



**Democrat**  
EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY

**Mediator Training**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> German Pilot Intervention**  
**Assessment report**

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## Project factsheet

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## 1. Introduction

The DEMOCRAT Project's work packages are built on each other. This evaluation report is the penultimate stage of the complex Education for democracy (EfD) process designed, tested, evaluated and shared for exploitation by the consortium. DEMOCRAT has outlined a European curriculum for EFD, based on a shared understanding of what democracy means, as well as a competence framework for responsible democratic citizenship (RDC). The curriculum has been piloted in a series of interventions in primary and secondary schools in the six EU member states in which DEMOCRAT has operated: Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Poland and Spain. In some countries, the testing stage also included interventions in teacher training at higher education institutes.

The national activities were designed on the basis of the DEMOCRAT competence framework (included in D2.1), taking into account preliminary national reports on education inequalities and the state of the art in EfD (D3.1) in the six participating countries. The national and local work that is evaluated in the present deliverable is also based on DEMOCRAT deliverable D5.1. (Design of local pilot projects (LPPs)), as well as on subsequently developed tools (see Annexed Guides) and includes the self-assessment of the pilot participants. A final elaboration of the national pilot interventions will be done when they are compiled into the DEMOCRAT Toolbox (D6.1., under preparation).

The results of the assessment of the national intervention were presented in the deliverable D5.2 and the results of the comparison of the intervention in the deliverable D5.3). Here we present the Spanish chapter of deliverable D5.2.

It is worth noting that the various pilots/interventions, because of their limited scale and duration, are not considered as providing strictly scientific evidence about the efficiency and effectiveness of the learning approaches used in terms of RDC competence development. For the DEMOCRAT Project, the primary objective was to test and further develop the competence framework and the assessment tools, as well as to obtain insights of possible success and hindering factors for novel approaches in Education for Democracy. Pilots show that the school heads and teachers have a crucial role in education for democracy and that they can contribute significantly, as agents of research and development, as well as implementation. Here we present the results of the assessment of one of the German pilot interventions.

## 2. General description of all the living lab activities and methodology

The understanding of the DEMOCRAT-Living Lab activities in Germany is the following: It is a meeting of educators, teachers, practitioners, school social workers, professionals of cultural and political education, and researchers. It aims at connecting professions locally and incorporating their multiple perspectives when developing material for Education for Democracy (EfD). Within the frame of the EU-DEMOCRAT Project, the first Living Lab events in 2023 were supposed to be exploratory as open kick-off events. They took place at the campus and enabled open encounters of professionals to discuss different approaches and good practices as well as challenges.

In terms of methodology, the first living labs were created to assess the needs of educators in terms of EfD. Next to this, it was also important to get connected to the regional context of North-Rhine Westphalia. There is a focus on this region in Germany, because the University of Applied Sciences that is the German partner in the DEMOCRAT Project is located in Düsseldorf. This local connection is considered to be important, because the people met in real encounters and only exceptionally in digital meetings. There was a high need for educators and teachers who are very committed in this subject area, to meet other colleagues, because it turns out that very often, they are “lone fighters” in their organisation. When it comes to networking, it became apparent that the first task is to strengthen colleagues by offering them a space where they can empower each other so that they can be(come) strong multipliers for democracy. It is thanks to them that Education for Democracy can happen as a lived experience.

In the second phase of the living lab events, the objective was to find out about suitable formats for different age groups. This is why in 2025, the meetings took place monthly. Meeting once a month in the evening, sometimes at university campus and later on online, helped develop further ideas and prepare the teachers and school social workers for the first tests of the material.

The Living Lab meetings paused in the summer of 2025 so that tests of material e.g. for school labs could take place. The participants are still connected via mailing list and will be provided with the resulting material, so that they can make use of it in their specific contexts in school and education. One objective in terms of sustainability is that the Living Lab partners will stay connected beyond the project.

The Living lab started in 2023 with meetings and workshops, continuing in 2024, e.g. with a network meeting of “schools with courage” in October 2024.

