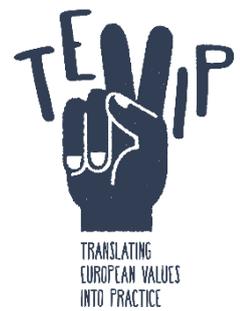




TRANSLATING EUROPEAN VALUES INTO PRACTICE

POSITION PAPER

(SHORT VERSION)



CHALLENGES IN DEALING WITH EUROPEAN VALUES

Against the background of current trends and political cleavages in Europe, we consider an open reflection on values necessary. This reveals three challenges in dealing with (European) values:

- **Problems related to the definition of meanings.** Values do not have the same meaning for everyone but can be interpreted differently. It is thus easy for misunderstandings to arise.
- **Problems related to manipulation.** Increasingly, we see a tendentious reinterpretation of European values. These are invoked and exploited to justify actions that violate the values themselves.
- **Problems related to action.** Sometimes, there is inconsistency between principles and conduct. Even if the meaning of a value is shared, individual behaviour may contrast with the principles.

TRANSLATING EUROPEAN VALUES INTO PRACTICE – OUR PROPOSALS

How can these challenges be mastered in view of the complexity of today's society? The main TEVIP proposals are the following:

1) Building a narrative that connects us as Europeans. This narrative cannot be based on a shared language, on historical events, on cultural characteristics nor on religious identity. However, the fact that we share values and want to open ourselves to dialogue can be the basis for a European identity which does not replace but complement our various identities.

2) Overcoming an exclusive interpretation of European values. The fact that all EU member states share values and that the EU itself refers to shared values gives them a European dimension. However, this should not result in any exclusive validity limited to the continent. European values must be inclusive, both externally and internally.



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3) Building an open debate and a learning space. We accept that there are different ways of interpreting and putting European values into practice. Sharing basic values enables us to respect the points of view of others, to grow through joint discussions and clear up misunderstandings.

4) Supporting the development of critical thinking. Political education cannot be limited to the teaching of content but must focus on the acquisition of civic competences. Critically questioning content is an indispensable skill in a complex and multicultural society.

5) Using interactive methods. These promote an open debate, raise awareness for the topic and strengthen empathy for the other side.

WHY TEVIP?

The project **TEVIP – Translating European Values into Practice** involves German, Polish and Italian organisations, and a European network that develops **educational formats on the subject of European values**. This is considered important, as the subject of values has **received little attention** in the political debate and the political education of young people.

WHY A POSITION PAPER?

We want to share the insights gained in the context of the project and put them up for discussion. This paper is aimed at decision makers, activists, political educators, teachers and trainers. It is intended for making the **role of European values in society visible and open for discussion**.

TEVIP-RESULTS

These principles are the basis for methods and formats developed during the project. They have been tested with European youths and young adults and summarised in a handbook. From summer 2020 on, all results will be available on www.tevip.eu.

