary school, non-college youth.

Of course, Germany and Europe have the advantage of geographical proximity and lower

cost physical international exchange, and in consideration of the human impact on climate change, it should also be emphasized that physical exchange is not the only, or in some cases the best, option. Virtual exchange programs and international youth projects come to mind as alternatives. If pedagogically designed in a way that reflects the goals of non-formal civic education, these can be appropriately used in that context as well.

- What barriers exist to incorporating international experiences into other sectors of civic youth work?
- How can the explicitly civic/political element be emphasized in addition to the development of intercultural competence and 21st century skills?

5. Appendix

Figure 1: Topography of the Practice of *politische Bildung*
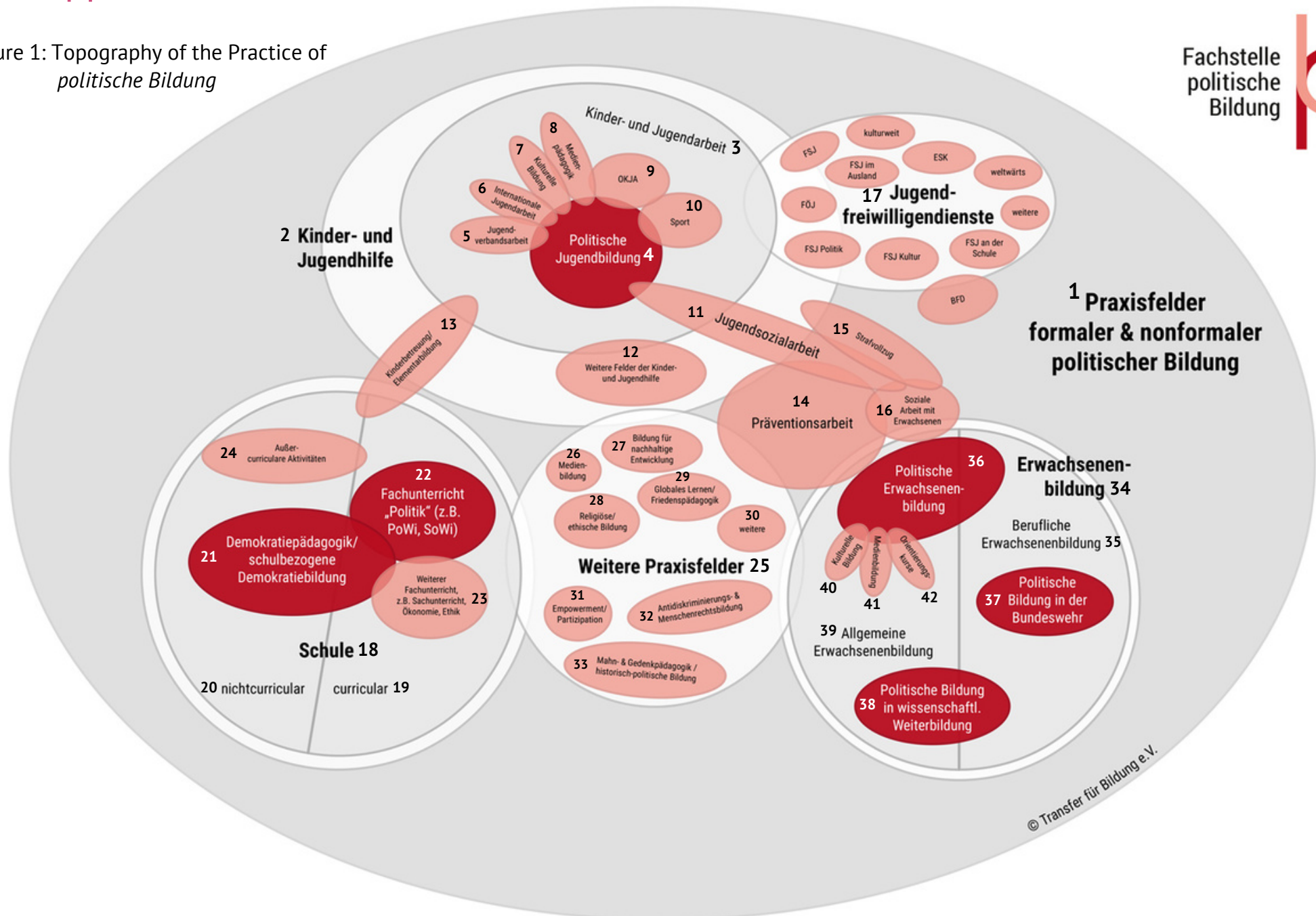
Key	German	English*
1	Praxisfelder formaler & nonformaler politischer Bildung	Practice fields of formal & non-formal civic education
2	Kinder- und Jugendhilfe	Child and youth services
3	Kinder- und Jugendarbeit	Child and youth work
4	Politische Jugendbildung	Youth democratic citizenship education/civic education
5	Jugendverbandsarbeit	Youth organizations
6	International Jugendarbeit	International youth work
7	Kulturelle Bildung (for young people)	Cultural education
8	Medienpädagogik (for young people)	Media education
9	OKJA	Open-door youth work activities
10	Sport	Sport
11	Jugendsozialarbeit	Youth social work
12	Weitere Felder der Kinder- und Jugendhilfe	Other sectors of child and youth services
13	Kinderbetreuung/Elementarbild-ung	Child care/early childhood education
14	Präventionsarbeit	Prevention work
15	Strafvollzug	Penal system
16	Soziale Arbeit mit Erwachsenen	Adult social work
17	Jugendfreiwilligendienste	Youth voluntary services / public service programs
18	Schule	School
19	Curricular	Curricular
20	Nichtcurricular	Extracurricular
21	Demokratiepädagogik/schulbez-ogene Demokratiebildung	School related democratic education/democratic school culture
22	Fachunterricht "Politik" (z.B. PoWi, SoWi)	Subject "Civics/Social Studies"

Key	German	English
23	Weiterer Fachunterricht, z.B. Sachunterricht, Ökonomie, Ethik	Other subjects, e.g., Economics, Ethics
24	Außercurriculare Aktivitäten	Extracurricular activities
25	Weitere Praxisfelder	Other fields
26	Medienbildung	Media education
27	Bildung für nachhaltige Entwicklung	Education for sustainable development
28	Religiöse/ethische Bildung	Religious/ethical education
29	Globales Lernen/Friedenspädagogik	Global citizenship/peace education
30	Weitere	Other
31	Empowerment/Partizipation	Empowerment/participation
32	Antidiskriminierungs- & Menschenrechtsbildung	Anti-discrimination & human rights education
33	Mahn- & Gedenkpädagogik / historisch-politische Bildung	Pedagogy of remembrance and commemoration/historical civic education
34	Erwachsenenbildung	Adult education
35	Berufliche Erwachsenenbildung	Adult vocational training
36	Politische Erwachsenenbildung	Adult civic education
37	Politische Bildung in der Bundeswehr	Civic education in the German armed forces
38	Politische Bildung in wissenschaftl. Weiterbildung	Democratic citizenship / civic education in adult education at universities
39	Allgemeine Erwachsenenbildung	General adult education
40	Kulturelle Bildung (for adults)	Cultural education
41	Medienbildung (for adults)	Media education
42	Orientierungskurse	Immigrant orientation courses

*Translated with permission of the Transferstelle für politische Bildung

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