



Zentrum fir politesch Bildung

Mission statement

English translation of the validated document *Leitbild* (German).



Introduction

The mission statement defines the self-image, goals and tasks of the Zentrum fir politesch Bildung (ZpB). It guides the committees and staff in their work in citizenship education. It also sets out the guiding principles of the ZpB and its activities to the public.

The mission statement was drawn up jointly by the Board of Directors, the employees of the ZpB and the Scientific Advisory Board. It is regularly reviewed and adapted as necessary.

What is citizenship education?

"Citizenship education is the collective term for all intentionally planned and organised, continuous and targeted measures by educational institutions to equip young people and adults with the necessary prerequisites for participation in political and social life." (Massing, 2010) Citizenship education takes place in formal (e.g., schools) and non-formal institutions (e.g., youth centres), but also in unplanned or even nonintentional ways in families, associations and other everyday situations.

Who we are

The ZpB is a foundation that is independent of any political parties and ideologically bound organisations. Neither are the foundation, its committees and employees executors of government policy nor are they working on the instructions of ministries or authorities.

The activities of the ZpB are committed to the fundamental values and principles formulated in the Luxembourg Constitution (e.g., equality, solidarity, and the rule of law) and civil liberties. It is also based on the conventions and international declarations of commitment to the principles of human rights which the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the European Union adopted, and which Luxembourg ratified.

The foundation ZpB is composed of:

- the Board of Directors,
- the Scientific Advisory Board,
- the Management,
- the employees who work professionally for the foundation,
- the freelance employees and experts,
- volunteers and interns.

The Board of Directors consists of equal representatives from both public institutions and civil society. Recognised academics and experts in citizenship education from Luxembourg and abroad are appointed to the Scientific Advisory Board.

The foundation, with its committees and employees, is a learning organisation that is constantly striving to further develop itself.

What we do

The ZpB is a player in citizenship education and historical-political education in Luxembourg.



On the one hand, the ZpB sees itself as a service provider (*centre de ressources*) that initiates, develops and manages educational processes and activities with the help of specially developed educational materials. On the other hand, the ZpB sees itself as a reference centre (*centre de référence*) that makes its expertise in the field of citizenship education available to other educational stakeholders, in order to support and strengthen them in their role as civic educators. Furthermore, the ZpB networks these educational stakeholders to make citizenship education accessible to all citizens, but primarily to children and young people.

What we want

The ZpB believes in democracy as a form of social and political organisation because it guarantees free elections, is based on the principle of the separation of powers and respects fundamental, civil and human rights. Citizenship education is an integral part of a modern democracy and contributes to shaping a democratic and open society. It thus strengthens confidence in democracy.

The ZpB is therefore committed to citizenship education and the development of democratic competences in Luxembourg. This includes, among other things, the ability to critically examine the democratic system and its challenges, the promotion of conflict and dialogue skills and the ability to make critical judgements, to tolerate ambiguity and to take action.

'Demokratie léieren a liewen'

The motto of the ZpB is *'Demokratie léieren a liewen'* ('Learning and living democracy'). On the one hand, the ZpB helps children, young people and adults to better understand politics in the broader sense, as well as the processes and principles of democracy, and to recognise options for action in the democratic system. On the other hand, the ZpB makes democratic processes tangible and thereby strengthens the democratic culture in society. These goals are promoted especially in schools and extracurricular institutions.

The ZpB strives for an active citizenship education by setting own topics. With this approach, it wants to react to social and political developments and trends, to pick up ideas, to set own accents and to pass on impulses. Ultimately, citizenship education also aims to impact society and institutions, thereby strengthening and developing democracy.

The ZpB emphasises citizenship education through its own projects, coordinates activities in the field of democracy learning and encourages others to act autonomously. By addressing current politically and socially relevant topics, the centre makes an active contribution to public debate.



Who we address

The activities of the ZpB aim at all the people who work and live in Luxembourg, regardless of origin, nationality, political or religious beliefs. An important focus of the educational work is on children and young people.

How we work

The ZpB provides publications, workshops and exhibitions and organises its own events. The centre advises other institutions on the introduction and further development of democratic structures and can support projects in the field of citizenship education.

The educational, mediative and awareness-raising work of the ZpB is based on the following guidelines:

- *Non-partisanship and political balance:* The ZpB works independently of political parties. The programmes and events ensure an appropriate balance.
- *Openness and interculturality:* The ZpB values the diversity of cultures and recognises differences in languages, traditions and religions. Its approach is pluralistic and multi-perspective, for as long as these perspectives are compatible with respect for human rights.
- *External transparency:* The mission statement and the selection criteria for the cooperation with partners are publicly available.
Criteria for the selection of projects are:
 1. The project is in line with the mission statement of the ZpB,
 2. The project qualifies as citizenship education,
 3. The project addresses the ZpB target audiences,
 4. The project can be realized with the available resources.
- *Beutelsbach Consensus:* The work of the ZpB is committed to the recognised professional principles of citizenship education, particularly the *Beutelsbach Consensus*. Educational programmes must be designed in such a way that participants can form political judgements independently and free from any influence (prohibition of overwhelming) and are supported in identifying and pursuing their personal interests (interest orientation). To this end, content that is controversial in science and politics must also be presented controversially in educational work (controversy rule).
- *Networking and cooperation:* The foundation carries out its projects in cooperation with external partners in Luxembourg and Europe. It promotes exchange and seeks cooperation with public bodies, governmental institutions, non-governmental organisations, actors from the fields of education - especially school and extracurricular education - and culture. The ZpB is part of international networks and works across borders.

- *Consideration for social diversity:* The ZpB takes into account the principle of equality for all when planning, implementing and evaluating each activity. Furthermore, when organising and communicating its events and publications, it ensures that the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are considered as far as possible.

The internal guidelines of the ZpB

The internal working methods are based on the following aspects:

- *Participation and co-determination:* Foundation committees and employees are involved in decision-making processes. Decision-making processes inside the Board of Directors are participatory, transparent and democratic.
- *Transparency and teamwork:* The transparency of processes is important to the ZpB. Team building and teamwork among employees are important aspects for the proper functioning of the ZpB.
- *Targeted cooperation:* When designing and implementing projects, the ZpB strives for partnerships, defines objectives together and also involves external partners in the implementation process.
- The representatives of the ZpB treat citizens and partner organisations with *openness, respect and friendliness*.
- *Responsible use of resources:* The ZpB uses the available financial and material resources from public and private sources responsibly.
- *Quality assurance and evaluation:* In order to act efficiently, clear and verifiable objectives are formulated for the projects in the various areas of citizenship education. The focus is not only on results, but also on processes. Work processes, but above all the educational projects and products of the ZpB, are reviewed internally for success and quality and, if necessary, also externally.
- *Scientific foundation of activities:* The ZpB bases its work on scientific findings and is supported in this by the Scientific Advisory Board.