

“Fair Skills” – a youth-cultural and group dynamic approach to preventing violent extremism and promoting practices of citizenship

Fair Skills developed and probed an approach of youth-cultural social intervention which combines elements of post-classical civic education (pedagogical anti-bias training, mediation, civic issues) psychologically based open-process self awareness group-work, and peer-learning in youth-cultural activities (including Breakdance, Skateboarding, Slam Poetry, Techno-DJ-ing, Digital Music Production, Comic and Graffiti, Visual Design and others) – also open-process exchange based on the young peoples’ preferred fictional media narratives, as films and songs/lyrics.

While receiving pre-vocational training in an extended process over several weeks in order to work as youth-cultural workshop facilitators themselves, the adolescent participants also gain emotional and social intelligence and biographical awareness, and they adopt specific anti-violence and anti-bias methods, enabling them to – informally – promote civil society values and skills. Gender oriented elements specifically aim at working with the young women and men to support gender related skills of communication, self-expression, and conflict resolution.

The Fair Skills approach is novel in the sense that it surpasses the largely cognitive, informational and history-teaching methods of most civic education interventions. CI focuses on cultural, social and emotional intelligence and is thus able to reach out to those adolescents which seem most resistant to any of the traditional pedagogical practices and are at risk of turning away from the school system and from civilized society altogether.