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E+ HORIZONTAL PRIORITY: PARTICIPATION

Researcher on adolescents, youth, policies & human rights

Over 20 years of experience in policy,
research and advocacy

Working with organisations including
UNICEF, UNICEF Innocenti, European
Commission, Council of Europe

In education: UNESCO,
European Training Foundation





E+ horizontal priority:

**“Participation
in democratic life,
common values
and civic engagement”**



E+ horizontal priority:

- Participation as a *topic or focus* of your project
- Participation as a *process*, how you design & carry out your project

“Participation”





What does “participation” mean?

In everyday language:

“To take part in something”

- Participating in a running race, in class, birthday party, football team...

In Erasmus+, EU policy:

“To influence decisions and matters that impact you”

Is a fundamental right under European & international human rights frameworks

SALTO Participation and Information:

“(Youth) participation in democratic life is about individual (young people) and groups (of young people)

having the right, the means, the space, the opportunity and, where necessary, the support...

“

**...to freely express their views,
contribute to and influence
societal decision-making on
matters affecting them, and
be active within the democratic
and civic life of our communities.”**

“



Is it “participation”?

Ask yourself:

Is there a decision being made?

Do the people who are affected by this decision, have a chance to shape it?



Why is participation (in decision-making) important?

Can design **better, more responsive programmes**, tailored to target populations

People become **active agents** in their own development (rather than passive players) & promotes **accountability**

Builds **skills and competencies** (forming own views, communication, deliberation, confidence)

Fulfils a **fundamental human right** & promotes awareness of this right

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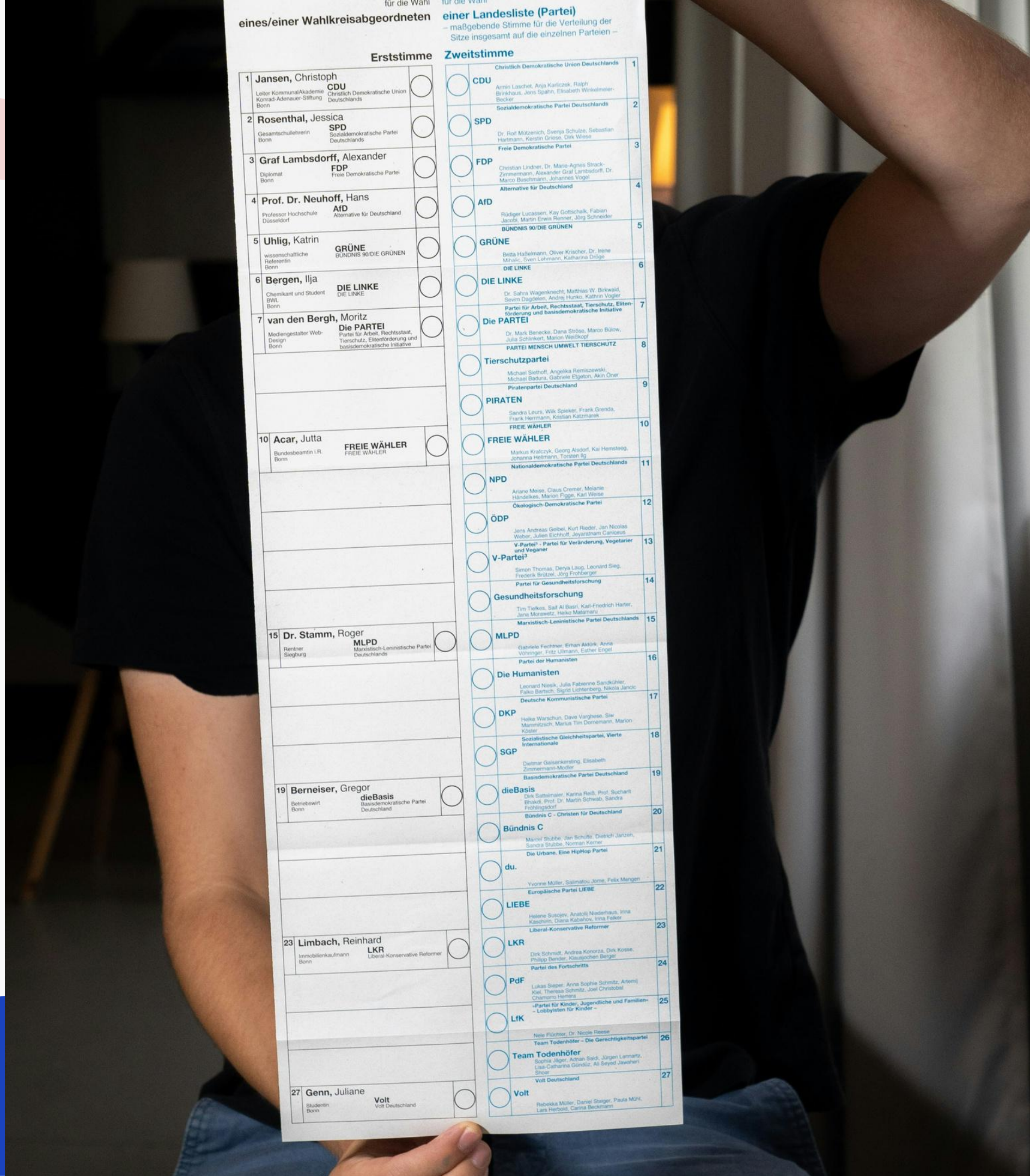
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Think about your school, or educational institution, and the people that it aims to support (e.g. students, trainees, adult learners) aka TARGET POPULATION