Events of the living lab in 2025 with Andreas & Jennifer:

- 12.02.2025 Introducing the Democrat framework on RDC and Workshop on the necessities of schools and teachers regarding interventions of EfD. The event took place in person at HSD with 14 participating teachers and social workers from secondary and primary schools
- 06.03.2025 International Conference on EdF at HSD with 59 participants (teachers, social workers, scholars and students)
- 13.03.2025 Conception meeting of the school labs on Edf. Online event with 5 participants
- 03.04.2025 Conception-meeting with 5 participants (online)
- 07.05.2025 Conception meeting of school labs with two teachers at HSD
- 13.05.2025 Presentation of the Democrat Project at the regional meeting of the network “schools with courage” in Cologne with 24 teachers and social workers
- 20.05.-23.05.2025 ECPR Conference at the Charles-University of Prague, workshop-session and paper presentation of results and challenges of pilot projects in the Democrat Projects


- 05.06.-07.06.2025 Presentation of the Democrat project at the Angel Conference Humboldt-Forum Berlin
- 13.06.25 One Living Lab Partner joined us with a group for EfD Activities
- 25.08.-29.08.2025 ECPR-General Conference at Aristotle-University Thessaloniki, paper presentation of pilot project of the Democrat Project
- 01.09.2025 One living lab partner joined us with a group for EfD activities

## 2.1. Pilot project specifics

In the following sections, the “interventions”, also referred to as “pilots” (from “pilot projects”), are listed and described under the rubrics of general objectives, challenges and target groups. The assessment, as well as the “lessons learned”, are presented transparently. The following sections provide readers with more detailed information, with the use of tables to allow for a quick overview of particular projects. From North-Rhine Westphalia there are seven pilot projects that are part of the DEMOCRAT Project. They differ in length and group size as they are designed to be suitable for different target and age groups. The titles are:

- Discrimination-sensitive project days
- Children Conference
- Mediator Training
- Against Forgetting
- School Lab: Jeu Dramatique *Animal Elections*
- School Lab: Simulation Game *Founding a New Society*
- Multipliers in School Lab: Teaching Educators to perform *Animal Elections*

### 3. Mediator training

<b>Pilot ID</b>		
<b>MEDIATOR TRAINING</b>		
<b>Executing entity (school, other)</b> Förderturmhaus, after school club	<b>Location of implementation (town/region)</b> Essen, North-Rhine Westphalia	
<b>Target group (age of students)</b> 8 to 10 years old	<b>Number of students involved</b> 8	<b>Number of teachers involved</b> 1
<b>Other stakeholder partners involved (if any)</b>	<b>Period of implementation</b> 12.2024-03.2025 (2months)	
<b>Targeted RDC competences</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Solidary participation</li> <li>● Deliberation</li> <li>● Judgement and critical thinking</li> <li>● Resilience</li> </ul>		
<b>Brief pilot project description</b>  This is a service-learning oriented project where primary school children become mediators for their peers. By trying to understand and helping to solve other children's problems, empathy will be trained. Solidary Participation as a democratic competence is focused here.		
<b>Link to pilot project website</b>  <a href="https://www.foerderturm.de/das-foerderturmhaus/">https://www.foerderturm.de/das-foerderturmhaus/</a>	<b>Links to any blogs, Democracy Talks or other such material available on the Democrat Agora or the Democrat website regarding this pilot project</b>	

#### 3.1. Description of the intervention

The mediator training is an education program of a short time period of two months, but therefore quite intensive for a small group of young students in primary school. The pupils have a weekly training session for about one to one and a half hours on how to become a mediator. The approach of service learning is used here, because after this training, the mediator project of course goes on, and the pupils offer their service to other peers to help them find solutions in their conflicts. The pupils realize that their help is needed in real-life situations. The goal of the course is to have capable mediators in service who help other kids when needed, in school and beyond. The mediator training takes place at an after-school club and it was already tested in this format some years ago, but this season it takes place to be part of DEMOCRAT. Even the head of the after-school club is committed to join DEMOCRAT Activities and visits the DEMOCRAT Conference in Düsseldorf in March 2025.

