

## Educate to democratize? Learnings from transnational communication

Learning about politics, through democratic processes, political fights and inside political movements happens in diverse ways in different contexts. Therefore, the links between aspects of politics or democracy and education or learning are varying and variable. One could understand (pedagogical) reflection and (political) action as an iterative process or circle of one and the same thing as Paolo Freire did. Or one could highlight the role of education to sustain and preserve democratic society (or just democracy as a system?) as the EU concept of democratic citizenship education does. Or one could understand political education (civic education) as tool to extend the ability to criticize power relations (directed at the state and current democracies) and to prevent genocide and authoritarianism - as some German educators do as learning from their genocidal history. Or one can use it, as some social movements (e.g. feminist or civil rights movement) do, to empower followers, educate supporters or to spread/broadcast their goals and ideas. All understandings can have in common to educate/learn to democratize society and criticize hegemonic power structures (capitalism, racism, patriarchy, colonialism and so on).

Different understandings lead to different approaches and practices and also different academic perspectives on education and democracy. Nevertheless - or maybe precisely for this reason - we could learn a lot from one another, if there was a space to talk, debate and understand each other. For that goal, the project „Educate to democratize?“ – organized by the researchs groups “Transnational and Intersectional Critiques of Power”, “Educational Governance” and “Political Education” of the GGS at the university of Gießen – wants to organize digital transnational encounters to enable an enriching exchange of ideas outside the own professional bubble.

Therefore, we encourage educators, teachers, academics, researchers and political activists to contact us via [konstantin.korn@sowi.uni-giessen.de](mailto:konstantin.korn@sowi.uni-giessen.de) with a few sentences about motivation and particular interests until May 25th 2025.

The project wants to form small groups, two to three persons, from different contexts. The groups will meet digital and get to know each other. The goal is to identify two or three topics that are worth debating and writing about, because one could learn a lot from the comparison of the specific context the group members are from. From October 2025 to February 2026 the project will organize a lecture series as a space to present and discuss these topics. Additionally, we want to publish the transcribed debates to maintain the learnings and make them accessible for others (e.g. students, practitioners, educators, activists).