How much influence do learners have on the decisions being made at your educational institution?

“Democratic life”



Participation in educational settings

Why is it important

How can it look like



**“Schools can be spaces of
lived democracy”**

**- Council of Europe
Steering Committee
for Education (CDEDU) 2022**

“

Schools within DEMOCRACY

DEMOCRACY within schools

Schools are the first substantial contact of a learner with a **public institution**

Can be the place where people **develop trust** in **good governance**, public services

Schools can demonstrate the value of education as a '**public good**' and a benefit of a **democratic society**

Learning environments are where **democratic culture** can be fostered and appreciated



Schools within democracy

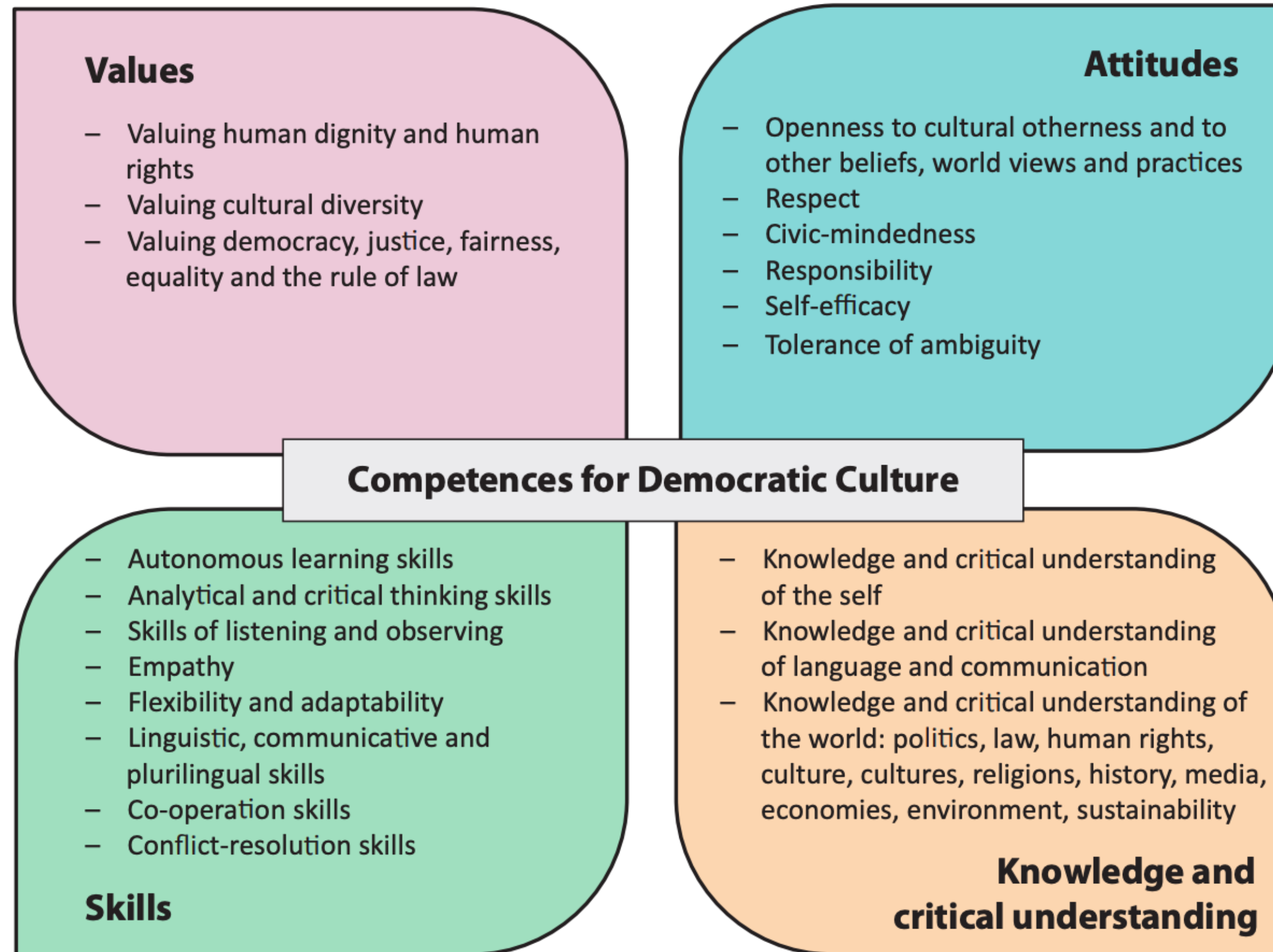
CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION (also called HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION, CIVIC EDUCATION)

Developing specific competences required for young people's active citizenship

Implicitly contains ideas about how learners "should" actively engage in democracy and be a "good" citizen

Enhancing critical thinking, media literacy

Offer opportunities for civic engagement / linking to democratic processes outside of schools



CoE Reference Framework of Competencies for Democratic Culture (2021)



Democracy within schools

PROCESSES/MECHANISMS of DEMOCRACY (procedural)

Active and meaningful learner representation, councils, advisory groups

Mechanisms for learner feedback, accountability

CULTURE/WAYS OF WORKING in DEMOCRACY (substantive)

Ethical integrity, openness to change of educational systems or programmes to learners

Openness, transparency, participatory approach to internal decision-making, school management, programme design

Opportunities for collaboration, power sharing, co-decision

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How well does your school perform as:
a school within democracy, or democracy within a school,
or both?

**"common values
and citizen
engagement"**



Reality: The rightward shift in Europe

Politics

EU election results confirm shift to the right

As expected, first results of the 6-9 EU elections show that voters across Europe have shown a preference for the far-right parties, which will look to either make an alliance or break the record of the centrist majority made of the centre-right, Liberals and Socialist, still holding.



POLITICS | GERMANY

Germany: Far-right AfD wins first state vote since WWII

Published 09/01/2024 | last updated 09/02/2024

Results show the far-right AfD winning the election in Thuringia and coming a close second in Saxony. The success in the party's eastern stronghold states comes around a year before federal elections. DW has more.



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Do you think that we, as the European education sector, are doing enough to address the rise of the far-right in Europe?




**How can your
educational institution
better enable students
to participate in
democratic life?**



**“Education is not only meant
to help individuals to be
prepared for the present job
market...”**



**...but also needs to enable
individuals to be able to
identify societal, economic,
environmental, political and
other problems...**



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**...and to be able to look for
possible solutions to those
problems.” (CDEDU 2022b).**

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**AMPLIFY
YOUR
VOICE**

