



DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION PAPER

WORKSHOP ON CULTURAL EDUCATION IN GERMANY AND TURKEY OCTOBER 9-12, 2017 BERLIN, GERMANY

MARCH 2018

with the financial support of the German Foreign Office



This paper has been prepared within the scope of the Workshop on Cultural Education in Germany and Turkey. Material herein can be used directly or indirectly provided the source is fully acknowledged.

Held in Berlin with the participation of specialists, the Workshop on Cultural Education in Germany and Turkey (October 9-12, 2017) aimed to open a space to share knowledge about experiences, methods, and strategies around key concepts in cultural education. The workshop also intended to construct a sustained dialogue that explores and fosters youth mobility through international cultural exchange.

With the initiative of the German-Turkish Youth Bridge (DTJB) and financial support from the German Foreign Office, the Federal Association for Arts Education and Cultural Learning (BKJ), and the Federal Association of Drama and Theatre (BAG), in Germany, and the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Art (IKSV) in Turkey have come together to acknowledge the importance of cultural education. This collaboration intended to promote the sharing of ideas amongst specialists to advance cultural education in German-Turkish youth exchanges and to contribute to the knowledge about cultural education, cultural exchange, and youth education.

Cultural education offers a productive approach for delving into the issues of learning, cultural diversity, and intercultural dialogue. Cultural education initiatives in cultural exchange programs play an important role in facilitating the ability of youth to acquire new perspectives. In international exchanges, the potential of art as a form of communication can reduce linguistic barriers, thereby creating possibilities for reducing stereotypes and prejudices. In this respect, the aim of exchange programs that focus on cultural education is to open new spaces for young people to have artistic and cultural experiences together, to discover their potential in intercultural learning processes, and to foster their creativity and critical thinking skills.

Cultural education has an important place in youth projects in both Germany and Turkey, and the two countries have a long history of engaging in bilateral collaborations. Yet, educational and cultural professionals and specialists have rarely come together to discuss cultural education within the context of youth exchange programs. While this cooperation intends to enhance knowledge on the underlying conceptual issues around cultural education, it also brings the issues of intercultural dialogue and learning, cultural policy, and youth mobility onto the agenda.

The recommendations in this paper were developed based on preparatory meetings between four organizing institutions beginning in June 2017 as well as discussions that took place at the workshop held in Berlin on October 9-12, 2017. Multiple organizations, including those working on arts, culture, children, and youth issues, and local governments from Germany and Turkey participated in this workshop. The overarching issues with respect to cultural education discussed at the workshop include:

1. TRANSLATING CONCEPTIONS OF CULTURAL EDUCATION. Different approaches in cultural education rely on differing conceptualizations and definitions of several core concepts. Variation in these conceptualizations and lack of clarity in addressing these differences has inhibited productive discussions in cultural exchange practices. It is therefore important to bring to the forefront how cultural education and related issues are defined and conceptualized within each country. It is important for all participants to understand how concepts such as cultural education, cultural policy, arts education, artist education, education through the arts, integration, and intercultural dialogue are used by the institutions involved in the exchange programs. Sufficient time should be devoted to discussions aimed at understanding such concepts, which would help to translate differences and attain common ground for more productive dialogue in cultural exchange programs.

2. ADVOCACY. Cultural education is a policy field that has been sidelined in education, cultural, and youth policies. Advocacy is an important tool by which constituents can influence policymaking processes. Advocacy might take different forms based on the country's governance structure, cultural infrastructure, and capacity. The German Federal Association for Arts Education and Cultural Learning (BKJ) is a unique umbrella organization working in the field of cultural education. It is a supra-regional structure that represents all relevant arts disciplines in cultural education of local, regional and national organizations. Focusing on children and young people, the main aim of the organization is to relate current social problems to cultural education and to contribute to the development of the cultural education field. BKJ aims to achieve life-long cultural education that takes into account social sensitivities and is sustainable and accessible to all.

3. POLICY DEVELOPMENT. It is critical for cultural education to become a priority issue within educational, youth, and cultural policy circles. Education, youth, and the cultural sector need to join forces to formulate policies and devise strategies on the cultural education of youth. Participation by civil society and cultural organizations should be mobilized to better integrate the arts into education and youth programs and to enhance access to culture and cultural rights.