To make this project possible, there must be an educator who is experienced in doing the training. This could either be one of the teachers or educators of the team or there will be a cooperation with a coach from outside the school or organisation. As the most important resource next to the coach there should be a room available where the group is not disturbed when doing their training that includes a lot of role play.

### **3.2. Design and process of execution of the intervention**

#### **Design**

The mediators training should help qualify young students to be a support to others. It aims at giving people self-efficacy. This kind of mini-Education is a course of about two months, depending how often the training takes place. There should be 6-8 meetings in a small group of participants. Each meeting lasts around 1 hour. There won't be more time in the schedule of the pupils, so 1 hour once a week will probably be sufficient.

#### **Methodology and learning approach**

The learning approach is a kind of service learning, because the skills that are trained will then be needed to give this support to others. The pupils shall help to solve conflicts and in this "giving" a service to others – they can grow and become more caring for the needs of others. The good thing is, that they offer a real service that can be useful for other students

#### **Execution: realised activities**

The realised activities were 8 meetings with the participants: the students, and also organisational work that needs to be done to get this project working. The first meetings are about getting to know each other, but also getting to know oneself. Next step is that kids learn about feelings and how to recognize them and how to approach others who can be identified as "not feeling well". In role plays, the kids learn about appropriate dialogues and how to handle uneasy conversations. They practice finding solutions for problems and writing them down in treaties so that each participant can see that the agreements are binding. Finally, they have a kind of role-play exam and get a certificate in the end when managing this successfully.

### **3.3. Difficulties and favourable factors**

Objectives are that students will be able to intervene constructively in difficult conflict situations and will be able to talk about critical things and get creative to find solutions. This turns out to be quite a challenging goal. Rather than spillovers to non-targeted competences, observations are that the targets were too high.

The intervention had its challenges in so far that the children were already tired when it started in the last hour of their school day.

By 3-4pm the children were so tired already that there were hardly any concentration and energy left to seriously learn something new.

### 3.4. Monitoring process by the national team

It was realised at an early stage that the assessment how it was thought to be would not fit in here. With the group of early learners, it becomes clear that an online survey is not possible, but kids rather needed individual conversations to reflect upon things.

#### Assessment of the intervention by the national team

##### *General*

The mediators' program is a challenging project, because the participants need skills like a high level of empathy, abstract thinking for role plays and the ability to concentrate well. It is quite ambitious to do this with a group of young learners aged 8-10.

##### *Assessment of the selected competences*

The assessment for participants in the intervention was based on a group interview after the mediators' training finished after all meetings, during which the young pupils could ask questions and discuss important points while reflecting on the pilot. This was based on the general democrat assessment but made easier by using easier and plain language. The answers demonstrate that the mediators are confident in their values.

- "I understand that people do have different ideas. It is because everyone has different experiences."
- "It is ok to be of different opinions. We are in Germany."
- "It is important to help each other, when someone is hurt."
- "Each situation is different. We cannot always react in the same way."
- "We can make use of this [knowledge], when we argue with friends."

The quotes of participants have the function to give them a voice and create an impression of the ideas of that age group.

The Educators and other team members involved in this pilot project mentioned that there should be a basic level of competences and empathy before children can join this program. This pilot turns out to be quite challenging for the participants in terms of doing the role-plays in a way that they can learn from it and be able to transfer aspects into their everyday life.

While in this age group there is a rough set of values already, they do not quite know how to act to make these values lived out and get them in practice.

