

Session for history of citizenship; Evolution of citizen's rights throughout history

Time: 90 minutes

Size of group: 20-40 people

Summary of activity: The activity in a creative way introduces and focuses on the historical moments that defined Europe and contributed towards the development of citizenship, citizens' rights' and democracy as we know them today. The session helps participant to better understand what is citizenship, democracy and rights of citizens, how they are connected and how they were developed throughout the history.

Materials:

- Handouts with explanation of the historical periods (if needed according to group knowledge)
- Flip-charts, papers, markers, clothing or whatever else that participants can use to create costumes or set-up the stage for their theatre plays.

Instructions:

- Introduction of the activity and shortly what is about (that will explore the evolution and development of citizenship concept and citizens' rights throughout history in a creative way).
- Dividing participants in 4 groups and telling them that they have a task to discuss and prepare short silent theatre plays (no words, sounds are allowed) that will present the people's position, role and rights and responsibilities in important periods for the development of Europe, citizens' rights and democracy. Each group secretly gets one of the following historical periods (written on pieces of paper) that they need to present to the others:
 - The Ancient era: Ancient Greece, Roman Empire (city-states, king, aristocrats, only elder men can vote...)
 - Feudalism/Medieval ages (kings/lords, vassals (working on lords properties), priests...)
 - French Revolution (the most important event for citizens' rights, equality and freedom of all people as we know today)
 - Post-war period (after II World war) and today (this play should be generally for Europe, tell them NOT to pick only one example of a country)

- Participants have **35-40 minutes** to prepare the silent theatre plays and they should be encouraged to use any materials they can find in the room to make the play better and more realistic.

- Presentation are done in random order. After each presentation, facilitators ask participants from the audience to guess what period they have seen, what they have seen, what they wanted to show etc. Participants from the audience can also ask questions to the presenting group or comment their play. After the audience finishes with the comments and questions, facilitators asks the presenting group to introduce how was for them, how they prepared and clarify and explain more in detail what they wanted to present to the others and how was the situation of people in that period in regard of their rights and democracy in general.

After all presentation finish, the facilitator ask everyone how was the session, what they have seen from all plays and points out what was the purpose of the activity – to show the historical moments that defined citizens’ rights and democracy as well as their development throughout the ages; to creatively and visually compare important stages for development of citizens’ rights and democracy, but also to present the issues that we still face today on national and European level (that will be showed by the “Today” group)

Debriefing and evaluation (10-15 minutes) – Sit everyone in circle and ask them these questions.

- How do you feel?
- Was it hard for you to present the historical periods?
- Was it hard for you to recognize the presented periods?
- Is there any other important periods/events/persons for the development of Europe, citizenship and citizens’ rights? What/Who are they?
- How is the situation with citizens’ rights today in the world?
- Is there any countries today that are not democratic and where rights of citizens are not respected? If yes, where and why is like that?