

Citizenship Understandings


THEME/FOCUS: CITIZENSHIP CONCEPTS

 **Group Size** | 10-30

 **Age Group** | 16+

 **Total Time** | 85 Minutes

 **Level of Complexity** | 2

 **Materials Needed** | Copies with a quote in each piece of paper (Handout)

 **Keywords** | Citizenship

Purpose/ Learning objective	<p>To exemplify the complexity of understandings related to the concepts of citizenship.</p> <p>To increase critical thinking and raise awareness about the multitude of characteristics, social realities and ways of understanding and exercising citizenship.</p> <p>To associate some key features of citizenship and democracy and discuss the role of individual, youth work and citizens action in citizenship.</p>	
Preparation/ Instructions for educator	Timing	Instructions step by step
	25 min	<p>Participants are invited to reflect individually about their understanding on citizenship.</p> <p>Understanding the word (in groups with multiple languages) ask participants to write on the board the word "citizenship" in their own language.</p>
	20 min	Request what is the etymological origin of this word and how is currently understood. Are there in their languages different words for citizenship, nationality, patriotism,...?
	10 min	Spread the quotes around the training floor room and ask participants to read them all, to choose the one that they agree the most and to stand next to it.
	20 min	Invite participants to sit near the quote they have chosen. Could happen that several participants have chosen the same one. Make a round for participants to express the reasons they choose a quote or another.
	10 min	<p>A short debriefing may follow:</p> <p>According to their perception, which of the quotes presented and discussed are mainstream in their society. Why do they think so?</p>

<p>Facilitation tips</p>	<p>As facilitator you can choose not to mention the origin of the quotes (write in the other side of the paper) and at the end unveil the authors and observe the reactions of participants.</p> <p>At the end of the annex we have included few contemporary definitions on the concept of citizenship. To conclude the session a debate around them may be opened.</p>
<p>Ideas for follow-up</p>	<p>We can ask our community what is the main understanding of citizenship, nationality and patriotism and explore why is this way. Do all groups in our society agree with the mainstreaming understanding? Would they feel more comfortable with other approaches?</p>
<p>Appendices</p>	<p>The list of potential quotes is annexed to this description. Notice that quotes should be updated and adapted to different realities.</p>
<p>Source</p>	<p>Developed by the group on European Citizenship in Youth Work TC</p>

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HAND-OUT

Quotes on Citizenship:

"I am not an Athenian or a Greek, but a citizen of the world." (**Socrates**)

"If my theory of relativity is proven successful, Germany will claim me as a German and France will declare that I am a citizen of the world. Should my theory prove untrue, France will say I am a German and Germany will declare that I am a Jew." (**Albert Einstein**)

"All free men, wherever they may live, are citizens of Berlin. And therefore, as a free man, I take pride in the words "Ich bin ein Berliner!" (**J.F. Kennedy**)

"A citizen of my country (.....) will cross the ocean to fight for democracy, but won't cross the street to vote in a national election" (**Bill Vaughan**)

"This country (.....) has never been united by blood or birth or soil. We are bound by ideals that move us beyond our backgrounds, lift us above our interests and teach us what it means to be citizens." (**George W. Bush**)

"If an American is concerned only about his nation, he will not be concerned about the peoples of Asia, Africa, or South America. Is this not why nations engage in the madness of war without the slightest sense of penitence? Is this not why the murder of a citizen of your own nation is a crime, but the murder of citizens of another nation in war is an act of heroic virtue?" (**Martin Luther King**)

"It is not for him to pride himself who loves his own country, but rather for him who loves the whole world. The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens." (**Baha'u'llah**)

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." (**Margaret Mead**)

"First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win." (**Mahatma Gandhi**)

"It will not be enough to rely on experts. Ordinary citizens must become experts too. It will take public opinion on a wide scale to ensure that world leaders act." (**Mikhail Gorbachev**)

"There can be no daily democracy without daily citizenship." (**Ralph Nader**)

"A real patriot is the fellow who gets a parking ticket and rejoices that the system works." (**Bill Vaughan**)

Citizenship is something expressed by identity card and passport issued by my State.

Citizenship is a legal and political status, which every citizen has. This status gives some essential rights and definitely some duties (eg. paying taxes).

Citizenship is all the different actions to promote understanding of and respect for cultural diversity and intercultural co-operation to engage in a variety of tasks on voluntary basis to protect the environment, support marginalised groups of society, provide catastrophe relief and to protect citizens.

Citizenship is an attitude/belief based on values such as responsibility, personal activity, solidarity and tolerance. These values are than basis for the actions.

Citizenship is not just a certain status, defined by a set of rights and responsibilities. It is also an identity, an expression of one's membership in a political community.

The most fascinating challenge facing European citizens today is to learn the ability and willingness to live with cultural diversity, both within their countries and between them.

Further definitions:

“Citizenship is the peaceful struggle through a public sphere which is dialogical.” **(Habermas, 1994)**

“Citizenship is not just a certain status, defined by a set of rights and responsibilities. It is also an identity, an expression of one’s membership in a political community.” **(Kymlicka and Norman, 1995)**

“Citizenship is a complex and multidimensional concept. It consists of legal, cultural, social and political elements and provides citizens with defined rights and obligations, a sense of identity, and social bonds.” **(Ichilov, 1998)**

“Citizenship is the active membership and participation of individuals in society who are entitled to rights and responsibilities and who have the capacity to influence politics. Therefore citizenship has to be more than a political and juridical status; it also is a social role.” **(Cesar Birzea, 2002)**