<b>STUDENTS SELF-ASSESSMENT OF RDC-COMPETENCES</b>		
STUDENT'S <u>SELF ASSESSMENT</u> TOOL	Yes	No
EX-ANTE ASSESSMENT	X	
INTERMEDIATE ASSESSMENT		X
POST ASSESSMENT	X	
WHO MANAGED THE ASSESSMENT TOOL		
THE SCHOOL	X	
DEMOCRAT TEAM		X
	Yes	No
USE OF SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL WITHOUT MODIFICATION		X
USE OF MODIFIED SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL	X	
MODIFIED QUESTIONS		
MODIFIED SCALES		
OTHERS		X
<b>EXPLAINING OTHERS</b>		
<p><i>The tool was adapted to an oral format with specific examples of mediation and conflict resolution, appropriate for the age of the students. This was not done individually but through a group interview</i></p>		

<b>RESULTS OF STUDENTS SELF-ASSESSMENT</b>				
	mini mal	bas ic	inter mediate	Advanc ed
<b>SOLIDARY PARTICIPATION</b>				
EX-ANTE ASSESSMENT				
INTERMEDIATE ASSESSMENT				
POST ASSESSMENT				
<b>DELIBERATION</b>				
EX-ANTE ASSESSMENT				
INTERMEDIATE ASSESSMENT				
POST ASSESSMENT				
<b>CRITICAL JUDGEMENT</b>				
EX-ANTE ASSESSMENT				
INTERMEDIATE ASSESSMENT				
POST ASSESSMENT				
<b>DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE</b>				
EX-ANTE ASSESSMENT				
INTERMEDIATE ASSESSMENT				
POST ASSESSMENT				

TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT OF RDC-COMPETENCES		
TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT TOOL	YES	NO
EX-ANTE ASSESSMENT	X	
INTERMEDIATE ASSESSMENT		X
POST ASSESSMENT	X	
BY TEACHER AND STUDENTS		X
BY TEACHER AND GROUP	X	
BY GROUP OF TEACHERS AND GROUP OF STUDENTS		X
	YES	NO
USE OF TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT TOOL WITHOUT MODIFICATION		X
USE OF MODIFIED TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT TOOL	X	
MODIFIED QUESTIONS	X	
MODIFIED SCALES		
OTHERS	X	
<i>PLEASE: EXPLAIN OTHERS</i>		
A qualitative assessment was carried out based on continuous observation and experiences from the mediation workshops. The scales were adapted to specific behaviours (empathy, listening, cooperation).		

RESULTS OF TEACHERS ASSESSMENT				
	MINI MAL	BASIC	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
<b>SOLIDARY PARTICIPATION</b>				
EX-ANTE ASSESSMENT				
INTERMEDIATE ASSESSMENT				
POST ASSESSMENT				
<b>DELIBERATION</b>				
EX-ANTE ASSESSMENT				
INTERMEDIATE ASSESSMENT				
POST ASSESSMENT				
<b>CRITICAL JUDGEMENT</b>				
EX-ANTE ASSESSMENT				
INTERMEDIATE ASSESSMENT				
POST ASSESSMENT				
<b>DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE</b>				
EX-ANTE ASSESSMENT				
INTERMEDIATE ASSESSMENT				
POST ASSESSMENT				
<b>QUALITATIVE COMPETENCE ASSESSMENT BY TEACHERS</b>				
<i>Educators observed clear progress in cooperation and the ability to resolve conflicts independently.</i>				

### 3.5. Assessment of transferability

If possible, make use of an earlier time slot in the day. Late afternoon might be too late for such a challenging program. So whenever possible, have an early get-together to make sure everyone is still fresh.

### 3.6. Lessons learnt

#### RDC competences and tools

It is always important to try to reach as many people as possible with a project, but to make the outcome more effective for a single participant, it is ok to have smaller groups. The reflection and self-assessment of it therefore played an important role. Conversations and easy language are of high importance to kids at the age of 8-10 years.

#### Teachers' training

The pilot emphasized the importance of teachers acting as facilitators and supervisors of student mediators. While students can resolve many conflicts independently, teacher guidance helps to ensure that they do so in an ethical and safe way. To scale up this approach, teacher training should cover mediation processes and strategies for supporting peer mediators while respecting their autonomy.