In 2011, IKSU established the Cultural Policy Studies Department to contribute to the development of cultural policy in Turkey and to increase the participation of different actors in discussions within the field. The Foundation organizes workshops, conferences and symposiums in cooperation with different institutions, conducts research, prepares reports, and focuses each year on a different issue in the field of cultural policy, being an example for the contribution of civil society to the policy development process. Cultural education and arts education are at the forefront of the cultural policy issues that IKSU brings onto the agenda.

4. COLLABORATION. In arts education policy, collaboration between actors working at different levels and with different capacities is important in enhancing the quality of cultural education. These collaborations might exist at various scales and can include teachers, arts educators, cultural professionals, artists, schools, cultural organizations and institutions, local and national governmental institutions, and universities (Ece Aydınlik & Fazlıoğlu Akın, 2014; Galligan, 2001). While schools open their doors to art educators, artists, and cultural professionals, cultural institutions and civil society organizations in the fields of youth and education should develop more education programs that create possibilities for collaborations with schools and teachers.

Inadequate infrastructure and capacity in arts teachers training is the biggest obstacle to attaining high quality in arts education. Cultural institutions should support university students in arts education and assist in integrating them into the arts and cultural sector (Ece Aydınlik & Fazlıoğlu Akın, 2014; Ece Aydınlik & Fazlıoğlu Akın, 2015). This would help to create new ways of incorporating arts education programs into schools and cultural organizations.

International collaborations among institutions working in the field of cultural education have significant contributions in the development of national arts education policies and practices. The ongoing collaboration between the German Federal Association of Drama and Theatre (BAG) and the Turkish Contemporary Drama Association (CDA) since 2005 constitutes an important example of cooperation between Germany and Turkey. In 2011, the International Agreement on the Conduct and Ethics of Theatre Educators was published with the cooperation of BAG and CDA. The agreement focuses on educational, artistic, moral, conscientious, and intellectual professional ethics in the fields of theatre pedagogy and creative drama. The text is being translated into 10 different languages (BAG & CDA, 2011).

5. INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE AND LEARNING. Cultural education plays a vital role in helping people to understand issues around cultural diversity and in enhancing intercultural dialogue and learning. Youth exchange programs focusing on cultural education improve young people's ability to understand the thinking patterns and cultural practices of others and to live together with people from different cultures. By giving young people opportunities to express themselves and to get to know different cultural identities, the aim of cultural education is to raise critical awareness amongst young people about the issues of discrimination, exclusion, and social justice (Ece Aydınlık & Fazlıoğlu Akın, 2014; Ece Aydınlık & Fazlıoğlu Akın, 2015). Allowing for a discussion of preconceived values, intercultural learning helps to enrich one's sense of identity. Although intercultural learning is an individual process, it is about learning how to live together, and, in this respect, it is the beginning of living together in peace (Bennett, 1993 cited in Gillart et al., 2000). Cultural education, intercultural dialogue, and learning should be incorporated into exchange programs, especially with respect to youth issues.

6. YOUTH MOBILITY. Youth issues need to be considered in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of education and cultural policies. By empowering young people with critical thinking skills through experiential learning methods, mobility and youth exchange activities enhance social and political participation and help foster dialogue amongst young people having different cultural backgrounds.

One of the most important tools of youth exchange is the encounter. By learning about each other's cultural habits and lifestyle and solving daily problems together, young people from different countries have the opportunity to better get to know their own selves. The goal of youth exchange is to become able to better understand other people, to eliminate prejudices, and to approach one's own worldview critically. Designed with the active participation of young people, exchange programs are planned and implemented based on their interests and needs. The aim for young people is to learn to take responsibility, to be proactive about issues they care about, and to respect others' needs. Young people may be more aware of the effect they have on others as long as they are included in the process (Görbil et al., 2006).

Founded in 2013 as an initiative of the German foundation Stiftung Mercator, the German-Turkish Youth Bridge (DTJB) is an important actor in youth exchange programs and youth mobility between Germany and Turkey. Contributing to the development of the two countries' historical and cultural relations, its mission is to support youth programs and youth mobility between the two countries, to facilitate the exchange of experts between Germany and Turkey, and to carry out advocacy work on the importance of intercultural dialogue. While the headquarters of DTJB is based in Düsseldorf, Community Volunteers Foundation (TOG) hosts its Turkey Program Office in Istanbul.

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www.iksv.org

Federal Association of Drama and Theatre (BAG) / Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft (BAG) Spiel & Theater

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